

Sons of the Fatherland: Brazilian Masculinities in *Tropa de Elite* and *Praia do Futuro*

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Abstract

The main objective of this article is to examine the different perspectives on Brazilian masculinities brought by *Tropa de Elite* / *Tropa de Elite 2* and *Praia do Futuro* by the investigation of the main characters in both movies, both played by Wagner Moura: Roberto Nascimento and Donato. We argue that the masculinities in both movies are reflections of phenomena which are produced at the institutional life of Brazilian state.

The Brazilian-German drama movie *Praia do Futuro*, which literally means *Beach of the Future*, directed by Berlin-based Brazilian director Karim Aïnouz, and released in Brazil in May 2014, tells the story of the Brazilian lifeguard Donato (played by Brazilian actor Wagner Moura). Shortly after facing the failure of an attempt to rescue a drowning man, Donato meets the German motocross pilot Konrad (interpreted by German actor Clemens Schick), a friend of the victim. Konrad and Donato begin a hot love affair in the wake of the failed attempt, while they search for the drowned man in the city of Fortaleza, the capital of Brazilian state of Ceará. Their physical attraction turns into a deeper emotional bond. In an attempt to escape from his present self after the failed attempts to find the drowned man, Donato decides to begin a new life in the gray and misty city of Berlin, which contrasts with the warm and sandy beach at home, but is a place where he can try to reinvent himself. Some years later, Donato is confronted with his past in Berlin when his younger brother Ayrton (interpreted by Brazilian actor Jesuita Barbosa as a young Ayrton) appears at his door furious and wanting to know why Donato left him and his family in Brazil without saying a word. When he was younger, Ayrton used to admire Donato as a hero because of his courage in risking his own life to save people from drowning. Years later, Ayrton thinks his brother was a coward for leaving his family behind to live a romantic relationship with another man in Germany.

Because of the scenes of male nudity and gay sex between the characters of Moura and Schick, many viewers of *Praia do Futuro* left Brazilian movie theaters half way through the film. In the light of this conservative reaction, some movie theater managers in Brazil took measures to prevent customers from requesting a refund of the ticket price. Some theaters even stamped the tickets warning viewers of the homosexual scenes in the movie. Many viewers were disappointed because they expected to see Moura interpreting a new version of the character Roberto Nascimento which he had played in two other movies: The 2007 movie *Tropa de Elite* (*Elite Squad*) and its 2010 sequel, *Tropa de Elite 2: o inimigo agora é outro* (*Elite Squad: The Enemy Within*), both directed by Brazilian director José Padilha. The two movies were outstanding commercial successes and became cultural a phenomenon in Brazil. *Tropa de Elite 2* is the most successful movie of all times in Brazil, with an audience of almost 12 million viewers.

Tropa de Elite is a crime film in which Nascimento is a captain of the Special Police Operations Squad of the Rio de Janeiro Military Police (BOPE, its acronym in Portuguese), analogous to the U.S. SWAT teams. The movie was based on the book *Elite da Tropa* (*Elite Squad*), written by former BOPE policemen André Batista and Rodrigo Pimentel, and sociologist and anthropologist Luiz Eduardo Soares, which provided a semi-fictional account of the daily routine of the BOPE as well as some historical events based on the experiences of the BOPE policemen. In the movie, Nascimento has to find a substitute for his occupation because his wife is pregnant and he intends to quit his command and become a trainer of new recruits. He also tries to take down drug dealers and criminals in a dangerous slum near the place where Pope John Paul II intends to be lodged during his 1997 visit to Rio de Janeiro. Meanwhile, the two idealistic friends, Neto (interpreted by actor Caio Junqueira) and Matias (played by actor André Ramiro), join the Military Police force expecting to become honest policemen and fight the criminals, but they face a reality characterized by corruption, incompetence and excessive bureaucracy in the Military

Police. The lives of Nascimento, Neto and Matias are intertwined through the next months, first in the tough training period and then in action against drug dealers. When the film was released, it caused a major controversy for its portrayal of Nascimento's unpunished police brutality in Rio de Janeiro's slums, and was highly criticized for glamourizing police violence. However, the movie became one of the most popular Brazilian movies in history and its sequel holds industry records in Brazil for ticket sales and gross revenue.

In the sequel, after a prison riot, Nascimento, now a high ranking security officer in Rio de Janeiro, is swept into a political dispute that involves government officials and paramilitary groups. Nascimento and the BOPE expel the drug dealers from several slums, but another enemy arises: The militia led by Major Rocha (interpreted by Brazilian actor Sandro Rocha) and supported by the Governor, the Secretary of Security and politicians interested in votes. As the main character of both movies, Nascimento became a popular icon in Brazil. Originally conceived to criticize the violent actions of policemen and be an antihero, the character played by Moura in both movies is still seen as a hero by most viewers of the movies all over Brazilian territory. In many states where the movie was released, *Tropa de Elite* was labeled as a neo-Nazi movie because it seemed to justify human rights abuses on the low income sectors. However, in Brazil, *Padilha* was acclaimed mostly by conservative and right-wing groups as well as citizens who criticized corruption in the political system and in Brazilian police.

The arguments of *Praia do Futuro* and *Tropa de Elite / Tropa de Elite 2* are very different, but many viewers in the audience created misperceptions and wrong expectations of continuity of the characteristics of the main character in *Praia do Futuro* played by Moura in *Tropa de Elite / Tropa de Elite 2*. Among the multiple differences between Donato and Nascimento, it is possible to highlight the incorporation of different perspectives on Brazilian masculinity by the two characters, which possibly was the main reason for the disappointment for many viewers of *Praia do Futuro*. The main objective of this article is to examine the different perspectives on Brazilian masculinities depicted in *Tropa de Elite / Tropa de Elite 2* and *Praia do Futuro* by the investigation of the main characters in both movies, both played by Wagner Moura: Roberto Nascimento and Donato. We argue that the masculinities in both movies are reflections of phenomena which are produced at the institutional life of the Brazilian state. The individuals and the state itself are constructed by gender relations through inequality; they are not homogenous and are powerful determinants of social life, even though inequality is not sustained by force alone. In light of the possibility of the construction of multiple masculinities, we argue that Nascimento incorporates a Brazilian 'patriotic masculinity' associated with strength, brutality and aggressive heterosexuality. His masculinity shows elements of the 'citizen-soldier' determined to fight and sacrifice himself for the political community in which he is simply a member, but also relies on excessive physical violence against outlaws and corrupt leaders – more in the first movie than in the sequel – as a way to preserve the stability, integrity and cohesion of the state and the values of his nation, including the patriarchal ones connected to bravery, courage and personal and national honor.

We also argue that the patriarchal institutions of the Brazilian state and nation are characterized as oppressive in *Praia do Futuro* because of the strengthened emphasis on compulsory heterosexuality on men by those institutions. Like Nascimento, Donato has a profession which represents courage and bravery in the political and social apparatus of the Brazilian state. However, Donato incorporates a Brazilian homosexual masculinity which is oppressed and must isolate itself from those patriarchal institutions in order to be reinvented freely. It also reinvents the notions of courage associated with the established patriarchal roles in Brazilian 'patriotic masculinity' and conceives 'courage' in a more individualistic way as the freedom to leave oppressive institutions behind and determine one's own future. The search for a new life in an unpredictable foreign land which is in constant change – where Donato is a foreigner and a stranger – is in opposition to the clearly oppressive fatherland where he was a subjugated 'citizen-soldier'. In the case of Nascimento, there was no clear separation between his public and private lives and his subjectivity did not represent a rupture with the oppressive masculine and heteronormative state. Instead, his subjectivity reaffirms the oppressive institutions of the state, and Nascimento works to preserve the integrity of the place where those institutions are established. On the other hand, Donato separates himself from the normative ideals in which the man's body must work to preserve the integrity and the stability of the Brazilian state.

Brazilian 'patriotic masculinity' in *Tropa de Elite* and '*Tropa de Elite 2*'

Mulvey (1975) argues that movies work with discourses that legitimize individual and private actions into social spaces. In this sense, the power of the movies is in the manifestation and realization of the unconscious structure that phallogocentric language has crystallized for human beings. The cultural industry reflects the dominant political logic as well as the desire of economic capital. Aesthetics and politics are inseparable from the dominant notions that consolidate social principles and values. In this sense, mainstream cinema is used by the patriarchal order to reinforce the social roles for women and men. Consequently, the imagery of the characters can not only deal with abstractions; it is built through 'real' characters with whom the viewer can identify. According to Mulvey, the whole structure of the movie is made for the viewer to behave as a voyeur and enter the character's lives in order to discover his/her normalizing life. Such imagery will create the ideal gender notions with which people identify

themselves in the matrix of patriarchal discourse, as can be seen in *Tropa de Elite* and its sequel.

There is a connection between manhood and nationhood in the construction of the 'patriotic masculinity' and the designation of gendered spaces in national politics, with an emphasis on force, toughness and aggressive heterosexuality as masculine traits. These links were defined in gendered processes in which masculinity was mobilized in multiple political, social and military projects that sought to build the modern nation and open the institutions of the state and public life to this collective entity. The citizens who loved their fatherland and demanded to be represented by the government and the evocation of the 'nation' as the only supreme source of political sovereignty were fundamental inventions in the rise of political modernity, as well as the rise of national armies and national police forces in order to guarantee the external and the internal security of the nation. The fight for the autonomy of the citizen, the people or the nation connected all these inventions, mobilizing masculinity in the process. Despite the fact that many men were excluded from the total appreciation of this autonomy, the ideological presence and the legal reality of political rights allowed the generalization of the notion of the 'citizen-soldier', a citizen determined to fight and sacrifice himself for the political community in which he is simply a member (DUDINK & HAGEMANN, 2004: 4-12). In the traditional imaginary of nationalism, men are considered responsible for protecting the community and the economy. The spaces for action of each person is defined through the notions of 'good' and 'bad' that constitute national morality. Nationalism is also based on the binary of heteronormative relationships. Heterosexuality produces the basis for male performance. In *Tropa de Elite*, Nascimento is one of the most iconic characters that represents normative heterosexuality, rationality, virility and violence. He is a man who 'makes things happen' and is significantly active – in contrast to female passivity –, constructing the fantasy of maximum male power. He controls the actions the same way he controls his duties. He becomes the ideal man for the Brazilian ultra-sexist society.

Unlike women conceived as 'sexual objects', the man that Nascimento represents in *Tropa de Elite* and its sequel has multiple social functions. He is the personification of heteronormative masculinity that controls morality. He is responsible for maintaining peace in his ex-wife's house and her new family after their divorce in the sequel. He is also capable of fighting corruption in the police force and the government, bringing progress to the city, and protecting the nation's values. Nascimento is the unstoppable myth that does not give up even in the face of the death of colleagues and threats to his child's life. He sustains faith in progress and bourgeois ideologies. *Tropa de Elite* and its sequel are examples of a new Brazilian cinema that triggers an aesthetic and emotional politics that reinforces the values of middle class bourgeois morality. Consumed by passive spectators, Nascimento is the ideal representation of a Brazilian man who is a triumphant, intelligent, virile and courageous agent, putting together all characteristics traditionally associated with men. Coinciding with the rise of Brazil in the global media space, he represents the local and historical change that can bring hope and trust in Brazil's growth. Although sometimes fragile – even making use of psychiatric treatment and medication –, Nascimento has attitudes which bring the possibility of modifying the narrative of what Brazil is. His sense of community is inseparable from an idealized subjectivity of a man who, like a "father figure", teaches us how to act and reaffirms the characteristics of men to redefine a new social moment in Brazil. His maleness and sexuality reaffirm 'moral' and 'civilized' society.

Nascimento's ideology and public actions seem to emerge from his supposedly 'natural' strong virility, and his power within the family to protect his pregnant wife and guarantee her obedience in the first movie is also a reference to his attitudes in all of the other social spheres. In the private sphere, Nascimento ensures the safety of his family, wife and son. In the public sphere, he fights against violence in Rio de Janeiro and implements the strongest male prerogatives. As a BOPE member, he invades favelas, conquers the space and seeks to control the population. Next to him, his wife is almost invisible. When she speaks, she is barely heard. Nascimento and his wife are no longer married in the second movie. As Butler (1998) would argue, he dramatizes and reproduces what he embodies. Nascimento's war is gendered, one that is a personal and public struggle against violence and corruption in a new representation of the ethical and social order.

The war against external enemies and the fight against outlaws inside the state (the enemies within) were conceived as complete expressions of the 'natural aggression' of men in the light of the urgency to protect the state and their 'women' against threats (HOOPER, 2001: 81-83). In the modern nation states, the armed forces and the police are conceived as 'schools for the nation' that create an ideal of national masculinity. Toughness and sacrifice are incorporated by men, and the hegemonic masculine ideals of courage and bravery become the content of the character of the 'citizen-soldier'. Personal and patriotic honor should be defended in order to avoid shame, and cultural and personal narratives are created to incorporate masculinities that are based on national force and determination (NYE, 2007: 421-423). Military service and men's participation in the police forces become rites of passage in which 'boys' become 'men' in the modern era. Their training involves the physical and social shaping of the men's bodies through discipline and the definition of their masculinity. The regulation of this body is strengthened in order to make it "economically efficient" and promote emotional self-control (HOOPER, 2001: 81-

83). The body and the accessories related to the military and the police spheres – such as uniforms conceived as extensions of the militarized body, and weapons that symbolize the real idealization of aggression – represent regions in which the masculine identities, especially the hegemonic ones, are practiced and constructed in those institutions (MANKAYI, 2008: 24). Terms such as honor, patriotism, bravery and duty are connected not only to masculinities but also to the nation. The cultures of masculinity at the level of everyday life articulate the demands of nationalism, especially its more militarist side. The fear of cowardliness and the desire for adventure push men to engage in patriotism and nationalism.

The nation state appropriates bodies as objects on which the desire for national unity and identity is brutally inscribed. The appropriation of the men's bodies is traditionally accompanied by hegemonic forms of masculinity that are constitutive of national identity. The rhetoric of constant war against internal and external threats validates men's bodies and their masculinities through the reference to the supreme sacrifice of men for their nation. Men's bodies that defend the nation, freedom and honor are codified to incorporate the fundamental masculine virtues of courage, discipline, competitiveness, virility, dignity and strength. The trained, powerful and invulnerable masculine body evokes ideals of sacrifice and, in times of crisis, this dominant masculinity can easily become a metaphor for the whole political community and can be expressed in idealized forms in order to establish the link between nationalist ideology, the men's bodies and the hegemonic forms of masculinity. The disciplinary power of the nation-states defines and categorizes men's bodies when it codifies some bodies and their masculinities as superior in relation to other bodies and masculinities (VÄYRYNEN, 2013: 137-140, 147).

The categorization of different masculinities can be seen in one of the first moments of *Tropa de Elite*, when Nascimento divides Rio de Janeiro's police officers into three categories: Those who are corrupt (the case of most policemen in the Military Police – PM – in Rio de Janeiro); those who nullify themselves (i.e., turn a blind eye to corruption, crime and administrative irregularities); and those who 'go to war', the BOPE policemen. The BOPE mission is to combat organized crime, capture heavily armed criminals, rescue hostages, contain riots, and serve in other high-risk operations which evoke the manly ideals of bravery, courage and strength. BOPE officers receive a differentiated training focused on urban warfare operations which includes a strict selection and training process. BOPE is an elite squad distinguished from other members of the military police corps and civilian police force because of its high technical qualifications and resistance to corruption. The professional and personal pride in belonging to an elite squad can act as an element that inhibits corruption, presented in the movie as a widespread problem in the 'conventional police' where 'weak' men can be easily corrupted. BOPE is presented by Nascimento as a force of war trained to preserve public safety, a battalion of urban warfare intended to intervene in areas where the police work of investigation and prevention, guided by democratic principles, hardly exists. If, on the one hand, the organizational culture of BOPE condemns corruption and cultivates a sense of honesty among its members, on the other hand it values the use of excessive violence as a means of police action, being one of the main aspects of BOPE policemen's masculinity. Based on that logic, BOPE members go to Rio de Janeiro's slums and promote the extermination of its opponents, criminals who are often called 'vagabundos' (vagrants), outlaws who threaten the stability of the state and the values that 'honored men' must have. Besides being valued to the point of being considered legitimate in the eyes of BOPE members, these truculent and arbitrary actions virtually face no internal or external institutional barriers. The pattern of violent actions affects not only the so-called 'vagabundos'; the victimization of BOPE members is high and innocent people are also affected, such as children who are victims of stray bullets or witnesses of police action who are eliminated. However, given the mission to exterminate outlaws, the other victims appear as 'collateral damage' in the fight against the main threats. The excessive use of force is validated through the dehumanization of the enemy, invariably a marginal individual that should be eliminated (NEME & CUBAS, 2006: 323-324).

The moral and tactical superiority of BOPE members is clearly opposed to the inefficient PM policemen. BOPE fights the drug dealers (who have guns and count on the blind eye of corrupt PM policemen) and the drug users. In this dynamic of violence, drug users are identified as middle and upper class students who, paradoxically, engage in social activities that aim to minimize social problems such as delinquency and criminality. Such problems, in the logic presented by Nascimento, are actually fed by the social agents – the final part of the drug economy. In the movie, there is an organic relationship between the middle class and drug trafficking. For Nascimento, drug dealers and users are equally dangerous to public order because, according to him, 'those who help drug dealers are complicit'. He seeks to overthrow the mask of the 'socially conscious' middle class which participates in NGOs seeking to have a social role, but actually contributes to criminality. According to Nascimento, the social action of the middle class is merely a form of cynicism (ANDRADE, 2008: 243-244). The masculinities of Nascimento and the BOPE policemen--characterized by honor and righteousness--are defined in opposition to the masculinities of drug dealers--connected to dishonor and crime--and drug users, which are unappreciated and connected to hypocrisy.

The BOPE's operation is in principle guided by the identification of potentially dangerous social types in dangerous areas. The consequence is the loss of constitutional rights that ensure democratic life and freedom of movement of those who inhabit the slums where the actions of BOPE occur (ANDRADE, 2008: 242). The people who live in the slums are not considered 'citizens' because their individual freedoms are frequently suspended in the name of the preservation of the security and integrity of the state. On the other hand, Nascimento and BOPE policemen incorporate the patriarchal values of the nation--bravery, courage and personal and national honor--and, in the words of Nascimento, 'go to slums to kill outlaws' who threaten the stability of the state. The BOPE policemen are determined to fight and sacrifice themselves for the political community to which they belong and rely on physical violence to bring back the state's integrity and cohesion. Those who threaten the stability of the state--the corrupt PM police officers, drug dealers and drug users from middle and upper classes--are conceived as inferior and marginal in relation to BOPE officers because they do not fit the patriarchal values of the nation, which, in Nascimento's vision, are incorporated by BOPE members. Drug trafficking and police corruption are elements opposed to the moral superiority of BOPE members. According to Nascimento, BOPE is an atypical group because its members do not share the 'vices' or the abandonment of public policies, like the rest of the police, which leads to an interdependent relationship between the corrupted part of PM and drug trafficking. BOPE is actually seen by Nascimento as a group of officials who stand out physically and mentally from the rest of the police in Rio de Janeiro. As Andrade (2008: 239-241) argues, this militaristic and repressive vision of what the public security organs should be results in an environment of war in which individual rights can be ignored in the name of the security of the state and the nation. It allows force to be used legitimately by the police to maintain order in the name of the state.

The actions and justifications by Nascimento seem to follow two paradigms of the typical state of exception: extending to the civil realm the powers that are the realm of military authority at times of war, and the suspension of constitutional norms that protect individual freedoms in the name of maintaining peace within the nation--in this case, to win the war against drug trafficking. By relying on this exclusionary logic, the function of BOPE, according to the vision of Nascimento, would be to kill those who are threats to the institutional power of the state. BOPE's targets are subjects who have been disenfranchised of their rights and citizenship. Actually the state of exception comes from concrete necessities created by gaps in the laws, but drug trafficking is not a gap in the laws. It is a punishable crime. Nevertheless, it is possible to think of a split between government and citizens in an informal state of exception established by a repressive official agency of the state-- in this case, BOPE--, in which the exception is taken as the rule. It is necessary to say that BOPE's violent actions can be seen as responses to the pressure from segments of society that see themselves as the main victims of crime. The systematic use of violence by police would be a way of seeking the recognition of segments whose safety and property should be protected. However, such use of violence becomes systemic, resulting in a set of unwritten laws governing police treatment of individuals considered to be a threat. These unwritten laws are respected regardless of the official laws and formal police functions. They do not originate from the actions of the police, but are reflections of the attitudes of higher institutions and the structure of power that was historically constructed and pragmatically manifested in actions and dealings with the population. This power structure, which distinguishes between 'respectful' and 'threatening' people, suppresses the danger posed by the threatening individuals through penalties and military responses. It does not allow mediation or the observance of human rights (ANDRADE, 2008: 247-250). However, individual rights can be suspended in the name of the stability of the political community where 'citizen-soldiers' live and for which they would give their lives, based on the masculine values of bravery and courage they have incorporated. It is possible to see that, for Nascimento in *Tropa de Elite*, there was no clear separation between his public and private lives, and his subjectivity did not represent a rupture with the state. His subjectivity reaffirms the institutions of the state, and Nascimento, like the other BOPE policemen, works to preserve the integrity of the place where those institutions are established.

In spite of the fact that BOPE seemed to be strong enough to use violence against poor populations, it was unable to resist the political use of the institution by the government and the political pressures that aim to generate personal benefits to authorities. In *Tropa de Elite 2*, drug dealers were expelled from their command at Rio de Janeiro's slums by corrupt PM policemen who eliminated the middlemen and replaced the missing state. A corrupt system is constructed through the cooperation between the leaders of the militias in the poor communities, the sensationalist press, and politicians associated with the militias. The great militia scheme, based on real examples of militias acting in Rio de Janeiro's slums, is the main threat Nascimento has to fight against this time, and now he also has to deal with dilemmas in his personal and professional life so that, instead of exhibiting only the patterns of truculent and violent masculinity of the first movie in which he puts himself as a 'citizen-soldier', Nascimento is now also more melancholic, sometimes feeling impotent in the light of his responsibilities as a father and the weight of being a public figure whose life and behavior are the focus of intense public interest and scrutiny. In order to fight the main threats, Nascimento understands that it is not possible to rely only on violence. Institutions of the state can sometimes be more rational and effective tools counteract the corruption within the state itself. In *Tropa de Elite 2*,

Nascimento's 'patriotic masculinity' is still associated with strength, brutality and aggressive heterosexuality, but it becomes more visible than in the first movie that it is not sustained by force alone. In the construction of the 'citizen-soldier' in the sequel, violence is gradually combined with rationality and the faith in the power of institutions to construct social order. A masculinity that is more balanced with technical and institutional knowledge is more visible in the main character of *Tropa de Elite 2*.

The warfare that Nascimento tried to protect in the past stimulate political initiatives and interests that oppose the values of the 'citizen-soldier' he defended first as a policeman and then as a high ranking security officer in Rio de Janeiro. Nascimento started to see himself as a part of the uncontrolled warfare and questions his role as an agent who constructs society. He even needs to take pills to survive the pressure he suffers. His job--which dignified him as an important element of the society and as a man--unveiled the opposite: He became an agent prepared to defend the structure of a corrupt and bloody power structure. He starts acting more wisely and questions the structure he used to protect, which is dominated by corrupt men who act in politics and the media, as well as the corrupt policemen who replaced drug dealers as the main power in the slums. A lawsuit is filed by Nascimento and Fraga (interpreted by actor Irandhir Santos), a representative who is a human rights activist with whom Nascimento used to diverge regarding the ways to deal with criminality and corruption in Rio de Janeiro. The lawsuit puts behind bars a great part of the corrupt policemen and politicians involved in criminal activities. Nascimento's social and personal passions intertwine: When he sees that his family is threatened by the corrupt people who work for the state, he starts acting radically against these people using the tools offered by the state itself, such as the rule of law. He overcomes his personal problems with Fraga--who has married Nascimento's ex-wife and used to defend 'the human rights of outlaws', according to Nascimento--and rationally plays the role of the 'citizen-soldier' based on the constitutional guarantees in a democratic republican society.

The oppressive fatherland and homosexual masculinity in *Praia do Futuro*

For McClintock (1995: 47), the constant efforts to control people's bodies and their sexualities were naturalized mainly with the support of Darwinism that organized cultures as global narratives managed by Europeans in the mid-nineteenth century. In a culture dominated by patriarchal power, every man seems to be constantly forced to prove his virility and demonstrate that he is not homosexual. He tries to keep self-control in public space and the domination of women's bodies. Even from a young age, as it is possible to see in Ayrton in *Praia do Futuro*, boys are taught to be strong and face their fears. If the traditional heterosexual male identity is public, being a gay man endangers not only man's private space, but his security, because this man turns out to be publicly persecuted, sometimes violently. The feeling is that the public domain must be occupied by ideal men who build their sexualities as competently as they govern the social space. Donato is a man in crisis, unable to rebuild his masculinity in the light of social and cultural pressures in a Fortaleza attached to the traditional values of the past regarding the construction of a traditional and heterosexual masculinity. Donato chooses to live in the protective shadow of Berlin where he disappears from his family instead of feeling 'wrong' and hiding his affections in Fortaleza.

The purpose of the couple in a nuclear family is to offer the bodies to produce children for the nation. The love of Donato and Konrad is condemned in Brazilian society, because, since both men are unable to have children, they cannot serve the political and economic order of Brazilian nation. The homosexual lovers are seen as immoral. Donato opts to escape to Berlin and leaves his family behind because his energy is no longer devoted to support the family. The family seems to be incompatible with his privacy, and erotic and sexual subjectivity. Supporting family and working for the nation demand a commitment to a traditional Brazilian masculinity that he can no longer have. Choosing to live his own desire meant to leave behind the social and symbolic space in which he lived before. His homosexual relationship with Konrad breaks up categorical and hierarchical fixed categories that polarize mental constructions in the Western culture such as order / disorder. Homosexuality is conceived in a Brazilian traditional masculinity as animalistic, irrational and wild. It is based on a passion that is not dedicated to the homeland and deviates from nationalist causes. Gay men would be unable to control their sexual passion. The stereotypes of minorities are defined by excessive lust, seen almost as moral deficiencies that go against all values and romantic behaviors defined by bourgeois morality. Homosexuals are to be ridiculed, not imitated.

Many men become soldiers, policemen, firefighters or lifeguards because of their family history and economic considerations. These activities provide access to important material resources to hegemonic masculinity, such as economic security and physically defined and capable bodies in the light of the intensive training men go through. Because identities and masculinities are constructed by the interaction between available material and symbolic resources, the state institutions in which these men work make some of these resources available for the construction of hegemonic masculinities. In the construction of these men's 'emotional maturity', the admission of emotional vulnerability is not tolerated in the face of its potential threat to the institutional morale. The body of the man is conceived as 'dry', 'clean' and 'stiff', but always subject to the contamination by the 'dirt' of women, whose bodies are treated as 'open', 'wild', 'promiscuous' and 'threatening' to the 'masculine integrity' because of the desire that it causes to the heterosexual male soldier. As such, physical violence against women becomes an integral part

of the constitution of the hegemonic model of masculinity in several states throughout history. In addition, 'men who do not fight' are devalued for not running a high risk of death or physical injury. For example, in several states, gay men were barred from military service or were limited to restricted roles based of ideologies of 'national security', in a context where the full rights of citizenship were conferred only to those participating in the defense of the state (HOOPER, 2001: 81-84).

The presence of gays in the military and police institutions is perceived by most conservative sectors as a threat to the effective individual and collective performance. In the view of such sectors, homosexuals would be targets of harassment by heterosexual officers and would not be respected if they were in command positions. Social prejudice supports this position: Under this perspective, the marginalization of homosexuals is due to the need of not 'offending' the population that sees homosexuality negatively. The resistance to a greater participation of homosexuals in the military and the police reflects the institutional privilege of men's heterosexuality in these institutions which support the 'traditional family' and the development of compulsory heterosexuality through force, sanctions and control of consciousness. The exclusion or marginalization of gay men in the context of consolidation of hegemonic masculinity in these institutions aims at the suppression of homoerotic elements in the bonds of friendship, camaraderie and solidarity among state officers and other highly sexualized factors of institutional life, especially in order to avoid disputes between internal units (BRITTON & WILLIAMS, 1995: 11-15).

In *Praia do Futuro*, Donato is willing to break physical and emotional boundaries to reinvent his life. His profession as a lifeguard indicates courage and heroism, notions that are compatible with the ideals of 'patriotic masculinity'. His heroic figure is underscored by his brother Ayrton, who calls him 'Aquaman'. The lifeguard is conceived by Ayrton as a hero who risks his life to save others. Donato spends a lot of time looking at the horizon, where the sea meets the sky, waiting for something to happen for him to intervene. While he watches and waits, he wonders what is on the other side of the horizon. Donato spent his life wondering how the other side would be. Driven by his desire and love for Konrad--not by self-control and rationality, which are elements valued in some notions of 'patriotic masculinity'--, Donato has the courage to cross the ocean and reinvent himself. However, as he is afraid to tell his family about his sexuality, he gradually breaks the emotional, professional and political bonds with his oppressive past. Donato shows strength and courage when he saves Konrad's life as a lifeguard who represents the state's obligation to save and protect the lives of people in its territory. However, he is also fragile, displaying hesitation and fear of being judged by his family and his co-workers because of his homosexuality. The patriarchal institutions and values of the Brazilian state and nation which are defended by Nascimento in *Tropa de Elite* and *Tropa de Elite 2* are characterized in *Praia do Futuro* as oppressive because of their strengthened emphasis on men's compulsory heterosexuality. Donato's masculinity needs isolation from the patriarchal institutions of the family--which takes the form of the heroic image Ayrton has about his brother--and the state--represented by his profession, which involves the notions of bravery and self-control--in order to be reinvented freely. This process of isolation from the family and the state also involves the reinvention of the notions of courage associated with the established patriarchal roles in Brazilian 'patriotic masculinity'. Donato understands 'courage' in a more individualistic way as the freedom to leave oppressive institutions behind and recreate his own life in a different place.

While Nascimento's subjectivity did not represent a rupture with the oppressive masculine and heteronormative state and a reaffirmation of its oppressive institutions, Donato separates himself from the normative ideals in which the man's body must work to preserve the integrity and the stability of the Brazilian state. Donato could not fully live his sexuality in *Praia do Futuro*. In exile, he could be himself, without the burden of being the lifeguard who served the state and the hero his brother imagined he was. He cut several ties and needed isolation to be able to start over in a city that was in the process of reinvention: Berlin, which brings together people from all over the world. Donato lives the freedom of being a foreigner and a stranger. Sexuality has an important role in his decisions: If he were not gay, probably he would not have left his fatherland. He comes from a generation and a social context where the recognition of homosexuality is still complicated. Donato is a character that does not tell the truth about himself all the time.

The rupture with the oppressive institutions of the family and the state is constructed in the movie through the relation of Donato's masculinity with two other masculinities: The masculinities of Konrad and Ayrton. Konrad loves speed and has been at war as a soldier, a character who ventures worldwide. Donato saved Konrad's life, but Konrad somehow also saved Donato's life: His love leads Donato to a foreign place and a new life. Konrad represents the notion of masculinity connected to adventure and risk brought by changes. He is the starter of Donato's rupture with the oppressive institutions of the family and the state in his fatherland. What fundamentally moves Konrad and inspires Donato is the desire to experience life to its fullest. Konrad is the vector and the vehicle of change, the catalyst of the main transformations in Donato's life as his object of love and desire. In spite of the bravery and the courage associated with Donato's profession in Brazil, fear was the dominant element of his

private life in *Praia do Futuro* because he was immersed in a conservative place where the risks and the dangers associated with changes were not welcome. Stability and integrity of the established institutions were valued. The courage to leave everything behind and build his own future with no previous references is at the heart of Donato's actions.

However, Donato suffers losses when he shows the courage to build his own life in a foreign land. His brother Ayrton--whose name is inspired by the F1 pilot Ayrton Senna--is an angry young rebel with a cause, which represents a young masculinity in search of answers to his questions from the past. Ayrton comes from a new generation which is different from the generation of his brother: For him, the fact that his brother hides, lies and goes away because of his sexuality does not make sense. Ayrton represents a more contemporary masculinity, with the anger and the desire to understand, to make sense of what seems not to make sense for him. Ayrton, who he previously saw his brother as a hero, now conceives him as a frightened, vulnerable and fragile gay man. At the end of the movie, Ayrton, who confronts Donato for leaving him behind, redeems his brother for what Ayrton used to consider his brother's unforgivable disappearance. Ayrton stops seeing Donato as a hero and sees him just as his brother. The three men in the movie have one thing in common: They are all moved by desire--desire for the other, desire for the risk of changes, desire for an answer, the desire to embrace a different life-- which represents a break with the notion of rational and self-controlled men such as some versions of the 'citizen-soldier'.

The search for a new life in the misty, dark and free Berlin--where Donato is a foreigner and a stranger--is in opposition to the sunny and oppressive Fortaleza, the city in which he lived in Brazil. In English, Fortaleza means 'fortress', which can be also understood in the movie as a prison in a clearly oppressive fatherland, where Donato used to see himself as a subjugated 'citizen-soldier'. The film is built around the contrast between *Praia do Futuro* and Berlin in color, light, temperature and soundscapes of these two geographies. There is a tension between the sensory elements, which translates the tense experiences of the characters: *Praia do Futuro*--which looks like a prison to Donato--is captured in shades of vibrant and saturated blues and greens, while Berlin--the place where he can look for his freedom--is filmed with less contrast to register the faded colors of winter light, which makes the characters points of vibrant colors in the monochrome landscape. Oppression is clear, while the search for freedom is misty and shadowy. *Praia do Futuro* (*Beach of the Future*) is a utopian name, but it carries the weight of being an unfulfilled promise. The design for the housing boom in *Praia do Futuro* in the 1970s never occurred. The air in the region is the second most salinized in the world. Because of this, everything there rusts. *Praia do Futuro* remains an empty place, with few buildings, which leaves the strange feeling that it is both a paradise and an apocalyptic landscape. Berlin is where Donato feels like a stranger, where he does not fully understand the codes. Berlin is also a city that has experienced pain, war and change. It is a city that carries the weight of the past, but points to the future. After the fall of the Berlin Wall, Berlin was a place of experimentation, but is at the same time full of voids and gaps. The film is also an intimate metaphor for the city-- a city that was separated for so many years and then reunited, as the story of the two brothers in the film. Berlin has memories of deconstruction and reconstruction, emptiness and the density of the memory. The song 'Heroes', written by David Bowie and Brian Eno in 1977 is featured in the movie. It is a product of Bowie's fertile 'Berlin period'. The life in Berlin was crystallized into a tale of two lovers who come together in the shadow of the Berlin wall.

Final considerations

When Donato finally meets his brother -- or is found by him -- in Berlin, what could be the transformative potential of this 'coming out' to family pressure? Before he left his homeland, Donato used to reiterate the powerful heteronormative patriarchal structure that stimulates prejudice against minorities. The end of *Praia do Futuro* could show the power of this 'coming out'. If spectators do not know how the story continues, perhaps this is precisely because new types of relationships or masculinities need to be designed, created or accepted in Brazil, going beyond the one defined by Nascimento in *Tropa de Elite* and its sequel. However, even though many have come 'out of the closet', there is ignorance ahead. How can a 'coming out' collectively change the structures of power and their effect on minorities? Perhaps it is still not possible to find power transformers in the movies (SEDGWICK, 2007: 33-36). The love story between two men in *Praia do Futuro* still seems more disturbing and shocking than actually making the audience reflect on exclusionary practices that characterize Brazil's patriotic masculinity. Being 'out of the closet' still implies social consequences that are beyond the personal desire. Sadly, it seems the answer is still overseas--in the case of *Praia do Futuro*, in the shadows of Berlin.

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