The teenage character as protagonist in four contemporary Brazilian films*

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Abstract

With the aim of studying the representation of teenagers in Brazilian Cinema in four recent films, this research was based on content analysis with a qualitative bias to carry out an analysis of visual and audible signs. After a history of the presence of young people on the screen, the themes, art direction and soundtrack in the films *Antes que o mundo acabe* (Ana Luiza Azevedo, 2009), *Sonhos roubados* (Sandra Werneck, 2009), *Os famosos e os duendes da morte* (Esmir Filho, 2009) and *As melhores coisas do mundo* (Laís Bodanzky, 2010) are analyzed. In these films, regional and social differences make it possible to notice a rich plurality in the representation of Brazilian youth

Key words: Brazilian Cinema. Teenagers. Narrative. Art Direction. Soundtrack.

Introduction

A character who experiences the conflicts generated by the typical transformations in their age group, the teenager has been shown by Brazilian Cinema as a stereotype, a consumer of fads (music for example) and from the standpoint of his/her existential and social dramas. This "youth cinema", according to Bueno (2008, p.42), obeys two criteria: "First, a youth film must centralize its narrative on the problematics of youth culture. Second: a youth film must be integrated in some form to one or several circuits of youth sociability".

Thus, the studies carried out in the line of research *Linguagens na comunicação: mídias e inovação*, (Languages in communication: media and innovation), on the Post-Graduate Program in Communication at the Universidade Municipal de São Caetano do Sul *(Municipal University of São Caetano do Sul)* and their results in this article were stimulated by the following question: how does contemporary national Cinema present the teenager? The main objective that guided the work was to identify the ways in which the teenage character is presented in current Brazilian Cinema. It means understood as the construction of the character from visual (costume, sets such as bedroom or classroom), sound (lines, soundtrack) or non-verbal (gestures, dance) elements, which are associated with a particular group, in this case, adolescents.

The corpus researched comprises four films shot or launched between 2009 and 2010:*As melhores coisas do mundo*, by Laís Bodansky (2010), *Os famosos e os duendes da morte*, by Esmir Filho (2009), *Antes que o mundo acabe*, by Ana Luiza Azevedo (2009), and *Sonhos roubados*, by Sandra Werneck (2009). The study of these productions takes into account, at this moment, narrative, thematic, scenographic and art direction aspects, which characterize the mise-en-scène of these productions which are guided by diversity, and also verify the ways that teenagers are represented through the soundtracks of the four films. Before presenting the analysis, this text covers the trajectory of the adolescent in Brazilian Cinema from the 1950s onwards. The objective of this

approach is to identify the way in which some national films, over time, present this type of character. We start from the 1950s because this was the moment when teenagers began to stand out in Cinema, bearing in mind US production at the time, which dealt with the rebellion of the young and their dilemmas before entering adult life.

Teenagers on screen

The presence of teenagers in US cinematographic narratives can be traced back to the 1930s, peaking in the 1950s with the figure of the rebel. In Brazilian Cinema, the teenage character began to be included in the humorous productions known as *chanchadas* – comedies made in Rio de Janeiro by the producers Atlântida and Herbert Richers. In *Colégio de brotos* (1956), students, with the help of the school cleaner, solve the case of a theft of rare coins and one of the female students gets involved with the teacher. In the film *Este milhão é meu* (1958), the teenage niece of a public servant, with help from her friends, tries to prevent her uncle, who has won a prize, from being robbed by crooks. In these productions, the teenagers are secondary characters, always solicitous and well-intentioned. Music, dating and motorbikes are the characteristic elements of the young, portrayed in a stereotypical way. If on the one hand, in certain contemporary films, the young take on the role of protagonists, on the other hand, amorous conflicts wrapped up in romantic songs are also present in these film narratives.

From the 1960s on, the focus given to the young took on new contours and teenagers were given leading roles. According to Ramos (1995, p.227), Brazil followed the international trend of creating a youth culture. This writer singles out two movements, *tropicalismo* and *a jovem guarda*, which "expose a tuning with the internationalized, modernized situation of the young sections of society".

Films that can be inserted into this line are *Roberto Carlos em ritmo de aventura* (1968), *Roberto Carlos e o diamante cor-de-*

rosa (1970) and *Roberto Carlos a 300 quilômetros por hora* (1970), which, according to Ramos (1995, p.231), "are full of signs of what was considered 'modern', expressing a strong desire for contemporaneity in its search for the teenage viewer". Because of both Roberto Carlos and his relation with *a jovem guarda*, the soundtrack that accompanies these narratives is of the adolescent music type that was enjoying success in Brazil: rock. But these were cultural products *for* the young not *about* them. The lesser known productions *Pra quem fica... Tchau!* (1970), *Marcelo Zona Sul* (1970) and *André, a cara e a coragem* (1971), all starring Stepan Nercessian, deal with the daily life of an ordinary teenager, with his problems adjusting to the world or the family, whether he is a student in crisis or a boy from the countryside who goes to Rio de Janeiro.

In the 1980s, some cinematographic productions were directed at a young audience, for example *Menino do Rio* (1981), *Garota dourada* (1983) and *Bete Balanço* (1983). Antonio Calmon was responsible for the first two, which follow the dreams and romantic disilusions of a group of friends who surf and do extreme sports. The third shows the attempt by a rich girl from the interior of Minas Gerais state to become a singer in Rio de Janeiro. They are films shot at the moment when Brazil was returning to democratic normality, when national rock was gaining fame with bands from the 1980s, such as Blitz, *Titãs, Barão Vermelho, Paralamas do Sucesso, Legião Urbana*, among others. In Ramos' view (1995, p.244), the dialogue between these films and the broad adolescent public "demanded at the minimum an audiovisual developed on the technical plane". In this sense, "image and music should prevail over the density of what was narrated". Besides Rio de Janeiro, films about or focused on the teenage public were made in other states, such as *Onda nova* (1983)produced in São Paulo, which deals with the difficulties encountered by a group of girls in setting up a women's soccer team, and the Rio Grande do Sul production *Verdes anos* (1984).

Contemporary Cinema

After the recovery of Brazilian Cinema, in the mid-1990s, national cinematography followed the line of diversity of themes and audiences. Because of this, there was a resurgence of films focusing on adolescence. But portraying the generation of that age group nowadays demands an understanding of what differentiates it from generations before. This is a generation with more access to information, used to rapid changes and more susceptible to the dynamics of consumerism. However, conflicts with elders (parents), doubts about the future, problems with feelings and tensions relative to the social condition remain.

The four films chosen for the research are different and similar to each other. Together they constitute a rich depiction of the youth of the first decade of the 21st century. From the narrative point of view, *Os famosos e os duendes da morte* has a psychological plot that allows for the fragmentation of the story; the other productions are characterized by linearity. In *Sonhos roubados*, the main characters are girls living in a Rio favela; in the other films the protagonists are boys from Rio Grande do Sul or São Paulo.

Sonhos roubados has a social theme: it shows the poverty and violence to which the three female protagonists are subjected. It purports to be, therefore, a realistic record. On the other hand, *Os famosos e os duendes da morte* is set in a city in the interior of Rio Grande do Sul affected by a young girl's suicide. The sensations of fear and uncertainty provide a non-linear narrative. *Antes que o mundo acabe* and *As melhores coisas do mundo* were given a naturalist treatment, and though the former is set in Rio Grande do Sul with the latter in São Paulo, both deal with family relations , loyalty and betrayal, amorous disillusions and how to position oneself in a hostile, excluding world.

Some parameters of audiovisual analysis

On the subject of relations between "real" and "stereotypical" in the visual arts, Ernst H. Gombrich writes that "it makes no

sense to look at a motif unless one has learned how to classify and catch it within the network of a schematic form". (2007, p.63). Paraphrasing this thinking, one can state that it makes no sense to observe a specific type – in this case a certain social group – without fitting it into certain stereotypes. In other words, even though the representations of adolescents in the films examined might be closer to contemporary reality when compared to the Cinema of past decades, these representations also rely on certain stereotypes. The questions searching for an answer in this case are: in what way do narratives, elements of art direction (such as sets and costumes) and soundtracks represent this teenager? Do these new forms of representation, though based on stereotypes, present elements of innovation when compared to the Cinema of the second half of the 20th century?

To carry out the analysis of the elements of art direction, we began from the principle that scenography is composed of a set of codifications (sets, lighting, costumes, scenic elements) comprising signs of different natures (forms, colors, textures etc.) that establish syncretic relations with signs of other types (verbal and sound) to transmit the message of the staging (CARDOSO, 2009, p.17-30). It is precisely these relations that allow the viewer to recognize the narrative as more or less "realistic". The "realism" of the representation will be demonstrated through distinct levels of analogy of the representation with the object represented.

For Jacques Aumont (2006, p.207), "in everyday language, a realistic image is one which represents reality analogically". However, the author, referring specifically to the visual message, emphasizes that it is necessary to make a distinction between "realism" and "analogy". "The realistic image is not necessarily one which produces the illusion of reality. Nor is a realistic image the most analogical image possible, the best definition is the image that provides the maximum information about reality. In other words, if analogy concerns the visual, the domain of appearances, and visible reality, realism concerns the information conveyed by the image, it conveys understanding and thinking" (AUMONT, 2006, p.207).

In this sense, making use of Gombrich's ideas, Aumont (2006, p.199) states that all visual representation is conventional, even that which possesses the highest level of analogy with some external reference. Information that comes to us from the world is so more complex than any other type of representation, that no film, in this specific case, will be able to fully cover it. And, for Gombrich, (2007, p.78), this is due not to any subjectivity, but to the richness of objects. Thus, even though the level of figurative analogy might be high, there is no absolute realism in the visual representation in Cinema.

> In the case of scenography in particular, virtual representations –surroundings, costumes etc. – swing between levels of analogy: sometimes bearing a great similarity to external references, following a naturalist style; at other times distancing themselves from these references, adopting an anti-naturalist style (SANTOS; CARDOSO, 2011, p.77).

A parallel process can be considered in relation to the soundtrack in films. The music used usually helps the viewer to infer determined situations through emotion. Obviously the soundtrack is a strange element in realism, for no-one listens to the music in film as if were literally real, as if it were there to reproduce our daily moments. However, the music is perceived consensually by the public to compose both the narrative (the sequence of the actions of characters and their multiple relations) and the diegesis of the film (the scene and the actions around it constructed by the director for the viewer) through explanatory processes and by the act of emphasizing actions, character and atmospheric features. Utilizing the Barthesian term "anchorage", Claudia Gorbman (1987) shows the action of the soundtrack as an element that helps to construct the dramatic integrity of the scenes and the characters by the emphasis on determined atmospheres to conduct the perception of the viewer and the diegetic construction.

Another relation existing between the film and the soundtrack, complementary to the previous one and which interests us because of the aims of this article, is founded in the notion of musical genre as a key to certain identities built socially by musical taste.

According to Jeder Janotti Jr. (2004), the notion of genre is built according to the processes of mutual recognition between the listener and composer, intermediated by structures of production and distribution, shared tastes and affections, and identification of poetic(rhymes, meters, metaphors, themes), musical (rhythm, melody, instrumentation, voice and instrument timbres etc.) and performance (body, dance, costume) parameters. Hence, liking a song means sharing with it, with its genre, with its composer or interpreter several emotional and sociability codes. In the case that concerns us, it is possible for us to think of the inverse sense of this relation, in other words, certain songs function as identifiers of personalities, social types or cultural standards of taste. Hence the importance of the soundtrack in the construction of characters and scenes. For example, a rebellious, critical character from a poor city area can have their personality constructed with the help of rap music, taking into account the parameters that define this type of music and its relation to certain type and social environment.

Ways of representing Brazilian teenagers

According to Lúcia Santaella and Winfried Nöth (2005, p.16), there are in semiotic theories distinct definitions for the concept of representation, but "the attempts at delimiting the concept are [...], frequently imprecise". For these authors, such a concept finds itself principally as a synonym of the sign: "The words 'representation', 'language' and 'symbol' are virtually interchangeable in their widest use" (HOWARD *apud* SANTAELLA; NÖTH, 2205, p.16). Charles S. Peirce (2003, p.61), also characterized semiotic theory as a theory of representation, attributing to the concept the general idea of sign: "To be in the place of, that is, to be in a relation with another that, in some cases, it is considered by some mind as if it were the other". For Peirce (2003, p.61), "a portrait represents the person for whom it is intended to the conception of recognition". It is in this sense that we understand the characters and narratives of films as a type of representation of a determined social group. Their behavior, their clothes, the environment they

live in etc., represent youth in society. In the specific case of visual representation, this concept refers to the first domain of the image proposed by Santaella and Nöth, in which the images are material objects, signs that represent our visual environment. Thus, the cinematographic images of the films analyzed represent, according to the directors, youth in contemporary society.

In *As melhores coisas do mundo*, a film based on the literary series *Mano*, by Gilberto Dimenstein and Heloisa Prieto, the main character, *Hermano*, seeks to understand himself in a new world, after the revelation of his father's homosexuality. In this context, the art direction is supported in a naturalist aesthetic in the definition of the costume, set, scenic and lighting elements. Teenage clothes reflect the era and the environment, in addition to delineating the personality of each one. These personalities are based on certain stereotypes already presented in imagery: the "intellectual" girl; the "dumb blonde"; the "philandering" boy; the rebel brother; the gay student; the teacher who gives advice. Even though the characterization of these characters follows pre-established models, they portray to a certain point, the way these groups dress.

Many of these costumes, in particular *Mano*'s character, comprise t-shirts illustrated with environmental and musical themes. These forms of representation also tell a little about the character, his values, tastes and beliefs, as well as performing the same function with youth in general.

Concerned about maintaining aesthetic naturalism in art direction, the producers avoided chromatic homogeneity, combining different patterns in some scenes – such as patterned t-shirts and checked shirts in the final scene. However, the concern with being distanced from a homogenous composition, which could be considered false, ended up making the representation lose its connection to the "real" at some moments. In some scenes, the students wear a light-blue school uniform, and in others, for no reason, they are in school without a uniform.

Many elements of the adolescent universe, including scenographic, were defined from the workshops held by the production

team with the actors themselves. These adolescents collaborated by indicating references regarding behavior, vocabulary, costumes and scenic elements.

The interior of the main character's school and bedroom are presented as the most important spaces in the narrative – in one way or another, the representations of the school and bedrooms of the young characters end up being important elements in the narratives of all the films analyzed.

The locations used to depict the school scenes were the exterior of the Colégio Arquidiocesano and the interior of Liceu Pasteur Francês, both in the city of São Paulo. The architectural characteristics, while comprising a non-existent place outside the dimension of the film, suggest a series of meanings related to tradition and conservatism, which end up collaborating in the creation of conflicts that are established in the narrative of these locations: one student's discovery of his father's homosexuality; a student's homosexuality; the public revelation of the sexual relations of another female student; the affective relations of a teacher with a third student; bullying and the dissemination of these discoveries via social networks.

As is general in the bedrooms of middle-class adolescents, the decor of *Mano*'s room allows us to recognize a little of his personality. Photographs and illustrations on the walls reveal his values, concern with nature and interest in music, which also serves as the background in diverse scenes. A few toys (Lego) indicate a remaining link with childhood, which disappears in the final scene with the room's new decoration. A mural of photos and notes, as well as graphisms on the walls and illustrations with random lines – which also appear as the film's logotype and the opening vignette – reinforce his beliefs and tastes. The mural and graphisms also perform the function of symbolic elements in two of the three other films.

Acoustic and electric guitars are also presented as elements that indicate personality and maturing of the character. At the beginning of the film, in the bedroom, the character stands in front of a mirror, pretending to play the guitar to an audience at

a big concert, behavior that demonstrates a certain childishness or the teenage dream of being a pop star. The performance miming a rock guitar hero reveals a parameter of identity that the musical genre has with the character and, in general, with youth as a theme in the plot.   At the end of the film, playing for his friends, the young character shows maturity and the surroundings also mature – behind the stands, where the youngsters meet, some graffiti can be seen on the wall. Besides this, it can be seen that the guitar is an object of intermediation in several scenes, which functions as an instrument of collective leisure, a path to amorous conquests, leadership and identity.

The scene that best represents this change, from childhood to adulthood, is the moment when *Mano* and his mother are in the kitchen, firing eggs at the wall. Opening their hearts, the two throw eggs at a mural of photos and notes that suggests a family organization This action, while charged with frustrations and sadness, a moment of maximum tension, demonstrates that the two are freeing themselves of everything that does them harm. The family organization is subverted and only in this way can the mother and son find each other once more in a new order, as if they were saying: 'Something has changed. Let's live with this change". Even though the film seeks a naturalist aesthetic, there is always an intention in any representation. The eggs are thrown not at just any wall; they are thrown at the mural, at family organization.

In general, the naturalism that one perceives in the image and in the narrative also appears in the soundtrack. In this, the songs "anchor" the atmosphere of the sequences, and the emotions and actions of the characters. The musical action goes beyond the image and the narrative in the sound field to portray the scene in the best way possible for the viewer: sad scenes are accompanied by the serene strumming of a guitar, Mano's tense escape on a bicycle appears with heavy rock music, distorted guitar and so on.

Lighter and more ingenuous tha*n As melhores coisas do mundo*, the film *Antes que o mundo acabe*, based on Marcelo Carneiro da Cunha's book of the same name, tells the story of three friends

from the South of the country who experience the same family and relationship conflicts. The main character, *Daniel*, tries to understand why he was abandoned by his father, and at the same time learns to live with the drama of betrayal.

When the film opens, several collages recalling the universe of childhood appear. Toys, as in the previous film, also constitute the environment of the protagonist's room, though unlike the other, the images of toys return at the end in photos sent by Daniel to his father. Wanting to reveal a little of himself, the youngster sends his father, a photographer, photos of his house, friends, a mural and toys. The mural in the bedroom is once again a sign that delineates the character's personality, his roots and values. In this one, concern for the environment can once again be seen.

Unlike the previous film, which seeks to break the chromatic homogeneity and patterns of costume, in *Antes que o mundo acabe*, the characters appear in most scenes wearing plain t-shirts of the same color – strong contrasts in primary and secondary colors predominate (green, red and blue). At some moments stripes appear, but with single colors predominating. The main character's sister exhibits a different concept in costume, with illustrations and accessories that, at some moments, approach fantasy.

If in *As melhores coisas do mundo* the urban aesthetic of the big metropolis (São Paulo), predominates, in *Antes que o mundo acabe* rural surroundings dominate the screen. The country town, *Pedra Grande*, with its narrow streets and old houses, seems frozen in time; only the bicycles threaten to disturb the peace and quiet of the place. Parts of the story are developed in environments surrounded by the natural riches of Brazil's Southern region. The external environments present contrasts and similarities of differing types. *Pedra Grande*, at certain times, seems to share more similarities with Thailand than the state capital, Porto Alegre, which is presented to the young friends as a space yet to be discovered.

The bicycle is one of the signs that allows for the establishment of a relation with Thailand, where *Daniel's* father lives. If in *As melhores coisas do mundo* the bicycle appears as a means of transport in moments of pleasure (after *Mano's* first sexual

relationship) and anguish (when *Mano* is looking for his brother, who attempts suicide), in *Antes que o mundo acabe* it constructs part of the city's personality, and that of its residents and brings *Daniel* closer to his father. Interestingly, whenever one or the three central characters race on their bikes, a medium to fast song plays. Thailand is also presented, but only in its rural and riverside aspects. The school, again, is one of the most important spaces where the narrative develops.

Before regional conservatism can suggest a more conventional language, the superimposition of images, collages and contrasts of textures, related to the use of different technologies, brings the narrative closer to the reality of the contemporary adolescent. Videographic images, reproductions of films and photographs compose diverse mosaics that permit an understanding of the narrative. The internet appears in superimpositions of images on skype, games and musical graphics. The videographic images also appear on screen as verbal signs, when *Daniel* writes a letter to the father he does not know. The inverted letters place the viewer inside the computer, looking, through the screen, at the character writing the letter. Between character and viewer: the letters, the words, the corrections demonstrating the character's indecision. Besides the videographic texture of the computer screen, the granulation of the cinematographic film, in sepia tones, appears in flashbacks showing *Daniel's* childhood. The photos sent by *Daniel* to his father are also presented as one of the most important elements of the film's graphic identity. Along with photos of locations and residents in Thailand, the father sends his son a series of photographs showing parts of his body – eyes, mouth, arms, legs. From a reorganization of these photos that compose a mosaic, *Daniel* gets to know his father better.

If both central characters of these two films, *Mano* and *Daniel*, had to learn to accept changes in their lives, the conflicts developed in different ways, more dramatically in the former case and more romantically in the latter. These atmospheres can be clearly perceived in the scenography or the music, mostly guitar and voice.

In *Sonhos Roubados*, a film inspired by the book *As meninas da esquina – diários dos sonhos, dores e aventuras de seis adolescentes no Brasil*, (The girls on the corner – diaries of the dreams, pain and adventures of six teenagers in Brazil)by Eliane Trindade, the main characters (*Jéssica, Sabrina and Daiane*)live with harder, crueler violence than the previous characters. An aesthetic widely used in contemporary Brazilian Cinema (in such films as *City of God*, for example), the exterior surroundings intend to serve as a record of the reality of life in the poor neighborhoods and favelas, and this story is set in Ramos, Rio de Janeiro. In the same way, the choices in the soundtrack fall back on the genres that define poor areas, because of the socio-cultural conventions regarding identity: *pagode,* rap or Rio de Janeiro funk.

The film's opening scenes, unlike the previous ones which present the universe of the child in a playful, poetic even, manner, show the favela in an almost journalistic way, purely informative: cinderblock, uplastered houses; dirty, broken walls, tangles of electricity and telephone cables polluting the environment. In the middle of all this, *Jéssica* appears on a bicycle. The bike, unlike the playful, cultural characteristics of the previous films, is presented as a means of transport for the community. Jéssica's own house is also a bicycle shop, where her grandfather works.

The interiors, in the main, are composed of rough textures, dimly lit with contrasts of colors and patterns that indicate a lack of planning rather than a decorative style. Even so, Daiane, the youngest of the three, has a bedroom that reveals childish elements, such as cushions and dolls. In these environments, the earthy tones of the clay bricks and dirt roads predominate. The girls' costumes, on the other hand, are very colorful and diversified, indicating their dreams and vanities. Vanity is also present in the tight modelling of the clothes, low-cut and very bright, in addition to the care taken with hairstyles and make-up. The dream and fantasy color effects, which also appear in such spaces as funk dances, contrast with the harsh, dramatic lighting in the alleys, bedrooms and bars.

The "realism", which at some moments seems to dominate the scene, loses strength in chromatic compositions in which the

plastic results, which aim to transmit a certain atmosphere, are more important than the intention to appear real. An example of this aesthetic option is the bar scene, in which *Jéssica* is playing pool, where a diffuser is used below the actress, allowing a blue light to outline her face and expression against a dark background. A more dramatic and hardly realistic light. The same contrast in color and shade can be observed in scenes in the metal workshop, when *Daiane* visits her father. The sparks flying from the grinding machine color the black space with streaks of orange. The warm colors in the sex scenes contrast with the neutral colors of the cemetery or prison. Naturalism gives way to non-naturalism when the conflict becomes important. On the other hand, in some external scenes, although the lighting is dramatic, the contrast of light and shade denotes a lack of electric lighting in the location, an example of the public negligence regarding communities living in poor areas. Reality reclaims its space in the narrative.

Although there are few school scenes, this space ends up also becoming an important environment for the narrative. It is in front of the school that the girls choose their path. Opting for prostitution and rejecting studies are intimately connected. *Daiane*, at fourteen, celebrates each day without lessons and realizes that the best way of achieving her dreams is to accept prostitution. A common story on Brazil's street corners.

The soundtrack, as occurs in *As melhores coisas do mundo*, functions to delineate the diegesis and the characters' social milieu. If in the first film, the middle-class adolescent stereotype is defined by pop rock, here it is the genres and artists connected to poor areas that compose the scenes and characters who live with poverty and crime: the theme song, which lyrics recall the dreams of a better life, is a mixture of samba with rap and Rio de Janeiro funk rhythms and is sung Maria Gadú and MV Bill.

With no commitment to reality, *Os famosos e os duendes da morte*, based on the book by Ismael Caneppele, presents a fragmented story in a plot of psychological conflict that confuses dream with reality. *Mr. Tambourine Man* – a name inspired by a Bob Dylan song – is an adolescent living in the Vale do Taquari,

in Rio Grande do Sul who tries to overcome the tedium of his life on the internet. Graphic references to the web, as in *Antes que o mundo acabe*, predominate throughout the film. Also, as in the other film from Rio Grande do Sul, videographic representations and cinematic granulations appear in certain scenes. These contrasts of granulations and saturations of colors make impossible at some moments for the viewer to understand whether the images refer to a memory, a dream, a hallucination or a simple video posted on the internet. The oneiric atmosphere also appears in exterior areas: in the darkness of the night; in the excessive luminosity; in the mist; in the reflection of lights in the water; in the diffused lights of the distant city; in the low definition of photographic and videographic images. The shadows and light suggest some environments, but they are not always revealed. .

The young person's room is again one of the most important areas of action. But, this time, the room is not welcoming, and translates the character's personality. The climate is bucolic and tedious. The colors are cold and sad, reinforcing the depressing atmosphere.

In this film, the soundtrack gains distinct contours and seeks to work strategies on less naturalist dimensions. What emerges with the music is the characters' emotions and psychological states, unlike the contours of the distinctive genres in the representation of the previous films, as if the teenagers in this film were not real, or did not share the common musical taste of the young generation. The songs – slow, with guitar and few instruments, sung in English – have melancholy lyric, mournfully sung by local composer Nelo Johann. The slow pace of the music and limited instrumentation accompany some film shots and represent, through the atmosphere created, the dramas, doubts and divergences in the storyline.

As in the other films, relations with family and friends is intermediated by the school environment. However, in this film, an iron bridge appears as a fundamental element in the narrative and the plastic composition. The bridge is a place of fear, doubt and decision, change. The bridge, like the bedroom walls, is

represented on screen in geometric shapes, diagonal lines, which often do not allow for identification. As if the object were seeking to stop being the object. The concrete becomes abstract; the real, a dream.

Final considerations

According to Bueno (2008), youth cultures have been forged in the environment of a society focused on consuming, including cultural media assets and the new media:

> Through this process, youth cultures potentialize the integration and interchangeability of media, strengthening the synergy between the industries of content and those of technology. The young thus become fundamental in the existing articulation inside cultural industries themselves and in the strategies that these create to be in the world.
> Undeniably consumers, young cultures also configure as producers of style, practices, products. New social experiences undergone in the dynamics of everyday life appear out of this production, exercising fundamental actions of negotiation, pressure and transformation of the industrial production of culture (BUENO, 2008, p.43-44).

The Cinema, which is characterized by being simultaneously a product of culture and of consumption – which also promotes other merchandise – has become, as previously stated, a vast field for the manifestations of youth cultures. In this way, the image of the adolescent on the screens is both a reflection of the authentic anxieties and expectations of the young and also convention, stereotype, the state of youth disseminated in the symbolic media content. The clothes they wear and the music they listen to determine in the main the identities constructed socially by consuming. Such signs identify personalities, social types or cultural standards of taste.

The analysis carried out on four contemporary Brazilian films made it possible to perceive how the construction of the teenage character in Cinema is processed, be it from the thematic-narrative point of view, or the use of cinematographic language: the image resources created by the art direction, such as sets and costumes,

and the soundtrack, which helps the construction of the film and character diegesis sociologically or psychologically. By observing the narrative, the elements of art direction and soundtrack in these films, one can see the use of schematic forms However, as mentioned earlier, such stereotypes are natural to representations, since the signs represent the objects based on concepts existing in the mind, and every concept, for its part, is always a simplification of the object to which it refers. In other terms, the complexity of each human individual does not fit into one representation. Hence the simplification in groups with common characteristics – for example, in the simplistic definitions of generation "X", "Y" or "Z". Thus, even though the representations of teenagers in the films analyzed might come closer to contemporary reality when compared to the representations in the Cinema of past decades, these representations will always need to be supported by some kind of stereotype. After all, every representation is a convention. The relations between different types of audio-verbal-visual signs and the amount of informational data that these types of signs give on the contemporary adolescent, are what end up causing the sensation that the representation is less or more "realistic".

If many similarities are found in the works studied, the differences between them are also significant: they attest to the fact that current youth culture is marked by plurality. If compared to the films of past decades, the behavior, costumes, sets and soundtracks show more complex teenage personalities. This complexity, by what can be observed, is also due to regional diversities and social inequalities.

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