

Preserving Image Heritage and Affective Memories: digitalizing dwellings of a Brazilian community

Miriam de Paiva Vieira, Department of Letter, Arts and Culture, Universidade Federal de São João del-Rei, Brazil

Abstract

A photo monocle collection, kept at the bottom of a dusty drawer of a dweller of the *Aglomerado da Serra*¹, mesmerized artist Guilherme Cunha back in 2015. The rescue of the negative photo archives from photographers João Mendes and Afonso Pimenta, who live and work in that urban non-planned settlement, triggered Cunha's curation for the project *Retratista do Morro*. With a Yashica Mat and a Kodak Instamatic, Mendes and Pimenta have registered photos for documents, portraits for school graduation, weddings, carnival, and even dead people. This kind of iconography may seem unconventional for museum curators, but they indeed transmediate an universe that the average Brazilian identifies with, as a sort of collective memory imaginary.

In times of smartphone selfies, what has the project *Retratistas do Morro* to do with the theme of this conference? To start with, the processes involved in the rescue and reproduction of the negatives which has used innovative digital methodology. Created by the team led by Cunha, the methodology of modular system, storage and distribution aims at dealing with image hypercomplexity in a way that it is neither only about the image nor only about memory, but about another symbolic entity coined as “imagememory” by the team. Besides, there has been unpredicted transmediation unfoldings of the project, such as a freestyle rap battle. For this talk, I will present how the “imagememory” digitalization methodology enabled the preservation of affective memories with focus on the photos which depict people in their non-planned dwellings at *Aglomerado da Serra*.

Keywords

Digital, Transmediation, “Imagememory”, *Retratistas do Morro*

¹ The largest slum in Belo Horizonte, capital city of state of Minas Gerais, Brazil, *Aglomerado da Serra* emerged in the end of the 19th century.

References

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Bio

Miriam de Paiva Vieira is a professor at Universidade Federal de São João del-Rei, Brazil. Researcher of the National Council for Scientific and Technological Development (CNPq). Her research interests are comparative literature, architecture, ekphrasis, and intermediality. Board member of the International Society for Intermedial Studies. Member of IAWIS/AIERTI and CRIalt. She belongs to the research groups Grupo Intermídia and Leitura Comparada das Mídias, and is currently the coordinator of Anpoll’s GT: Intermidialidade. Her most recent publication is the coediting, with Jørgen Bruhn and Asun Azcarate, of *The Palgrave Handbook of Intermediality*.

ORCID-ID/Websites

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-9851-0217>

Google Scholar: <https://scholar.google.com/citations?user=9P6LTrgAAAAJ&hl=en&oi=sra>

Academia: <https://helder.academia.edu/MiriamVieira>