On Constructing Black Cultural Citizenship in White Spaces

by

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Abstract

In the last two years, the Goethe-Institut in Salvador da Bahia's residency program received an influx of Black participants and Black Brazilian artists who worked on different projects centered around topics of the Global South. The Goethe-Institut's choice of topic and collaborators represent an inherent disconnect between how actors of the German state treat their own Black citizens and the perceived celebration of Black persons abroad. A bond between Black people in Germany as well as abroad is denied access to the predominantly white citizenship, which often results in the construction of a Black cultural citizenship. This concept addresses how Black people create their own context-specific citizenship. Due to the fact that the Goethe-Institut is arguably the embodiment of white privilege, it is important to understand why Black artists still work with this institution and how it allows for the emergence of a Black cultural (transcontinental) citizenship. In order to shed light on the connection between Black cultural citizenship and the work of the Black female artists (residents) at the Goethe-Institut in Salvador-Bahia, this research analyzes the theory of Black cultural citizenship through supportive studies and a series of interviews to investigate two important factors and angles. The first is the history of the Goethe-Institut giving space to resistance to dominating power structures (the military and a white-dominated society). Second, it assesses whether there are aspects of Black cultural citizenship linking the different artists themselves.

Introduction

> "Euphemistically, Brazilian ruling society demands that we, Blacks, be Brazilian and not African. This really means that Afro-Brazilians must acculturate or assimilate: in a word, become white, at least on the inside. Only as 'Blacks with white souls' can Afro-Brazilians be Brazilian, for the Brazilian soul is not African" (Abdias do Nascimento 2004, 37).

In his statement, Nascimento addresses the topic of Brazilian citizenship by asserting that Afro-Brazilians do not have access to Brazilian *citizenship unless they are aligned with whiteness*, an issue relevant for many Black persons in white dominated societies. The phenomenon Nascimento expresses alludes to the struggle of Black people for identity and access to equal citizenship. Historically, notions of nationhood and citizenship that emerged in former colonies in the Americas were significantly shaped and coined by the French Revolution's tripartite idea of citizenship, which holds liberty, fraternity and equality as its foundation. These concepts and ideas, developed by and for white western people, in practice inherently exclude Black persons. One of the most evident historical examples of this is the Haitian revolution. The revolution began in 1771, during the French revolution; when former enslaved persons, who *had liberated* themselves from colonial rule, and therefore enslavement, demanded and claimed their right to liberty, fraternity, and equality. Despite the fact that, at that time, Haiti formed part of the French Empire, those founding principles did not apply to them, as Black French were not regarded as equal to white French (Césaire 2005, 26).

The importance of citizenship is reflected when looking at the Black Panther Party in the USA (1970's). Due to constant oppression and discrimination, Black people found themselves in precarious financial situations, which denied them access to nutritional food and good school education. In recognition of this, the group formed its own survival programs. Through these, Black people were not only given legitimacy in their existence but they were also creating their own structures (Hillard 2008, xi).[1]

Contemporarily, there are persistent cases that highlight the unequal access of citizenship to people of the Black diaspora. In 2005 Oury Jalloh, a Black imprisoned asylum seeker in Germany, was found burned and dead while his hands and feet were tied to his mattress. For years, police and the jurisdiction claimed that Jalloh committed suicide; however, "Folker Bittmann, a state prosecutor who for many years defended the police's account of Jalloh's death, changed his mind in April, when he argued that a murder investigation should be opened" (Knight 2017). To this day, the German jurisdiction has not managed to find the perpetrators, which is evidently a denial of access to a fair legal process and hence equality (Knight 2017).

In 2017, in Paris, the police sodomized Théo, a young Black man, yet the officer claimed that his baton was slipped into the victim's anus by "accident" (Holley 2017). In the Netherlands, there is a tradition known as Black Piet, in which the country's predominantly white citizens dress in Black face. While Black Piet has been (inter)nationally criticized by Blacks and non-Blacks alike, the tradition is publicly endorsed by the white prime minister, underlining the consistent ignorance and silencing of Black voices by people in power (Un.org; Viral Videos Holland 2014). The list goes on. Discrimination, particularly by police, is rampant against Black people in Salvador da Bahia, Brazil, home to the largest population of Black Brazilians in the country. The recent killing of Afro-Brazilian, queer activist and politician Marielle Franco in Rio de Janeiro is an example of how Black voices advocating for Black lives are attempted to be silenced by local governments (Aljazeera 2018). These examples demonstrate the transcontinental inability of Black persons in predominantly white, or better, white-ruled societies to enjoy their rightful liberty and equality (Caldwell et al. 2018).

However, what about fraternity? Fraternity is a concept that needs to be adopted to today's identity politics; its literal interpretation only emphasizes a bond between men; however, it should rather be understood as a shared bond between citizens (no matter their gender identification). A theory that encompasses equality, liberty *and stresses* on fraternity is the concept of cultural citizenship. It emphasizes the creation of a citizenship among groups of people who find themselves excluded from a specific national citizenship. This theory is particularly relevant in understanding the origins and patterns of Black resistance because, both historically and contemporarily, Black citizens, especially in diasporic communities, find themselves constantly navigating within and around oppressive white power structures.

Thus, through supportive studies and a series of interviews, this research analyzes the theory of Black cultural citizenship to understand the experiences and presence of Black female artists at the Vila Sul residency program at the Goethe-Institut in Salvador da Bahia (ICBA)[2]. The Goethe-Institut, being the official cultural institution of the German federal state, operates independently under the ministry of foreign affairs. The latter also finances the institution. Leadership positions are dominantly occupied by western white people/non-POC[3] and the institution's aim is to promote the contemporary German culture and language across the globe, and is arguably, an embodiment of white privilege(s). In their own words, "[t]he Residency Program of the Goethe-Institut Salvador-Bahia, stands out in the general scope of the Goethe-Institut as the first residency in the 'South'. The city is central in the South-South dialogues in geographic terms - as [...] [it is] part of the Black Atlantic -, historic – as it was the first capital of Brazil – and cultural – due to its Afro-Brazilian formation" (Goethe-Institut Salvador n.d).

The Goethe-Institut in Salvador da Bahia draws some significant concerns regarding the *German perception of Blackness*. There is disconnect between the way Germany treats its Black citizens and the perceived celebration and promotion of Black citizens abroad in Salvador da Bahia.

For example, in the last two years, the Goethe-Institut in Salvador da Bahia's residency program received an influx of Black international participants and Black Brazilian artists who worked on different projects. Meanwhile, the German state and society have made little efforts to remember Black Holocaust victims or the colonial genocide primarily of the Ovahereros and Nama, but also of the Damara and San in Namibia (1904-1907) (Knight 2018). In fact, the Namibian genocide and German colonial history are disremembered in Germany, which manifests in the maintenance of unequal land ownerships and the refusal of the German government to pay reparations or to formally apologize (Moloi 2016; Zimmerer 2013, 9). Thus, it needs to be asked why in Salvador da Bahia Black women (can) occupy the space of a German institution when Germany is constantly disremembering its own brutal colonial past and silences the descendants of the Ovahereros and Nama in Namibia. Is it possible to understand this disconnect and the presence of Black women at the institute in Salvador da Bahia through the theory of Black cultural citizenship?

This paper proceeds by firstly presenting a literature review on (Black) cultural citizenship. Secondly, the research question, hypothesis and methodology will be explained. Thirdly, the interview participants will be introduced. Then the interviews will be contextualized within the theoretical framework of Black cultural citizenship. Lastly, conclusions will be drawn.

Discussion on Relevant Existing Literature

This section will review the existing academic literature that addresses Black Cultural Citizenship and the key theories connected to it: (cultural) citizenship, as understood by the French Revolution, and Négritude.

According to scholar Laurence Pawley, citizenship is "primarily conceptualized as an explicitly public membership of a political community, and with the institutions that ensure the rights and duties accruing to the status of citizen" (2008, 594). Citizenship has been further defined as consisting of political, civil and social rights that apply equally to all members of the "political community" (Pawley 2008, 594). In his study, Pawley outlines three different contexts of cultural citizenship: (1) Multicultural, (2) cultural products, and (3) communication, the first of which is of greatest importance to this research, as it refers and "responds to the reality of multicultural political communities, arguing for a differentiated citizenship that takes account of the particular status of distinct cultural groups" (Pawley 2008, 595). This outline is supported by social scientist Toby Miller (Miller 2001, 183-184). In multicultural political communities, citizenship and culture are viewed distinctively. Culture is an exclusive factor; because communities are "denied access to the full benefits of liberal citizenship, cultural groups seek to rework the status of citizen through the lens of their communal affiliations" (Pawley 2008, 597).

One of the key intellectuals on (multi)cultural citizenship, Renato Rosaldo, conceptualizes culture as "a way of life" and politics as the backbone of it (Pawley 2008). He theorizes that "Cultural citizenship operates in an uneven field of structural inequalities where the dominant claims of universal citizenship assume a propertied white male subject and usually blind themselves to exclusions and marginalizations of people who differ in gender, race, sexuality, and age. Cultural citizenship attends not only to dominant exclusions and marginalizations, but also to subordinate aspirations for and definitions of enfranchisement" (1997, 37). Simplified, Rosaldo explains the circumstances, in which Cultural citizenship acts. According to him, the understanding of citizenship is only applicable to white males and hence oppresses non-white people.

Historian Blanca Silvestrini, who argues that cultural citizenship is "the ways people organize their values, their beliefs about their rights, and their practices based on their sense of cultural belonging rather than on their formal status as citizens of a nation" (Silvestrini 1997, 44), supports Rosaldo's line of understanding. In other words, cultural citizenship is shaped through diverse intersectionalities: race intersecting with gender, race and gender intersecting with sexuality, and so forth.

The importance and notion of a cultural citizenship has been addressed (though not by the same name) by sociologist Aimé Césaire. The poet argued and noticed that Black people in Martinique were deprived of full citizenship due to the fact that the tripartite slogan of the French Revolution, "liberty, equality, fraternity," foregoes *identity, an essential part of citizenship*, considering that, historically, Black people were robbed of their cultures and identities (2005, 58). Césaire therefore claims that there is a need to include identity in the foundation of citizenship due to this deprivation. As Black communities do not have access to the same privileges as other dominant groups, they begin to seek validation from within their communities and build their own cultural citizenship. That process has become known as *Black cultural citizenship*. When looking at this more nuanced and specific concept, addressing the theory Négritude is inevitable. Négritude, theorized by Léopold Sédar Senghor, is "the total-sum of the cultural values and expressions of the Black world" and, arguably, the theory that conceptualizes the connection of Black persons who share the same Black cultural citizenship (as cited in Mazama & Asante 2005, 369). Or as scholar Alpha I. Sow puts it, "African peoples share a rich common cultural heritage, … they are linked by a sense of solidarity shaped by the experience of anti-colonial struggle, and … they have a common determination to unite against the eve-present threat of imperialism (despite their recently acquired political independence, which has been consolidated)" (Sow 1970,16).

Haitian Poet René Depestre offers an overview of the existing literature on Négritude:

"In Roumain and his best disciples, Negritude was a concept of national liberation, an enlightening, unifying concept, a sort of new ideological 'maroonism', which, while subscribing to Marxism, added the charm of our Caribbean peculiarities to the latter's wealth. In Franz Fanon, Negritude took the twofold character of alienation among the oppressed Black peoples into consideration, and presented itself as the emotional reaction of the exploited and humiliated Black man. With Aimé Césaire, the father of this concept, which he defended and made famous throughout a long and exemplary series of writings, Negritude was above all a concrete realization of being oppressed (as it was too with Guillón, Fanon, Roumain, Damas and others), that is to say a deeply emotional quest for identity in the Black man degraded by centuries of scorn and slavery" (Depestre 1970, 35).

Black cultural citizenship and Négritude have additionally been discussed in the context of Second World Black and African Festival of Arts and Culture (FESTAC) in 1977 by Andrew Apter. FESTAC 1977 was a Festival in Nigeria that aimed to celebrate and draw visibility to Black Africans. However, tensions arose, as participants did not want Arabs from the Maghreb countries to participate in the festival, despite the fact that, geographically, the Maghreb region is part of northern Africa. The festival ultimately drew questions regarding what Black identity consists of and whom Black identity belongs to, a discussion which needs to be continued (Apter 2015).

Scholar Holly Flint takes a different approach by analyzing Toni Morrison's *Paradise* through the lens of Black cultural citizenship, concluding that even Black cultural citizenship itself can be denied and force Black people to create an even more distinct form of citizenship. She writes, "U.S. imperialism denies the legitimacy of Black cultural citizenship on the national level and then convinces the residents of Ruby to build their own practices of citizenship upon the same narrative forms that undermine their legitimacy" (605).

In the context of Brazil, the struggle of Black people to attain equal treatment by society and the state has been analyzed by Abdias do Nascimento in his essay, "The Cult of Whiteness" (2004, 37), in which he argues that the whitening of the Black identity lies at the center of the issue. The book *Negras in Brazil: Re-envisioning Black Women, Citizenship and the Politics of Identity* by Caldwell elaborates on this concern through an intersectional lense by providing an analysis of Afro-Brazilian women's interviews (2007). Caldwell describes how the participants speech "underscores the cultural dimensions of citizenship in Brazil and points to the lack of recognition, respect, and value accorded to Afro-Brazilian women. The order in which she uses these terms also suggests a chain of relationships that connect Black women's social invisibility to their struggles for full citizenship" (2007, 1).

The work sheds light on Afro-Brazilian women's harsh realities of accessing citizenship, but it also shows how this commonality brings them together. Caldwell further explores how these women navigate in the white-dominated Brazilian society by asserting "[h]ow Afro-Brazilian women's participation in antiracist and feminist activism has sought to redefine formal citizenship rights. It also examines how the citizenship experiences of activist and non-activist Afro-Brazilian women are revealed in everyday social relations. Although Black women are legal citizens of the Brazilian nation, practices of social, economic, and political disenfranchisement have rendered many of them de facto non-citizens" (2). She then contextualizes citizenship in Brazil's military dictatorship. Remarkably, Caldwell does not link her studies specifically to Black cultural citizenship, but rather to cultural citizenship. It is important to note however, that in light of the recent politically motivated execution of Black Brazilian activist Marielle Franco, whose work was centered on struggling "for inclusive citizenship and democracy within the context of increasing authoritarianism", the importance and necessity of investigating Black cultural citizenship is highlighted and pressing (Caldwell et al. 2018).

In sum, the existing literature on and around the topic of Black cultural citizenship has been studied in different historical, contemporary and geographical contexts. Due to the work of Rosaldo and Silvestrini, it is evident that the concept of cultural citizenship attains to marginalized people in societies. Nascimento in particular studied Black cultural citizenship and Caldwell positions this phenomenon in the context of the military dictatorship. Notably, key literature does not further inquire how the construction of a Black cultural citizenship within white spaces allows for liberty and agency that the members of the community are seeking.

Research Question and Hypothesis and Methodology

This paper aims to contribute to the existing literature by gaining insight into the relationship between Black cultural citizenship and the use of white spaces such as the Goethe-Institut in Salvador da Bahia, Brazil. Hence, this paper's research question is how Black cultural citizenship is linked to the presence of Black female artists at the Goethe-Institut Salvador-Bahia. The hypothesis to be formulated to this question is that the institute uses its privileges to allow Black citizens to construct their context specific Black cultural citizenship.

As this study is interested in the experiences of Black women at the Goethe-Institut Salvador-Bahia, five female artists were interviewed for this research. They have either been residents at the institute or have worked with one of the residents. As participants were specifically chosen based on their profession, gender and race it is crucial to mention the issue of the hypervisibility of Black women's bodies and the invisibility of their voices that is also evident in academic research. Interview participant Lucia Nhamo states and criticizes this methodology as she says that:

"(…) I think it is a shame when people keep expecting to pigeonhole your work, without any regard to the plethora of other contexts and experiences that you bring to the table. The scope of my experience in the Brazilian context cannot be pigeonholed by measuring it solely through the lens of race and gender. I rarely encounter white male artists, for example, being asked to consider 'issues such as cultural and racial identity and power relations?' Yet, they are very part of these entire systems and legacies. But somehow, they have the privilege of just being considered as unique individuals" (Lucia Nhamo 2017).

The methodology of asking participants questions concerning racial identity and gender was carefully selected in order to gain insight on the thematic. By picking this specific identity intersection, this paper aims to highlight the strong voices and experiences of these Black women, who are highly underrepresented in academia (Mowatt et al 2013, 650). As "white male artists" have the privilege to be heard, and due to racial factors that ensure that they are largely overrepresented in the recognized art scene, this paper chooses to focus on this specific underrepresented demographic group.

Ultimately, the purpose of this study is to shed light on possible forms of resistance to a world that encounters Black people continuously with anti-Black racism. Furthermore, this paper aims to examine the transcontinental connection amongst people who identify and are identified as Black and to assess strategies on if and how white spaces can be used in order to resist. It is important to note, however, that the interviews and data gathered do not speak on an overall experience of Black female artists but rather picture the reality of a few.

In order to assess the questions and hypothesis, firstly the artists will be shortly introduced. Then, the collected data will be analyzed firstly by focusing on the Goethe-Institut as a place of (none)-Black resistance by putting it into the context of contemporary history. Thirdly, there will be an analysis of the links between Black cultural citizenship and the artists. Lastly, conclusions will be drawn and limitations and remarks will be mentioned.

The Artists

As this study uses the experiences of artists as the main primary source, this section will briefly introduce the interviewees.

Carol Barreto (37) is a fashion designer, academic and activist. She was born in Santo Amaro (Bahia), Brazil, and has been living in Salvador for the past years. Since 2011, she regularly collaborates with the Goethe-Institut. With her work, Barreto pursues to break hierarchical, patronizing and anti-Black racist structures by including women in her creative projects who are socially disadvantaged.

For example, she works with women from marginalized quilombo[4] communities. By including these women, not only in the manufacturing process but also in the creative process, Barreto wants to break the image of the "untouchable intellectual designer" as she says (Barreto 2018). Furthermore, she uses her PhD program to explore how fashion can be used as a tool of activism. Barreto is part of the Black women's collective Fuxicos Futuros[5], which occupies space at the Goethe-Institut. In November 2017, she collaborated in and moderated the encounter "Forum Mercado Black" at the ICBA between three Black female fashion designers, namely Adama Paris, a Black Senegalese Fashion designer, Goya Lopes, an Afro-Brazilian Fashion designer, and herself at the Goethe-Institut.

Adama Paris (40) is a businesswoman and fashion designer from Dakar, Senegal. She is the creator of the *Black Fashion Week*, which draws awareness to "Black culture" (Paris 2017). The Goethe-Institute describes her as "a fashion activist who wants to situate fashion made in Africa on the fashion world map and moreover seeks to give exposure to women of color in the industry by fighting the existing discrimination and lack of opportunity" (Goethe n.d.). In 2017, Paris came to Salvador for a two-week residency during which she participated in "Forum Mercado Black" and additionally exposed her newest collection in the artistic gallery of the institute.

Lucia Nhamo was a Vila Sul resident in 2016. She is a visual artist, born and raised in Zimbabwe and currently living in South Africa. Her work "explores counter-narratives and power relations through performance, animation, video, printmaking and sculpture" (Goethe.de). During her stay, she had a joint project with Michelle Matiuzzi.

Michelle Mattiuzzi (37), born in São Paulo, has been living in Salvador da Bahia for the past years. Mattuzzi considers herself an ex-woman. Her work include performances in which she uses her body to experience pain and trauma tied to the memory of slavery and colonialism. Mattiuzzi says that she can only exist in and through her art, as it is the only space where she can be, due to the peculiar situation she finds herself in society (Matiuzzi 2018).

Laís Machado (27) is a performance artist and forms part of the Fuxicos Futuros collective. Her performances explore womanhood, Blackness, and the power of speech (Machado 2018). Her most important performance is "Obsessiva Dantesca" which she has also presented in FIAC[6] 2016. The performance consists of Machado holding monologues during while the audience has the opportunity to make her drink as much alcohol as they want. Her art is aimed to give an insight into how society treats Black women and vice versa (Machado 2018).

The Goethe-Institut as a Space of (Non)-Black Resistance

It is imperative to analyze the ICBA's history in Salvador to better understand its contemporary role in constructing Black cultural citizenship. The residency program Vila Sul forms part of the initiative *Episodes of the South*, which was developed by the Goethe-Institut for the subregion of South America. The institute describes the initiative as follows: "[t]he project [*Episodes of the South*] offers debates, research, exchange programs, and artistic and academic works over a period of three years. Each episode has its own format, is devoted to a concrete question and is connected to other episodes. With *Episodes of the South*, the Goethe-Institut dares to suggest new points of view and ways of thinking Germany, Europe and the world – even though or especially because those points of view are still so little known" (Goethe-Institut Brasilien 2015). The "main feature of the *Residence Vila Sul"* is depicted as "the exchange, not only among the artists, but also with the local population, allowing for continuous dialogue" (Goethe-Institut Salvador n.d.).

The importance of Salvador da Bahia's historicity and its societal and cultural meaning in the context of residencies is highlighted as the authors stress that "[t]he city of Salvador is symbolic of the overall scope of the project *Episodes of the South*: it was Brazil's first capital, it maintains living traces of its own history and is the city with the largest Black population outside of Africa" (Goethe-Institut Salvador n.d.). This suggests the general interest towards the topics of Blackness.

The main purpose of Vila Sul's international artists interacting with Salvador's population to allow "for continuous dialogue" was already pursued during the Brazilian military dictatorship in the 60's and 70's (the institute was established in 1962). Despite repressive politics limiting the freedom of expression during the dictatorship, the ICBA continued its cultural program whereas many other institutions closed their doors (Barreto 2018). The task of the ICBA during this specific period was to "convey a picture of the contemporary unbearable Brazilian reality. On the other hand, out of principle as well as in praxis, the ICBA did not interfere in internal Brazilian politics as it was its' primary destiny to support and assist intellectual and artistic creativity - free from censorship and without any preconceptions. And this is how an enclave of relative freedom formed at the Corredor da Victória[7] in these dark times of our history that offered intellectuals and creatives, lovers of arts and of free thinking, critics and avant-gardes a space" (Brichta 2012, 33; translated by the author). The importance of the institute's role described by Brichta translates until today and became evident in October 2017 during the "scandal" of the artistic performance "La Bête" performed by Wagner Schwartz at the theatre of the Goethe-Institut/ICBA and other cultural organizations. The performance consists of the artist manipulating "a plastic replica of a sculpture from the series *Bichos* (*Creatures,* 1960), by Brazilian artist Lygia Clark. The object [Wagner Schwartz] allows the handling of the different parts of its body through its hinges.

The public will be invited to participate" (Wagner Schwartz n.d.). During one of the performances, a four-year-old child touched the foot of naked Schwartz (Do Rosario 2017). In an aftermath, the artist and the spaces, promoting and supporting the performances, were nationwide accused of pedophilia, especially from evangelist conservative right wing politicians. On the social media platform Facebook, the GISB was harshly criticized in comments and significantly down rated (Goethe Bahia 2017). In a remarkable counteraction, hundreds of Facebook users vocalized their support, many pointing out the importance of the ICBA during the military dictatorship. For example:

"ICBA: open space, anti-authoritarian; already during the leading years of the dictatorship - today they uphold their position. An oasis for free existences. Long Life"[8] (Orlando Pinha 2017).

"The old ICBA, in times of the dictatorship, was a space where manifestations of vanguards took place. Where culture was respected – in all its languages - in a freeing manner"[9] (Renato Dantas).

"A potent space of production and cultural resistance. It bravely survived the military dictatorship, and is about to overcome the ignoble fundamentalist dictatorship that tries to install in Brazil. My support and solidarity to the Goethe-Institute" [10](Chico Assis 2017).

"A place that vibrates art and diversity. Historically, a place of resistance"[11] (Vanis Dias).

"Absolute support to the Goethe-Institut, never again censorship! For the return of democracy"[12] (Iara Sydenstricker 2017).

These comments support the argument of the importance of the history of the ICBA as a place of resistance and the long-lasting impact it had with its open and welcoming posture on the Salvadorian society. Even though there are no specific comments on Black resistance on these Facebook posts, in her interview Carol Barreto refers to the institute being a place of Black resistance today due to its actions during the dictatorship. This leads to the suggestion that the position the ICBA acquired during the repressive era might also affect today's usage of ICBA space by Black artists and groups. Barreto recounts a situation with a member of Fuxicos Futuros, who was questioned on the contradiction of the Black women's group using this particular white space during an event: "We are confronted with these challenges [incidences of microaggressions] and we generally deconstruct them with a conversation as a starting point. […] The moment that a person asked [a member of the collective], she remembered the epoch of the military dictatorship, when Black women were organizing themselves and many houses closed their doors. This one here was an institution that opened for the Black women to build their movement. So we need to think about the past in order to understand the present" (Barreto 2018).[13]

Nonetheless, Barreto weighs in by stating, "[T]he best would be that we are in completely Black spaces because one thing strengthens the other. This however, does not exclude the necessity and the possibility of experimenting with and using this [ICBA] space. And being an ally to this space"[14] (Barreto 2018). Barreto as well as Laís Machado point out that even though they are aware working within a white space, they feel comfortable with it, as the GISB does impose notions of limiting their artistic and intellectual freedom when it comes to their work (Barreto and Machado 2018). Matiuzzi contradicts Barreto and Machado by insinuating that in theory she knows that she is not wanted there as a Black person and that society leaves her with no choices than using this particular white space (Matiuzzi 2017). This partly highlights the unequal power structures between the ICBA and the Black female artist. The ICBA has the power to significantly shape the relationship, as a new German government could also mean a change in foreign policies that concern the Goethe-Institut. A positive or negative change in the alliance can also be brought from a personnel change of the institute's director. In fact, Barreto and Machado both particularly credit the new director, in office since 2016, for the advancement of their alliance (Barreto 2018, Machado 2018). This dependence, mentioned by Matiuzzi, is also reflected by Lucia Nhamo's statement, who writes "that as an artist, Goethe remains one of the key institutions promoting and advancing the creation and exhibition of art in the Global South where there isn't always as much institutional support from the state, for example." (Nhamo 2018).

The idea of using white spaces in order to bring forward one's own agenda and to revolt against existing structures is in line with how Adama Paris views using the space as a Black woman. She states that "[m]y fight is not against whites so I do not have any problem working with any other race. My fight is not about race but about culture. So I do not care who race help me do it I just want to be a voice for the Black experience and the Black fashion which I think is not visible in the fashion Industry. I am just doing it as a Black woman and as an African woman. And maybe if I were white I would be doing it as well. Because, as I say, it is not about color. So I do not have any problem whatsoever being helped or being part of a white people who can understand my fight or just my work actually, as a Black woman." She elaborates to say that she "The people I work with I want them to have the same vision" (Adama Paris 2017).

Interestingly, Michelle Matiuzzi denies talking about how and why she uses a space charged with white privileges. This is because she is not willing to discuss any discrepancy that her presence in white spaces might bring, as Matiuzzi states she has no other possibilities due to the conditions that society puts her in as a Black person.

It can be summarized that due to the role the GISB took during the military dictatorship, it still upholds a position as standing in for equal and freeing rights and furthermore giving a platform to minority groups, which makes the institute a trustworthy ally for Black women, particularly in the context of Salvador. Due to its position and its interest in contributing to a South-South dialogue, it connects Black female artists from different backgrounds.

This supports an exchange and additionally fosters the understanding among the women involved that their struggle is nothing singular but rather a phenomenon that can be observed in different localities with similar structures. As pointed out by Barreto and Machado, they can still feel comfortable in this space because the institute is not demanding or intervening in their work. However, it is important to keep in mind that the power between artists and institute is distributed unequally, due to the resources GI's resources and prestige. Hence, it seems that Black women using the space in order to discuss and debate topics of Black resistance should only be a temporary solution as otherwise they will never be in the position of changing power dynamics.

Transcending Citizenships: Black Cultural Citizenship

As demonstrated, the ICBA plays an important part in bringing together Black artists from different places. How can these women identify with one another, despite being and coming from different places? The event *Forum Mercado Black* demonstrates that both Barretto and Paris are aware of the importance of hearing and listening to the perspectives of persons who find themselves in similar structures, even though the circumstances may vary. Barreto explains:

"What unites us is exactly this: being Black women. I have been in Angola, NYC at last: in all of the places that I have been to, it is it this what is surprising me. How is it that we have this kind of connection independent from our reason? What are these similarities that connect us, independently from our home countries, from the realities that we grew up in? What is it that we feel like allies, that we are allies and that this alliance exists? I feel exactly this. The slave history, here in Brazil, deleted all of our history. We do not know anymore where we come from … The things that we know; we know them through afro religions… Therefore, my collection ASÉ is a homage to these Black women in afro religions. And this is the collection that went on for one year. No collection that I did ever lasted for such a long time. Therefore, this collection has a force, which lies in the force of the many women. Not only in the ones who sowed … But through the various women who feel represented through what is present in certain pieces or images of the collection. So I stopped thinking about it. I know that this is it! When I get to Senegal, even though it is a Muslim country… there is something about Négritude that exists in the touch that I have never encountered in another space" (Carol Barreto 2018)[15].

Barreto describes Négritude as something that is essential to Black people and as it has been understood by Senghor. In addition, she adds a further layer, as what speaks to her in the "touch" is not only Blackness, but also the particularity of being a Black woman. Relevantly, as Barreto says the word "touch", she touched the author's arm for a few seconds, who also identifies as a Black woman, evoking that she refers to this touch being literally as well as metaphorically. Barreto elaborates to say that:

> "… we are talking about a feminist and anti-racist battle. *What unites us is that we are inferior to whites* and *to men*" (Carol Barreto 2018 as translated by the author).

With her responses Barreto addresses all three topics that were outlined as subtopics of Black cultural citizenship in the literature review, namely: the lack of access to citizenship, cultural citizenship and Négritude. Citizenship is reflected in the "inferiority to whites and to men". Consequently, there is a need of unification that "unites" and allows new cultural practices to emerge for example feminism or anti-racist battles. And lastly, in regards to the "touch of Négritude", Barreto does not only recognize a common struggle between Blacks from different places such as from Africa and from Europe. By pointing out that not all Blacks "are our sisters" and linking it to the "feminist and anti-racist battle", she narrows down who is part of the Black cultural citizenship that she belongs to - precisely, Black women who are in the feminist and anti-racist battle. Her understanding of Négritude seems to be similar to how Sow has described it; nonetheless, she makes it more specific to her own living circumstances. Moreover, she is arguably referring to a feminist Négritude theory that finds its origins in the denied access to citizenship by the Brazilian white-dominated society.

Another factor standing out is the fact that she stresses that it is the "battle" which unites them, which suggests that in addition to womanhood and Blackness, what unites them is activism and artistry through which they advocate for their causes.

Laís Machado interprets her presence at the Goethe-Institut as an act of occupation (Machado 2018). She says that she does not feel uncomfortable at the institution due to the presence of the 15 other Black women of Fuxicos Futuros. The very formation of the collective is a demonstration of how the ICBA allows a Black cultural citizenship to emerge. According to Machado, the collective was formed as a consequence of Grada Kilomba's residency in 2016. The main purpose was to give Black people of the Salvadorian art scene a voice by giving them the space to regularly meet and hold events. It then became more narrowed as the collective decided to focus on women because "[t]he Salvadorian cultural scene is a lot more open to the topic of queerness than to [Black] women. […]

For example, in the group all women are lesbians or bisexual which is an excluded group in this city" (Machado 2018). They belong to a "certain political community" (as discussed by Pawley) that despite representing the statistical majority in Brazil has no political *power*.

It is this restricted power that holds Black female artists back in several domains, whether in the art scene or in politics and makes a specific Black cultural citizenship necessary. Machado describes a situation reflecting the possible friction and tensions that can emerge when Black groups make use of politically and culturally white-dominated structures and spaces. The tension arose due to different notions of leadership between the ICBA and Fuxicos Futuros. The latter was given the space and resources that allowed them to form and arguably find legitimacy in their Black Cultural Citizenship, however, it found itself limited because the Goethe-Institut is coined by its own culture (in this case of leadership), which was not compatible with the newly formed. The different notions were inherently incompatible because the power structures and culture on which institutions like the Goethe-Institut stand are the very reason why Black people experience a lack of citizenship.

Conclusions and Limitations

In order to understand the connection between Black cultural citizenship and the work of the Black female artists (residents) at the Goethe-Institut Salvador-Bahia, this research used interviews to investigate two important factors and angles. First, the research looked at the history of the Goethe-Institut as an institution that gives space to resistance to dominating power structures (the military and a white-dominated society). Second, it assessed whether or not there were aspects of Black cultural citizenship that linked the different artists themselves. Based on the research conducted, a couple of critical conclusions can be drawn. First, the importance of the institute's role during the Brazilian military dictatorship from 1964 until 1985. By keeping its doors open, the Goethe-Institut allowed marginalized individuals to use the space. In terms of contemporary politics, this is one of the main reasons why Black artists trust the ICBA and consider it a safe work space. Second, this study proves that there are limitations to Black cultural citizenship. The concept is simplified and lacks to address the nuances that bind people beyond Blackness, such as the intersection of Blackness and womanhood. Therefore, because various forms and intersections of oppression of Black people exist, Négritude, as the foundation of Black cultural citizenship, needs to be revisited. It is also recommendable to further contextualize the relationship of Black cultural citizenship to Black people in the global South and North, in order to shed light on additional factors that might create a sense of belonging among those people.

In understanding the role of white institutions in support of Black resistance, further research also needs to be conducted from a sociolinguistic perspective. Given Brazil's history, including the forceful implementation of a European language, Portuguese, and its resulting eradication of African and indigenous Brazilian languages, what position does the Goethe-Institut take in Brazilian society by teaching and promoting the German language? How does that affect the remembrance of European imperialism? How does it influence Black people's identity politics today? Most relevantly and closely linked to the conducted research, how does it affect the manifestation of Black resistance groups in white spaces?

Hence, this paper suggests the need to conduct research on alternative ways to query topics as presented without tapping into the hypervisibility that Black women often experience.

Recommendation

Based on the latter conclusions, it is not recommendable for Black artists and collectives to only claim and enter new spaces in using white institutional spaces. It is undeniable that the presence of Black people in white space is a form of resisting white oppressive power structures. However, in the long run, there is the need to build Black institutions, by and for Black people rather than contributing to the existing unequal power structures. This is important because predominantly white and white-dominated societies and institutions, such as the German society and the German state and thus also the Goethe-Institut, are too comfortable to *sacrifice their privileges* for the utmost benefit of Black artists, Black citizens, and beyond. Being *uncomfortable* would require more work; being uncomfortable could potentially affect actual societal power structures, and ultimately contribute to eliminate the need for Black cultural citizenship altogether. However, it is, arguably, much easier for white-dominated societies and institutions to remain comfortable, to maintain the status quo, to (whether consciously or subconsciously) maintain oppressive actions and behaviors, which ultimately limit Black people. The work of the Goethe-Institut is the exemplification of this. More precisely, it is comfortable for the German state to finance a cultural institution in an "underdeveloped" country like Brazil, where Germany has no colonial history, and claim to help make unheard voices of the historically marginalized heard, ultimately playing the role of the "white-liberal-savior." The German state and the political discourse within general German society find it uncomfortable, however, to resolve its own historical wrongdoings, such as paying reparations to the Ovahereos and Namas after the genocidal colonization of Namibia (1904-1907). Today, the Goethe-Institut is convinced and committed to support and advance Black individuals and communities with programs such as Vila Sul, but by continuing to perpetuate white, European focused conventions, it is actually continuing a narrative, which contributes to opiating the millions of Black citizens worldwide that are searching for ways to attain full citizenship.

Notes

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1.   For more information on the Black Panther's survival programs and structures please see "The Black Panther Party: Service to The People" by David Hillard (2008).

2.   In the following, the Goethe-Institut Salvador Bahia will be abbreviated with either GISB or ICBA.

3.   PoC: People of Color

4.   Quilombo: Historically, a community of freedom-seeking African/ Black people in a hidden place. Nowadays, some descendants still live in these communities, resisting white power structures.

5.   Fuxicos Futuros is a Black women's collective consisting of 15 members. The collective is partly the legacy of the residency of interdisciplinary artist and scholar Grada Kilomba in 2016. As of February 3, 2018, the Goethe-Institut Salvador-Bahia website describes Fuxicos Futuros in the following way "Promoting interlocutions between interested women in the topics of gender and racism Fuxicos Futuros: Conversations in the courtyard occupy the courtyard of the Goethe-Institut Salvador Bahia" (Translated by the author).

6.   Festival Internacional das Artes Cenicas.

7.   Corredor da Vitória is the street in which the Goethe-Institut is located. In Salvador, the street is known to be one of the most expensive and white ones.

8.   Quote as translated by the author. Retrieved from: [https://ptbr.facebook.com/pg/goethe.bahia/reviews/?ref=page_internal]. Accessed in: February 2018.

9.   Ibid.

10.   Ibid.

11.   Ibid.

12.   Ibid.

13.   Translated by the author.

14.   Translated by the author.

15.   Translated by the author.

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