



## Net-activism, memory and archives: digital heritage as an instrument for social justice

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### ABSTRACT

This article aims to reflect on the power relations historically built by groups that dominate social spaces and their implications in the creation of official memory, which ends up being impacted by the continuous process of marginalization of various places, including the population experiencing homelessness. Based on this, we consider memory, archives, and heritage as potential instruments for both silencing and insurgency of invisibilized individuals. In the case studied in this article, we emphasize the transformative and political potential of memory. Using the NGO SP Invisível profile as the research corpus, we propose an analysis of the narratives generated by these digital social movements, which emerged in the context of the early 21st century as a form of digital activism that goes beyond social media, but exists as an ecology that depends on both digital and human elements to exist, with the main objective of transforming reality through the diffusion of narratives of people in situations of homelessness and/or social marginalization. With this, we seek to problematize the banalization of the neoliberal ethos, which convinces us that success and failure are individual instances, so that concern for social well-being and the environment take a back seat and, in this context, are presented as expenses of the state and not as a collective need. Thus, we observe that these initiatives, created on platforms managed by large corporations, in the midst of late capitalism, are capable of using these spaces as a means that intertwines media and social movements, becoming an integral part of the process of visibility and destigmatization of traditionally invisibilized bodies.

**Keywords:** memory; heritage; narratives; people experiencing homelessness; neoliberalism; archives; SP Invisível.

## INTRODUCTION

There are two sources of motivation for this research: the first is personal outrage regarding the consequences of social marginalization, such as those seen on city streets, often materialized in the figure of homeless people, and the second, the interest in the digital social movements that began to emerge taking these people's narratives to social media, as is the case with Instagram profile SP Invisível<sup>1</sup>. We understand that the study of these topics cannot be limited only to the technical understanding of the development of technologies or exclusively to the social impact generated by them, but rather, “[...] uma ecologia colaborativa que instaura interações experimentais entre dispositivos de conexão, bancos de dados, pessoas e grupos em forma distribuída em cada parte do planeta, provocando em muitos casos rupturas nas estruturas de poder” (Di Felice, 2017, p. 136)<sup>2</sup>. Therefore, conducting research from a theoretical-technical point of view is necessary.

The profile was created on Facebook in 2014, but today it receives more engagement on Instagram. One of its most striking features is taking visual narratives (Sotomayor, 2018) — a concept developed during the master's thesis — into social media in which the protagonists are homeless people. This narrative modality brings together both a told biography and an image that composes and puts a face on this trajectory. Most posts are photographs of homeless people combined with excerpts from their interviews conducted in various parts of the city of São Paulo, aimed at awakening the affection of the population which has access to technology and does not face the reality of the streets. On Instagram, the platform allows likes, shares and comments, in addition to emoji reactions<sup>3</sup>.

These profiles carry sources of information and memory about a population that cannot be ignored. Considering the obsolescence of social media, archival intervention work in this collection can help ensure that a historically neglected memory can circulate and be heard, providing conditions for it to be seen beyond the stigmas. The data that emerges from their narratives can also support and/or update public policies in favor of this population if they are in accordance with the National Program for Human Rights – PNDH-3 (Brazil, 2010).

### VULNERABILITY, RESISTANCE AND MEMORY

Thinking about a society that trivializes the existence of human beings living on sidewalks is also thinking about the unequal distribution of vulnerability and precariousness (Butler, 2015) and its connection with a historical process of erasing subjectivities and memories of entire populations. In many narratives exposed on the page, one can find a scenario of invisibilization that either takes place once the person reaches that condition, or was already felt when they had a house to live in, in this case, already in precarious

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1 It should be noted that there are at least 14 profiles that perform similar work, and we will consider some categories of analysis on these other pages as well, however, this research will only focus on these two pages on account of the ease of access to the files created.

2 Translation: “[...] a collaborative ecology that establishes experimental interactions between connection devices, databases, people and groups in a distributed manner in every part of the planet, in many cases causing disruption in power structures” (Di Felice, 2017, p. 136, editorial [translation](#)).

3 Icon used to express or symbolize an emotion, symbol or object based on an image.

conditions and extreme poverty. Therefore, we propose one to observe the development of neoliberal capitalist ideology and how it guides the gaze that society directs towards certain groups. Question “which humans count as humans?” (Butler, 2018, p. 43) invites us to think, among other things, about recognition. We could change the question to “which humans are *recognized* as humans?”, without it losing its meaning. If we assume that all humans are worthy of recognition, we must understand what mechanisms make us internalize the idea that certain groups of humans are less human and, consequently, worthy of less respect than others.

Taking the case of people in situations of social marginalization, the representations that surround them are renewed from generation to generation and bring with them stigmas that have been developed for centuries and that act as a barrier to the effective integration of these people into society, making their figures caricatures of what they truly are. Furthermore, it is a way for society to reaffirm that, although these groups, in some way, are part of the community and what is considered human, they are not people like any other. They are treated as different, always. Based on these stigmas, various types of socioeconomic, psychological and/or physical discrimination are committed, which often contributes to reducing the life chances of these populations, as we often justify our personal, institutional or state animosity based on this type of inferiorization (Goffman, 1984).

These stigmas are not isolated and are mostly based on the instruments used by capitalism to sustain, among them, racism. As Cameroonian philosopher Achille Mbembe (2018) notes, biopower uses racism as a way to regulate the distribution of death. Such death can be direct or indirect, in the sense that the State finds justifications, generally in the context of public security, to justify the death of poor black people, even if it claims that there was no intent to kill. This same State, by not investing in decent public policies or not being able to guarantee decent health and safety conditions to the poorest population in the cities, leaves a large part of these people in such degrading living conditions that deaths due to preventable disease or accidents become the norm for these groups. This connection between the structural racism present in our society explains why most homeless people are black or mixed race. According to the 2020 Census performed in the city of São Paulo, more than 70% of the population is made up of black people (Sobrinho, 2020, on-line). Unfortunately, poverty has color.

This biopolitical configuration was inherited from the times of the plantation, in which the humanity of the enslaved individuals became a shadow, as these people lost their homes, rights over their own body and political status, this being characterized as both an alienation of self, and social death (Mbembe, 2018). Brazil abolished slavery in 1888, approximately 136 years ago, but its social bases were forged, since the 17th century, on the idea that non-white people are less human than the others, the so-called whites, even though both are in conditions of subalternity.

In such a difficult scenario, in which, historically, the neediest population is made invisible or is only represented in contexts of criminalization or degradation, we crown this

reality with the advance of neoliberalism, which transforms us not only into lonely beings, but also beings that are paranoid about the existence of others, transforming them into danger and enemies. So, how can we think of solutions? First, we must denaturalize these norms that claim to be capable of saying who are the humans and who are the almost humans, understanding that this is a morality constructed from social markers that support the capitalist way of life, in short, racism, patriarchy and extractivism. Thus, having access to these people's narratives can be an instrument to position them in the collective memory based on their media representation, since the battle for dignity becomes corporeal for those who have been demoted by this norm and publicly insist on existing and having significance (Butler, 2018).

Social media are potential instruments for this appearance, which depends on a body of people who come together for this purpose, so that the narration of their trajectories becomes an important mechanism for affecting society and making their subjectivities visible. Whether by means of marches or other forms of activism, it is important that bodies are coming together (Butler, 2018), and the media makes it possible to visualize this political act. In this sense, the media is a part of and a document of this action. Therefore, smartphones can often be a witness to violent actions by authorities, or document the acts, making them public, a central issue when thinking about visibility. These actions may somehow be able to reconstruct the perspective on these issues and call into question the visual hegemony and narrative given by dominant groups to this situation.

As Filgueiras (2020) states, it is not the social fact itself — people living on sidewalks and under overpasses — that makes this matter a public issue. The perspective on this topic must be directed towards a desire to change this *status quo*, so that different actors are able to identify this phenomenon and all the inherent social, moral and political issues, developing, based on this, intervention strategies (Filgueiras, 2020).

In this sense, cases like that of NGO SP Invisível's Instagram profile is emblematic, as it does a triple job: being out on the streets with people in situations of social marginalization and listening to them; recording their memories; and making these stories visible in another space, meaning that, in addition to being physically on the streets, they can also appear on social media.

Of course, one must be careful with the excess memory that this type of media is capable of producing, as there is a strong possibility that information be lost amidst its large production. It is possible for one to think of a certain saturation of memory due to the high production of records in media, increasingly inserted in the daily life of society. As if, due to its overload, it could implode and lead, in reality, to more oblivion than memory (Huysen, 2004). It occurs that, for the author, if there is no critical look at the unbridled production of memorial records, largely driven by the media, we can experience a certain trivialization of memory itself, which becomes just another product to be commercialized, just like the trauma, which is often as entertaining as is fun (Huysen, 2004).

Therefore, based on the process of valuation and observation, in the face of so many productions of records per day in these media, choosing to look closely at the production of

these profiles is important, even if by means of criticism of the possibility of trivializing memory, or the excess of its production. Therefore, the preservation effort, which includes assessment and selection work, is necessary, using social justice and the right to memory as a guide.

The strength of these movements lies within the visual narrative, which is what connects all parts of the process and attracts more people to the cause. This narrative is composed by photographs or videos of people in vulnerable situations, portraying their faces and facial expressions, and, below, a description, which, in general, is a summary of their life story, containing age, region where they live (or at least where the interview took place), plus information on how to help.

People can only access the Instagram platform via a device, (hardware ), be it a computer, tablet or cell phone, and they only connect with this social media because they are interested in interacting with the profiles that are hosted on it, be that of friends, institutions or public figures. Each profile contains records of activities, daily or otherwise. Most of them are images, moving or static, that boost the platform's engagement, which makes this collaborative ecology of net-activisms possible, because what is happening to people living on the streets is reported to the network from images, generally accompanied by a description.

In the PNDH-3 (Brazil, 2010), actions aimed at the population in marginalized situations are included in the document from different perspectives, among them, social inclusion, full citizenship, guaranteed access to housing, access to quality public health services and guaranteed decent work. This demonstrates that, at least at a strategic level, the phenomenon began to be observed, from the beginning of the 2000s, as a human rights issue, not just an urban and social space issue (Filgueiras, 2020). Thus, in this article, we understand visibility and its potential consequence, recognition, a means that can guarantee the existence of marginalized individuals and groups, as well as public investment for their well-being, dignity and rights, putting into practice the goals and actions of the national program aimed at this population.

## **METHODS**

In the context of the doctoral thesis, we conducted a theoretical-empirical research, situating the historical and social context that enabled the development of such an unequal, extractive, racist and sexist society, from the emergence of capitalism to the present day, in addition to the role of archives and heritage in this context, and thus, we created the basis for a more analytical study of the profile and the narratives contained within it. For this second part of the analysis, we used a selection of 330 narratives from the SP Invisível page, between 2014 and 2022. We extracted a total of 4 main lines of analysis, namely, statistical data, classification of narratives by categories, episodic analysis of narrated experiences and complex cases in which a single classification would not be able to reflect reality (Sotomayor, 2023).

Thus, to account for the subjectivity and complexity of this work, our methodological strategy was inspired by book “Memórias da Plantação”, by Portuguese psychoanalyst Grada Kilomba. This work was published based on her doctoral thesis and investigates the different forms of racism from a gender perspective faced by the women she interviewed, who narrate their experiences freely. As they bring their experiences, the author works on the topics identified as central in these women’s narratives, based on the episodes of racism they suffered, calling it episodic analysis (Kilomba, 2019).

Based on this research, centered on the subject’s experiences, we chose to carry out similar work, analyzing the stories published on the SP Invisível Instagram profile. Based on the narrative thread of the interviewees and a certain repetition of events, also noticeable in these narratives, we observed relevant data that emerged for analysis and we can divide them, didactically, as follows:

1. statistical data that can be observed from these narratives, such as gender, age group, race<sup>4</sup> and length of time living on the streets. We decided to divide genders by race. White men, white women, black men and black women;
2. data that we found from the narrative thread, configuring the main categories that emerge in the different stories that we found<sup>5</sup>;
3. more in-depth analysis of the experiences lived by these people, based on the experience of netnography focused only on the analysis of posts, not counting the interactions of internet users;
4. selection of 1 story with simultaneous categories presented in the texts, to show the complexity of these narratives and explain that, in some cases, the choice of category is more complex than in others, but that each story brings wealth of information and data that deserves to be preserved.

## RESULT ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

One of the results was the confirmation of the hypothesis that the SP Invisível profile has social relevance, producing important digital archival documents for the memory of such a marginalized and stigmatized population. Moving forward. Stating that they are archival documents could only suggest, for example, that the owners of these pages created a private archival collection, as stated in art.11 of Law No. 8.159/1991, “Consideram-se arquivos privados os conjuntos de documentos produzidos ou recebidos por pessoas físicas ou jurídicas, em decorrência de suas atividades” (Brazil, 1991, online)<sup>6</sup> [Private archives are considered sets of documents produced or received by individuals or legal entities, as a result of their activities]. For us, in addition, they are considered private archives of social

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4 This data is more sensitive, as it is my definition when analyzing the photographs. I chose to include “blacks, whites and indigenous people”, to understand blacks as black and brown. I did not identify indigenous or yellow people in these stories.

5 It was not possible to include all the categories in this article, as they are very extensive, and it is possible to find them in the thesis.

6 Translation: “Private files are considered to be sets of documents produced or received by individuals or legal entities, as a result of their activities.” (Brazil, 1991, online, editorial translation).



relevance, since, based on the entire historical-sociological survey conducted in this research, collections that address this topic are rare and, therefore, with the material produced by these groups, whether in the form of an NGO or not, they can be relevant sources for the history and scientific development on the subject in the country (Brazil, 1991), and, moreover, they can serve as a basis for possible public policies aimed at this population or even an update of existing policies, working to strengthen the aforementioned axes of the PNDH-3 or with regard to policies related to memory.

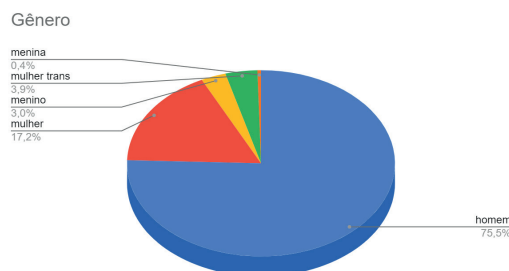
Thus, although many of these people who were interviewed are still subject to all types of violence from the State and society in general, they can be inserted in the collective memory with their own voices, so that it is possible to understand the sociopolitical scenario and the social determinants that allowed a portion of the population to reach these living conditions, in addition, affected by these stories, the various actors involved are still able to engage in finding solutions that are in accordance with social justice and the common good.

Therefore, let us analyze the statistical data taken from more than 330 SP Invisível stories. It is important to highlight that all were obtained from the collection made in the narratives of the homeless people who were interviewed, so that, in these selected interviews, some were not able to inform, for example, age or length of time on the streets.

Historically, official information about the homeless population is more difficult to record, so joint work between cities and state and federal governments, for this collection based on monthly records made available by Pop Centers and CREAS teams, becomes more useful than the Cadastro Único itself, given the fact that not all homeless people are registered (Natalino, 2022). As the Technical Note presented by IPEA in 2022 suggests, “é importante ressaltar que o que é possível medir, *stricto sensu*, é o número de pessoas em situação de rua que o Estado consegue enxergar” (Natalino, 2022, p. 10 ) [it is important to emphasize that what is possible to measure, *stricto sensu*, is the number of homeless people that the State can see]

Therefore, even state data collection presents an estimate of reality, as it depends on the ability of government agencies to track these people. In this research, the data collected is based on reports extracted from the SP Invisível profile and portrays a small section of reality that needs to be periodically updated, as it is a dynamic issue.

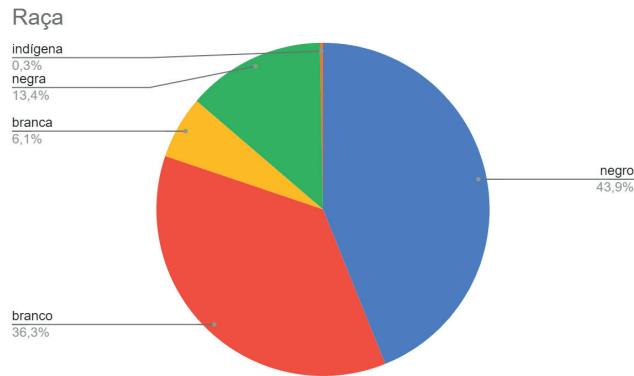
**Graph 1 – Gender**



Source: Prepared by the authors (2023).

From the stories analyzed, it was possible to confirm that there are many more men on the streets than cis or trans women, but the presence of boys, still in their late childhood or teenage years, in the city of São Paulo was surprising.

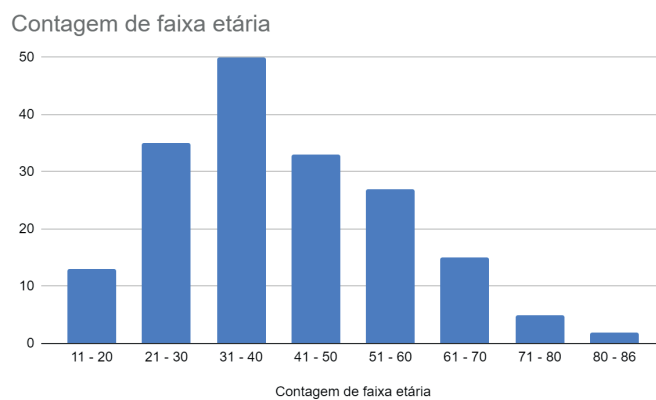
### Graph 2 – Race



Source: Prepared by the authors (2023).

In this topic, as we did not take this information from the narratives, but rather from the photographs, we chose to use the definition of blacks for blacks and browns. Furthermore, we divided it between white men and white women, black men and black women (only one indigenous story was located), so that we could analyze the presence of these races combined with the female and male genders. Here, trans women are identified as white women or black women as well. When we place the percentages together, we observe the presence of 42.4% white people compared to 57.3% black people. Furthermore, there are just over twice as many black women on the streets compared to white women.

### Graph 3 – Age group

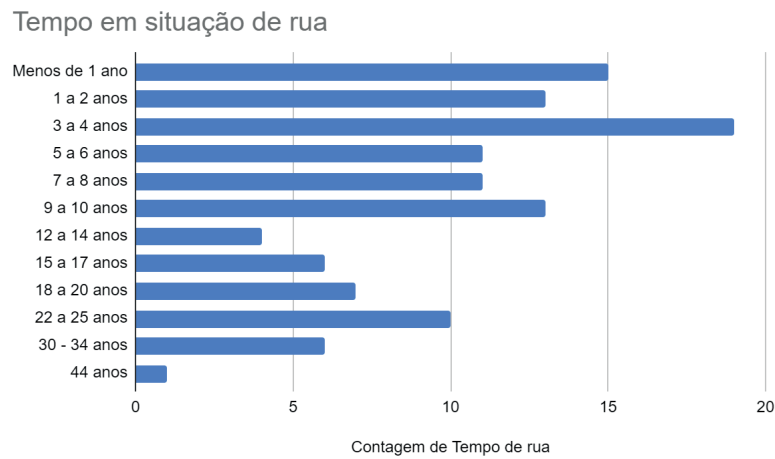


Source: Prepared by the authors (2023).



In this graph, it is possible to observe that the most recurrent age group is that between 31 and 40, but the street still has extremes of age groups, from children aged 11 to elderly people over 80 years old. Not to mention the younger children, daughters and sons of some of the interviewees who had their children in their arms or mentioned them in their biographies as being their little companions, exposed to all the risks and dangers of the streets. This data corresponds to the time frame from 2014 to 2022, so, today, these ages are already updated. Not all interviews included this information.

**Graph 4 – Length of time on the streets**



Source: Prepared by the authors (2023).

These are shocking data. People capable of living on the streets for more than 10, 20, 30 years. In some reports, people claimed to have been on the streets since childhood. Many others, after years of work, went on to live on the streets. And the longer they stay on the streets, the harder it is to leave. This data corresponds to the time frame from 2014 to 2022, for this reason, currently, these periods of homelessness are already updated or, luckily, some of these people are no longer living on the streets.

#### Qualitative analysis of the 330 SP Invisível stories

In this topic, we performed a netnographic analysis of these stories, based on the observation of the depth that the narratives bring, in addition to data or classificatory categories, which are also important to enable future research, digital preservation or even the creation or updating of policies public. However, the analysis of the density of these stories cannot be set aside, since they concern subjects narrating their own trajectory, crossed by various social and psychological issues that lead them to this situation or keep them there. Each of these stories reveals several socio-historical issues in Brazil.

After this more general analysis, which we will refer to as research impressions, we will focus on 1 story specifically, which brings multiple categories of analysis, given its complexity.

**TABLE 1 – Research impressions**

Violence	In many reports, interviewees recount that they do not have a peaceful night's sleep because they must stay aware of various forms of violence that may arise: theft of belongings by others; and police violence, which can take the form of insults, physical violence, removal of belongings and waking up to ice-cold water. Furthermore, many spoke of their constant fear of being lit on fire, an unfortunately common practice against homeless people. Interestingly, some reported that Fernando Haddad's administration was also characterized by much police violence, but they perceived significant worsening under Dória's administration. In other words, whether it was a left or right-wing government, they felt neglected. They show that the change lay within some social assistance services dismantled under the Dória administration, but the systematic violence by the police shows no major differences. Cases of document theft are particularly emblematic, because they take away from people any chance of employment, their identification and hope of escaping this situation.
	Some families are expelled from occupations, with no structure from the local government, and end up on the streets because they have nowhere else to go. Others, due to floods that destroy their precarious homes, landslides or fires. In most cases, unemployment appears as a driver for these people to become homeless, whether due to the pandemic or the crisis, many ended up on the streets after losing their jobs. In 2017, it was possible to observe some reports of the perception of people in vulnerable situations regarding the increase in the homeless population. In addition to a post of a family with 3 daughters who lost everything, interestingly, we also identified some cases of people who lost their jobs because they fell ill or suffered accidents, which confirms data in previous chapters about the way neoliberal logic views people: as replaceable parts. Cases of migrants from various regions of the country, mainly from the Northeast, who arrive in São Paulo in search of work or due to promises of employment, but are deceived and find themselves with nowhere to go. Returning to the job market is even more difficult, because, since they do not have a fixed address and are unable to keep themselves clean and wear appropriate clothing, many establishments do not accept them to work.
Politics	According to reports, people in this situation feel abandoned by the government and very disappointed with politics, believing that it comes down to theft and neglect. In the 2018 presidential elections, they felt very confused, as many stated that they would only vote <sup>7</sup> for candidate Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, and, with him arrested, Haddad would be the solution, precisely the politician who, in their experience, left them abandoned facing police violence. In 2022, reports of hope for a new Lula government appeared.
Pandemic	The Covid-19 pandemic was a tragedy on several levels. In these reports, it was common to read stories of people who lost their jobs due to the pandemic and others of increased prejudice, because many imagined that homeless people would be transmitters of the disease. They noticed feelings of disgust on the part of some who passed by on the street. With the lockdown, they no longer had access to places to collect recyclables, as establishments closed, donations decreased considerably and saw some acquaintances die as a result of the disease, as they were at risk for having no access to basic hygiene and without the possibility of isolation. They were anxious for the vaccines to arrive, as they knew they were extremely vulnerable to this disease.
Shelters	Shelters should be welcoming places, however, reports from homeless people were of neglect, lack of structure and danger of theft. Many only sleep in shelters on very cold nights, because they feel mistreated, sleep piled up together, take cold showers and are provided bad breakfast. As the pandemic progressed, they were even more afraid of being enclosed in this type of place, as there were a lot of people sleeping in the same room, but sometimes there wasn't much to do, because of the cold winter in São Paulo, so they slept in shelters even in fear of Covid-19.

<sup>7</sup> The interviewees did not clarify whether they were actually going to attend the elections or whether they expressed an opinion or desire.

Recyclable material collectors	Recycling is the main source of income for most of the interviewees and some of them report suffering prejudice due to their profession and lack of knowledge on the part of society in general about their work. They work for hours carrying weight to earn enough money to at least eat a meal throughout the day. Older people report their difficulty in performing this type of work when they have health problems, at a stage of life in which they should rest.
Drugs	Subject drugs is very recurrent in the narratives. Unfortunately, until it is treated as a public health issue, too few solutions will be provided. In this regard, there are countless reports: people who become addicted at a young age, due to the influence of parents or other family members; those who, arriving on the streets, find drugs a way to endure the difficulty of living in this situation; those who start out of curiosity and lose everything because of addiction and take to the streets. The fact is that, especially when it comes to crack, there is enormous difficulty in getting rid of the addiction, and addicts truly need motivation to get out of situations and not return – be it a romantic relationship, a pet, any emotional bond. There are truly shocking reports, such as a man who saw a mother breastfeeding her baby with a crack pipe in her mouth. Drugs, being the gateway to the streets or another device that prevents people from leaving the streets, is an issue that must be resolved from the perspective of public health, considering psychological and physical factors. Violence will not resolve this issue, as trafficking cannot be resolved by beating on drug dealers and users in the so-called “cracolândia”.
Former prison inmates	Some reports from ex-convicts are quite similar. They get out of jail after serving their sentences and have nowhere to go. They are rarely accepted into formal jobs and remain on the streets. A few claim to lose track of time, they don’t know how old they are, nor how long they’ve been homeless. Others claim to no longer have dreams when asked about this. When there is still room for dreams, they generally say they want a home, food on the table, to “join” society again, because, although they are a part of it, they feel separated.

Source: Prepared by the authors (2023).

## Post containing multiple categories of analysis

FIGURE 1 – Multiple categories of analysis



Source: Spinvisível (2015).

Priscila's story contains several categories and information, all very serious. She begins talking about her first pregnancy, at the age of 12, which configures, within our categories, a type of **gender violence**, more precisely, rape of a vulnerable person, by a 22-year-old adult man, to which she claims she had to marry. This 31-year-old had 9 children, but 2 died. She claims to have left home into the streets because of her husband's betrayal.

In the second part of her report, she states that she wishes to get rid of **crack addiction**, a very common desire among interviewees facing drug addiction. And then, Priscila shows more signs of being part of a dysfunctional family by stating "I've been smoking since I was 6 years old, I was introduced to crack by my brothers, I'm 15". Her statement has combined information: family disruption, attacks on childhood and drug addiction. This girl lost her childhood at the age of 6, when she first came in contact with drugs, at a young age. Those who offered this drug, or at least served as negative models, were her older brothers, who were already in this situation before her, and we also don't know when they started. Finally, she states that they are 15 siblings, which, in itself, is an alarming fact that shows, at the very least, that she comes from a family with no planning.

Priscila says that her marriage was not bad, as her husband "only" beat her (**gender violence**) when he had outbursts, implying that she did not think this was a problem, that in fact these were isolated events. What led to their separation was betrayal, not violence itself, as, in the context of a sexist and patriarchal society, violence against women is often justified by the victim herself. Already on the street, she states that the experience of being a woman is very difficult (the issue of menstrual poverty itself is implicit). However, the most difficult issue is dealing with the **sexism** that manifests itself with harassment from men who live on the streets and, mainly, from those who don't live on the streets, and which, according to her, is the majority of cases. In a patriarchal society, many men feel entitled to treat women as objects since childhood, and the more vulnerable these girls and women are, the more disrespect and violence of all types affect them.

## **FINAL CONSIDERATIONS**

Understanding the importance of activism and the union of people that work towards a more just and egalitarian society is mandatory if we thrive for a livable world for our descendants, since there is no way to continue living in a society in which natural resources are being emptied into the hands of a very few people who hold obscene wealth, while thousands suffer from hunger. It is not sustainable to live this way. Therefore, the stories of these people, who seem so far from us, are also our stories, they are the story of our society and its decline. The truth is that, when faced with people so deprived of rights, we cannot help but feel uncomfortable by the frightening reality that surrounds us, that even the most prosperous people are not exempt from a future downfall (Bauman, 2008).

According to Duff, Flinn, Suurtamm and Wallace (2013), this link between social justice, archives and changes is partly possible because of the information that is brought

from the past to guide us in how to act in the present. And, even though these digital records are very recent, the information they bring address old issues that can guide people in the future to work on these topics. Furthermore, according to the authors, it is also necessary that we be able to broaden our views regarding the methods we use to evaluate the impact of these collections, as perhaps a more critical, analytical and interpretative approach than a quantitative one would be more appropriate (Duff *et al.*, 2013). We agree with this vision proposed by the authors mentioned above, since, for us, it is the potential of archives as an instrument of social justice and human rights that guides this research.

UNESCO, on its 32nd session, held in Paris in 2003 (UNESCO, 2003a), aiming at safeguarding intangible cultural heritage, precisely addressed cultural manifestations passed down from generation to generation in traditional communities or even the so-called know-how related to the making of an object. In the same year, the Charter on the preservation of digital heritage was drawn up, which defines digital objects as still or moving images, sound recordings, web pages, etc. (UNESCO, 2003b). However, heritage must be built together with people, because it is always built by people, but often the very people for whom the heritage is intended are excluded from this process. For us, it is not simply a matter of stating that this collection is a digital heritage, but framing it within the focus of heritage citizenship, a concept that accounts for the operational capacity on the part of certain social groups to build interaction strategies, be it adherence to or denial of heritage policies, at local, national or international levels (Lima Filho, 2015).

Heritage, whether material, intangible or digital, only makes sense if it is the result of this interaction with the policies issued by agencies operating in society, aimed at bringing benefits to the groups in question, so that this process is inclusive, and not exclusive. Thus, “[...] o reverso do patrimônio tem lugar na cidadania patrimonial, potencializando a cidadania insurgente” (Lima Filho, 2015, p. 140)<sup>8</sup>. Unlike traditional archives, the profile of the “Invisibles” may be able to represent these subaltern groups, not as institutions that speak for those in situations of social marginalization, but by means of a joint construction so that these people are able to speak for themselves about their trajectories and have the opportunity to have their life stories recorded, associated with photos that were also created together and with their consent, and not in degrading positions or situations.

The struggle of these people was noticed by the various digital activists who gave rise to the profiles of the “invisibles”. Using the knowledge acquired within a public university to, in some way, collaborate with this network is also giving back to society what it invested, based on ethics that is guided by generosity and social justice.

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8 Translation: “[...] the reverse side of heritage takes place in heritage citizenship, enhancing insurgent citizenship” (Lima Filho, 2015, p. 140, editorial translation).



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