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Light, camera, hospitality: relationship between hosts and guests in film productions in Minas Gerais, Brazil

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ABSTRACT

This paper provides an understanding of the way that hospitality is portrayed in films produced with the support of a programme developed by the government in the state of Minas Gerais, in Brazil. The methodology of this qualitative research included a content analysis of eight films (including one documentary) shown on the non-mainstream festival and film show circuit in Brazil. The results showed the complexity that permeates the interpersonal relationships in hospitality. The filmic productions analysed portray several nuances of the hospitality phenomenon present in the Brazilian social imaginary. Different leisure practices and contexts are represented in the films, thus showing a wealth of details about hospitality that bring potential contributions to the academic debate on the subject. In this process, human life assumes a variety of meanings and causes a tangle of social practices and hospitality to emerge.

Introduction

Minas Gerais[1] state in south-eastern Brazil, is emblematic of the complexity of modern Brazil, where historical myths are contested by indigenous communities, descendants of the ruling colonising classes, and between locals and outsiders (Kiddy, 2005). This paper explores how artists have created and responded to the myth that people who live in Minas Gerais are more hospitable (Silva & Brusadin, 2014), through a content analysis of eight arthouse films. This colonial past is still a relevant feature of contemporary Minas Gerais, which houses several historic cities and a considerable historical and cultural heritage (Kiddy, 2005). Besides having an admirable historical and cultural heritage, the natural beauty of Minas Gerais makes this state an important Brazilian tourist destination (Gonçalves & Castellane, 2018). Its mountainous relief, the springs of its rivers, the fauna and flora attract visitors from Brazil and from abroad.

The population of Minas Gerais is considered to have mastered the art of 'being hospitable' (Silva & Brusadin, 2014). This is related to customs, ways of life, symbolisms and social representations related to this state. This attribute is strongly present in the Brazilian social imagination, representing an icon of identity and myth. The hospitable identity is included in the mark of this destination, as disclosed by the State Secretariat for Culture and Tourism of Minas Gerais who promote the region to tourists (Gonçalves & Castellane, 2018). In the academic context, hospitality is also

highlighted as a particularity of Minas Gerais, especially when considering the domestic scope. Silva and Brusadin (2014) agree that this hospitality is recognised in the Brazilian social imaginary. They state that it is represented through several possibilities that concern the popular traditions and customs of Minas Gerais.

Mafessoli (2001, p. 77) explains that 'the imaginary certainly works through interaction . . . so the word interactivity makes so much sense in the imaginary order'. According to Maffesoli, cinema is a 'technology of the imaginary' that feeds social imaginaries. Different forms of art devoted to the representation and interpretation of the world, such as cinema, help to understand distinct aspects of hospitality in the social imaginary. Cinematographic narratives favour the incorporation of values and reinforce imagery that, dialectically, builds realities 'in different perspectives, areas and contexts. In this way, cinematographic productions end up involving different representations' (Gomes, 2016, p. 3).

This study is part of a broader research project, entitled 'Behind the Cameras: Cinematographic tourism in Minas Gerais'. The purpose of this investigation is to analyse films supported by the *Film in Minas Programme*, aiming to identify the elements which can boost tourism in that state. The *Film in Minas Programme* was created in 2004 by the State Secretariat for Culture and Tourism of Minas Gerais, Brazil. This programme is an initiative of the government that aims to promote film production in that state, stimulate research and encourage new languages which express its cultural diversity. For a film to be supported by this programme, at least 60% of the filming must be made in Minas Gerais.

Even though it is not a direct purpose of the programme, the films supported can promote tourism in that state. Studies by Beeton (2001, 2005, 2011) indicate that film-induced tourism can be driven by several alternatives: a) by the place, including its landscapes and scenery, b) by the cast, personalities or characters that became famous, c) by performance of an audio-visual work, including its script, the chosen theme or genre. For Beeton, these factors have the potential to influence the choice of tourists for a given destination, intermediated by an audio-visual production that had been watched. Media tourism is a significant part of the leisure lives of people and regions around the world, as people visit places and contestations of space and meaning emerge. We can see this in, for instance, the contestation of locations for films such as the Harry Potter cycle and the creation of tourist experiences where large profits can be made from fan-tourists (Iwashita, 2006; Lee, 2012). Our critical frame then aligns with the growing wealth of research that explores the synergies between film, tourism and imagination (Reijnders, 2016; Riley & Van Doren, 1992; Urry & Larsen, 2011). In a world of global flows and post-industrial, liquid modernity (Bauman, 2000), we see films and film tourism equally subject to the social construction and contestation of place, history and identity (Spracklen, 2011, 2015, 2020). Leisure and tourism spaces, then, are sites for the maintenance of hegemony, gender, race, nation and other intersectional social structures (Spracklen, 2011, 2015, 2020) – even where they offer opportunities for agency, counter-hegemonic resistance and play (Beckman & Shu, 2021; Lee, 2012).

Hospitality is a relevant category to be analysed in film productions, as it is present in the social imaginary of various contexts in the world (Derrida, 2000). Hospitality represents stereotypes, assumptions, communicative rationality and instrumentality (Spracklen, 2011). Hospitality is friendship and capitalism (Derrida, 2000). We are interested, then, in exploring how hospitality, the relationship between host and guests, is constructed by the directors of these films seeking to invent something they think reflects (or subverts) the lived culture and experiences of people in Minas Gerais and Brazil. We are also interested in how meaning may be constructed or contested by audiences. Our paper provides a new contribution to the field because the analysis of hospitality will be conducted by situations experienced by characters in the films, aiming to understand different nuances of the relationship between hosts and guest – no one has explored this in the hospitality, tourism or leisure literature, and no one has explored film tourism in Brazil. There is then, real potential in our research for tourism and for studies on hospitality, and for understanding the contestation of identity in film tourism. Researching hospitality in films produced in the state of

Minas Gerais is a starting point to generate reflections and contributions for the deepening of this theme. This paper, then, aims to understand how hospitality is portrayed in films supported by the *Film in Minas Programme*, through the analysis of the relationship between hosts and guests. Before we turn to the methodology and results and discussion, it is necessary to situate ourselves within the hospitality literature.

Hospitality: A human act

Hospitality is polysemic. The academic debate on the ontology of hospitality welcomes different metaphysical concepts and epistemological frameworks, which are employed according to each context (Barakat & Wada, 2021; Lashley, 2000; Mauss, 2002; Walker, 2020). Much of the bibliographical production on hospitality traces its origins in human displacement by different territories, generating contact and interaction with other people and cultures. Thus, hospitality is as old '[...] as civilisation itself ... its development, from the old custom of sharing bread with a passing-by outsider, to the complex operations of multifaceted hospitality conglomerates' (Walker, 2020, p. 4).

Hospitality is associated with a behavioural set originating from the very base of society. 'The sharing and exchange of the fruits of labour, together with mutuality and reciprocity, originally associated with hunting and gathering food, are the essence of collective organisation and a of sense of community' (Lashley, 2000, p. 5). Since the dawn of time, some characteristics that involve the fabric of hospitality are mutuality and exchange, based on altruistic and beneficent feelings.

Hospitality manifests itself in the most different contexts, such as, for example, the private (domestic environment) and the commercial (economic activity). With regard to the private sphere, it is considered as the hospitality matrix, in which the hospitality roots of the relationship between host and guest are established, both socially and culturally (de Lima Camargo, 2004; Lashley, 2000; Mauss, 2000). It is at this moment that the host takes on countless tasks in order to meet both the physiological and psychological needs of the guest, thus ensuring a satisfactory welcome (Lashley, 2000). This goes back to the distant roots of hospitality. It '[...] appears first of all as a religious law that orders man to love, feed and dress a foreigner as if this one were God Himself'. (Gotman, 2019, p. 162).

In hospitality studies and leisure and tourism studies more broadly, discussions on the purpose of hospitality have been situated within three distinct currents (de Lima Camargo, 2007), involving scholars from different areas of knowledge aligned loosely to three places: France, America and Britain.

The French current is associated with gift theory of Marcel Mauss, based on the principles of *giving, receiving and giving back*. The academic debates based on the French current seek to understand the manifestation of hospitality in different cultures and societies (Caillé, 2002; Gotman, 2009; Montandon, 2004). In this scenario, welcoming, hosting, feeding and entertaining the guest (de Lima Camargo, 2007), make up the ritualistic process assumed by the host. In this way, the gifts and rewards between hosts and guests support the process of symbolic exchanges of hospitality (Mauss, 2002). In addition to being governed by rites, laws and rules, the hospitality suggests more than a form of social interaction between the individuals involved, thus constituting a form of humanisation (Montandon, 2003). On human interaction, Selwyn (2004) explains that the greatest potential of hospitality is to deepen existing relationships. After the hospitable encounter, host and guest are transformed. These individuals are no longer the same before this exchange, showing the basic function of hospitality: socialisation. In this relational process, countless situations reveal the alternation of roles between the welcomed and the welcomer: 'Indeed, it is perhaps better to conceive of multiple instances of hospitality occurring in many social situations whereby people may be both hosts and guests simultaneously according to the analytical perspective' (Lynch et al., 2011, p. 10).

The American current constructs a mercantile, capitalist view of hospitality, using it as a synonym for 'good welcome'. Studies on hospitality that follow this line value a relationship

based on contract and commercial exchange, with a focus on the hotel industry and management of different lodging facilities. (Chon & Sparrowe, 2003). In this context, hospitality:

> takes place in most Western societies in a context where hospitality does not occupy a central position in the value system. For the most part hospitality is a private matter for individuals and there is no dominant requirement to be seen as beneficent or charitable (Lashley, 2000, p. 9).

Although reciprocity can manifest itself in commercial contexts, in this environment, hospitable relations are paradoxical. Meeting with guests requires different ways of performing the role from the host, varying according to each commercial environment (Lashley, 2015). Therefore, '[. . .] the guest/consumer is enticed to consume hospitality of their own free will but the highly regulated experience may cause a loss of free will' (Lynch et al., 2011, p. 10). In addition to including goods and services to be offered and consumed, the commercial hospitality covers possibilities related to the business of tourism. Barakat and Wada (2021) argue that stakeholder theory can be used to better understand the meaning and purpose of hospitality, but this seems to us to reduce hospitality to management and marketing: subverting the ethics of the interactions and obligations of hosts and guests.

The British current uses both the Maussian theory and the commercial perspective of hospitality, thus encompassing the field of tourism, leisure and hospitality. It is comprised of the social (occurring in different social scenarios), commercial (economic activity including activities of the public and private sector) and domestic (referring to the home and relations between guests and hosts) domains of hospitality. These domains are independent but at the same time overlap (Lashley, 2000, 2004). However, 'whatever the foundation (or the beginning) of hospitality, there is a series of obligations, a succession of dangers' (Gotman, 2019, p. 165). This stems from the complexity inherent in hospitality. During the coexistence between hosts and guests, there may be setbacks governed by conflicts, tension and challenges of different orders.

Hospitality, in this way, then, is a complex and ambiguous phenomenon. Hosts and guests are faced with numerous situations regulated by rules as a kind of unequivocal ritual of hospitality (Montandon, 2003). Hospitality is a basic ritual of human bonding, regardless of the context in which it manifests itself. At the same time that the guest and host can enjoy the meeting, they can also face frustrating disagreements. That is, when the rules are violated by the individuals involved, hostility begins (de Lima Camargo, 2015; Gotman, 2019).

These considerations indicate that hospitality can be a privileged form of interpersonal encounter, marked by the attitude of welcoming others (Mauss, 2002). However, it manifests itself in a scenario that can be full of conflicts and tension, making hospitality go hand in hand with hostility (Gotman, 2019). Bearing in mind that all societies and cultures are governed by the principle of hospitality (Derrida, 2000), the importance of diving into the social dynamics that constitutes it is emphasised. According to Derrida (2000), hospitality is the key to understanding how all humans in this post-modern, capitalist global society interact. Hospitality, too, is a form of leisure that remains a space for communicate agency and one for instrumentality and hegemonic subjugation (Spracklen, 2011, 2020). It is necessary to examine its endless experiences, exchanges, relationships and human productions. Therefore, it becomes relevant to understand how hospitality is portrayed in the cinematic productions supported by the *Film in Minas Programme*, by following the methodology presented below. Our question is: what forms of hospitality are produced, and what do they say about Minas Gerais, film tourism and tourism more generally?

Methodology

The methodology of this research is qualitative and interpretive: a content analysis of films (Denzin, 2004) supported by the *Film in Minas Programme*. Content analysis, according to Minayo (2001), involves an analysis of the expression, relationships, themes and enunciation. These elements are relevant to the present investigation, whose main challenge was to analyse hospitality in audio-

visual works supported by the *Film in Minas Programme*. All the films were non-commercial, non-mainstream arthouse films.

The selection of films followed four pre-established criteria: (a) to have a trailer available on the YouTube video platform, due to the free and easy access of the audience; (b) to be a feature film; (c) to include, in its narrative, the hospitality category; and (d) to present a plot set in Minas Gerais, making it clear to viewers that the plot of the film unfolds in that state. What this meant is we reviewed each trailer available in full before we used the exclusion criteria.

Since 2004, the Programme has supported 140 films until its last edition, in 2014. Of these films, 53 have a trailer available on YouTube. Of this total, 8 Brazilian films met all the selection criteria and include the categories studied in the research. The hospitality category was clearly identified in these films[2]:

- 'Baronesa' (launched in 2018, directed by Juliana Antunes)
- The City Where I Grow Old ('A cidade onde envelheço', launched in 2017, Marília Rocha)
- The Secret of Diamonds ('O segredo dos diamantes', 2014, Helvécio Ratton)
- The Boy in the Mirror ('O menino no espelho', 2014, Guilherme Fiúza)
- The Clown ('O palhaço', 2011, Selton Mello)
- The Storyteller ('O contador de histórias', 2009, Luiz Vilaça)
- Royal Road of Cachaça ('Estrada real da cachaça', 2008, Pedro Urano)
- Dreams and Wishes ('Sonhos e desejos', 2006, Marcelo Santiago)

The access to the films selected in the research was made possible, mainly, through the loan of a copy in DVD format, granted by the State Secretariat for Culture and Tourism of Minas Gerais, in Brazil.

The process of analysing the content of the films was organised in three stages, which required us to: (a) watch the film in full, in order to learn about its content; (b) watch the film for the second time, trying to understand how hospitality is portrayed in these audio-visual works; and (c) deepen the analysis, identifying potential contributions to the advancement of theoretical production on the theme. This analysis was semiotic and critically iterative (Rawle, 2018; Tagliani, 2014), and allowed us to develop a critical lens drawing on hospitality and the contestations of meaning associated with the literature on film and the imagination (Reijnders, 2016). The 8 films selected portray hospitality situations in a direct way, as will be treated in the results presented below. The content analysis was informed by the four categories highlighted in the literature (de Lima Camargo, 2007): receive; host; feed and entertain/leisure. In the first stage of the content analysis, we made notes about locations, scenes, characters, key lines of the script for each film. In the second stage of the content analysis, we watched each film again far more slowly and applied the categories described above, spending approximately ten hours on each film. The third stage of the content analysis involved re-constructing hospitality as represented across each film, using our ontological and epistemological frame and repeating: how is hospitality created in these films, and what does that tell us about the contestation of identity in Brazil?

Results and discussion

Considering the locations of the films selected in the research, four are set in Belo Horizonte, which is the capital of Minas Gerais (The Storyteller, The City Where I Grow Old, Dreams and Wishes, 'Baronesa' and The Boy in the Mirror). The filming of this last work took place in the city of Cataguases. The script for the film The Secret of Diamonds begins in Belo Horizonte, but the protagonist travels to the countryside of Minas Gerais. The name of the municipality visited is not stated. The locations of this film were made in two historical cities of Minas Gerais (Serro and Sabará). The Clown is a film in road film style in which the troupe of a circus travels through the countryside of Minas Gerais, establishing itself mainly in the city of Passos. Even though they were

inspired by real events, these seven films are fictional. That is, they all make work in the construction of the myths of place and myths of identity that surround Minas Gerais. The directors are all performing the creative role of inventing traditions that haunt the imaginaries of the viewers about the place (Reijnders, 2016; Riley & Van Doren, 1992; Urry & Larsen, 2011).

The documentary Royal Road of Cachaça was filmed in several municipalities along this tourist route, especially in Minas Gerais. The Royal Road is over 1,630 km long and is the largest tourist route in Brazil. It runs through Minas Gerais, Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo. Its trails were opened in the 18th century, when the Portuguese Crown decided to make official the routes for the transit of gold and diamonds from Minas Gerais to the port of Rio de Janeiro. This documentary, through its editing and foregrounding of the spectacular picaresque, reveals the contested twists and turns of place, identity and culture in the literal twists of the trail (Lee, 2012).

The set of filmic productions which comprise the corpus of analysis in this article are permeated, in some way, by the plot and the myth of domestic hospitality. Only one film (The Clown) also provides the filmic setting of commercial hospitality. With regard to the relational dynamics between host and guest, each film features very particular nuances. In almost all films, it is noticed that women take on the role of hostesses during the acts of welcoming and hosting. In the film The Boy in the Mirror, the guest is welcomed by the couple in the plot. But in practice, it is the wife who is the hostess. While the husband abstains from the responsibilities related to the act of hosting, his wife takes on the duties inherent in the process. This is striking in all these films, showing a characteristic very present in patriarchal societies like the Brazilian: both historically and culturally, it is women who are in charge of the domestic chores, even today. The films, then, reproduce the existing gender order of hegemonic, heterosexual masculinity (Connell, 1987, 1995), which underpins traditional, Brazilian patriarchy.

Beneduce (2007) mentions the symbolism that permeates the figure of the woman, continuously associated with the domestic context under the tutelage of men. Through 'training' that begins in childhood, women are given the place of serving. In addition to naturalising the role of women in domestic life, these elements reinforce the stereotypes, even when considering the imaginary about the traditional hospitality of Minas Gerais. The films analysed, therefore, reveal the patriarchal and paternalistic heritage that is present in the social imagination, and that continues to rule many societies. Since the female characters are the main hosts, they are responsible for the welcoming visitors and are responsible for the tasks that the hosting process entails. In the first moment of meeting, it is observed that the hostesses, when welcoming, manifest a certain 'human warmth' directed to the guests. This happens in either verbal or gestural form, with smiles, hugs and kisses on the face. The hostesses in the films act in a kind and supportive manner, aiming to welcome the guest, during the reunion (Mauss, 2002). Despite the warm welcome, hospitality is sometimes paradoxical (Lynch et al., 2011). Hospitality is the vehicle through these films contribute to the performativity of the myth of norms and fixed, regional identity in the face of globalisation, the Tourist Gaze (Urry & Larsen, 2011) and liquid modernity (Bauman, 2000).

Of the films that portray welcoming and hosting, two of them (Dreams and Wishes and The City Where I Grow Old) are emblematic, because they highlight the discomfort of the hostesses when receiving the guest. This is evidenced through looks, facial expressions, and direct questions: 'Is it for a short time you will be here?' (character Cristina, film Dreams and Wishes). 'How long do you intend to stay?' (Francisca, film The City Where I Grow Old). After hearing an 'I don't know' as an answer, the hostess of one of these films justifies: 'The fact is that I am used to being alone. Several people who spend here, stay overnight and leave. They stay here, but to live here, wake up with me, no. It never happened, you will be the first person to stay longer in my house'. (character Francisca, The City Where I Grow Old).

Hostesses Cristina and Francisca, the latter Portuguese, reveal a concern with the process of coexistence between host and guest, which may be successful or not. This concerns the complexity of the subjective relationships in a domestic environment, which implies assuming duties that are not always part of that daily routine. It also implies offering rewards on the part of those involved,

making harmonious the interaction between host and guest. The signs of hostility shown in the act of welcoming indicate that the behaviour of the hosts is opposed to a genuine hospitality. As explained by Montandon (2004, p. 133), this one must refrain from any indication of hostility: 'The gesture of hospitality is, first of all, to put aside the latent hostility of any act of hospitality, since the guest, the stranger, often appears as a reservoir of hostility'.

Concomitant with the hospitable gesture, it was observed that all the films analysed have the necessary conditions for the hosting of guests in the domestic environment. This is evident in the preparation of a space with the basic infrastructure to accommodate the guests, providing them with both physical and emotional comfort. In this sense, the hostesses provided spaces in the house intended for resting, as a way to meet the needs of their guests. The hostesses prepared a specific room for guests in four films, thus demonstrating their care to welcome newcomers well. However, in the film Dreams and Wishes, only the couch in the room is offered by the hostess. This is probably because her home did not have a room to accommodate the guest. At any rate, the sleeping environment is a *sine qua non* condition for hospitality. It is a care that contributes to establishing a more intimate sociability to the person welcomed (Gotman, 2009).

In almost all the films analysed (seven films), the plot of hosting is marked by two relevant aspects. The first aspect refers to the strengthening of the bonds between hosts and guests, thus deepening both the affective and social ties between the individuals. Human warmth is mostly shown by the hostesses, being materialised in the form of gifts and cordial treatments towards the guest. It is at this moment that each 'housewife' ritualistically fulfils the welcoming process. This is done so that the guest can feel at home. The welcoming is evidenced in the preparation and offer of food, by creating opportunities to eat together. This mythic breaking of bread is symbolically rich and allows the creators of the films and the viewers to engage in a shared imagined space of community (Spracklen, 2015, 2020). The practice of commensality occurs in all films analysed, being a common feature of hospitality portrayed in the films of the research. The films The Clown and The Secret of Diamonds highlight foods that refer to the cultural and ritualistic identity of Minas Gerais. This is symbolised by the offer of several typical dishes. 'Feijão tropeiro' is the most common typical dish in the narratives. Other films include meals taken at the table of the host or in leisure situations, but it is not always possible to identify what is served or tasted. As the hostess of the film The Storyteller is French, she prepares food that is stereotypical of her country for the guest, creating another form of imagined community on screen (Reijnders, 2016).

The protagonist of the documentary Royal Road of Cachaça is the drink itself, which is used in various forms, practices and rituals. The 'cachaça' is associated with the history, festivity, culture, religion and memory of the communities along the Royal Road. This drink is part of the daily lives of both women and men, leading the act of welcoming visitors at the sugarcane mills, houses and commercial establishments shown in the documentary. This drink and the tourism associated with it is constructed and contested in the same post-industrial space that Scottish single-malt whisky has in the imagination of tourist policymakers, whisky fans and tourists to Scotland (Spracklen, 2011). In the film, the cachaça tasting can serve several purposes: to liven up the party, open one's appetite, refresh on hot days, relieve one's memory, ease one's work in an extremely hot weather, 'close one's body against the evil' or wash the holy images of the church. 'What livens up the party is the cachaça, and without cachaça there is no party'. (Deponent, Royal Road of Cachaça).

Eating and drinking, especially alcoholic beverages, are present in all films, especially during human actions of welcoming. This demonstrates several sociocultural representations involving both food and drink. Eating and drinking provide feelings of belonging and of human bond, going beyond the simple biological act. Food and drinks represent values, customs, behaviours, wishes and other meanings incorporated into everyday life. Among the alcoholic beverages consumed in the films, beer is notoriously present everywhere (Beckman & Shu, 2021). It is tasted both in the domestic context and in commercial establishments, such as pubs and restaurants. Often beer is enjoyed in the films to celebrate the arrival of guests or the loved ones, and in the leisure time and space experienced by the characters. In addition to the commensality practices around food and

drinks, the cordiality of hostesses is manifested in the willingness to entertain the guest with conversations, music and books, among other gestures of kindness. The films that portray the domestic context thus fulfil the different functions of hospitality created by our reading and our epistemology of the subject: welcoming, hosting, feeding and entertaining.

The care of the hostesses in the films analysed goes back to the deepest and most distant roots of the religious precepts that influence hospitality, where the 'outsider' must be treated by the host as a God (Gotman, 2019). These are also generators of mutuality and exchange, a characteristic that contributes to the deepening of ties, thus reinforcing the regulatory system of hospitality highlighted by Lashley (2000).

The strengthening of bonds through the experience of different situations ends up exercising altruistic and beneficent feelings: sharing, reciprocity, alterity, tolerance and respect (Lashley, 2000). For Lashley, this process induces the individuals to show altruism, the first quality of hospitality. In accordance with this line of interpretation, the narratives present countless situations that lead guests to repay the gifts given to them by the hostesses, as recorded in crucial scenes where the guest looks after the hostess in The City Where I Grow Old; and the moment when the guest helps to cook in Dreams and Wishes. Within this process, the alternation of roles between hostesses and guests is present in the domestic sphere. The uninterrupted fluctuation of chores causes the guest to become a host and vice versa, thus materialising a basic ritual of the human bond in the hosting process (Lynch et al., 2011). It is in this web of reciprocity that the relations established between hosts and guests gain meaning and, in parallel, the relational universe of hospitality becomes humanised: the gift is enjoyed in the same measure in which it is given back. Through sharing and exchange, growth is generated, and humanity is revealed (Selwyn, 2004).

Another aspect identified in the films concerns the conflicts that permeate the relationship between hosts and guests. Some tensions emerge in the plot of the films analysed. In general, conflicts and tensions stem from the violation of either written or unwritten rules, culminating in the hostility generated by an inhospitable encounter. In daily coexistence, quarrels, invasion of privacy and extramarital affairs are some of the tensions found in the films. Among the varied events arising from this process, it was found that often tensions between hosts and guests were overcome. However, The Storyteller is the only film in which hostilities were recurrent on the part of the guest. In this case, the guest is a teenager whose existence was strongly marked by material poverty and social abandonment, which was treated with great care by the hostess. This film was inspired by a true story.

The conflicts, tensions and hostilities also included invasion of privacy, violation of property, use of illicit substance and even physical assault on the hostess: 'You have no right to invade my home, this is violence'. (character Margherit, The Storyteller). These abominable attitudes violate laws regarding the inviolability of the home, injury, slander and violence, among others highlighted by Gotman (2019). In addition, both this and the other films analysed demonstrate tension between hostess and guest, as well as disobedience to unwritten rules. This type of situation confirms the existence of a subtle line dividing hospitality from hostility. Some of the conflicts experienced by hostesses and guests are shown where there is theft and assault (The Storyteller), clear violations of the rules; and a scene in The City Where I Grow Old where the guest quarrels with the hostess.

In the documentary Royal Road of Cachaça, as well as in the films The Clown and 'Baronesa', the reality portrayed is sometimes close, sometimes distant from the other filmic works analysed in the research. A common point of the films, as seen, is the construction of female protagonists in what concerns the acts of welcoming and hosting. This meeting is permeated by care, kindness, exchanges, strengthening of ties and alternation between hosts and guests, which is not always free from conflict situations.

In the film 'Baronesa', approximations and distances in relation to domestic hospitality were identified. This plot, whose protagonists are women, takes place on the outskirts of Belo Horizonte. The process of welcoming is constant and occurs mostly at the doorways of the houses of hostesses. As Montandon (2004, p. 32) points out, the doorway threshold is a borderline feature of the hosting

process: everything starts there, at the '[…] limit between two worlds, between the outer and the inner, the inside and the outside, the doorway threshold is a decisive step, similar to an initiation'. The bordering space of the doorway appears as a rite of passage. It is by transposing it that the subject becomes a guest to the fullest. Going beyond the geographical space, on the psychic level and in the territory of others (Grassi, 2004; Montandon, 2004; Vernant, 2008). 'Before the meeting, there is the threshold, the threshold of the "door". Here, the guest must hesitate and wait for the signal to pass. Then, they become a guest in the expression of the word and as such is introduced into the space of the host' (de Lima Camargo, 2015, p. 15). In this bordering area, '[…] new conditions and rules are revealed to set guests in an unknown environment, which encourages adaptations' (Moreira & Gomes, 2018, p. 9). The presentation and performativity of doorways here remind us of the liminal state of the tourists (Urry & Larsen, 2011): we are being invited to look in as if we are tourists ourselves and not viewers of an arthouse film.

The rules and conditions established in the film 'Baronesa', for example, demand adaptations perceived in various forms. Starting at the doorway threshold: in the film, this spot is widely used by hostesses and guests. Often they sit on the floor, on the threshold itself. This possibility is opposed to the other films discussed above, which use chairs and sofas to accommodate visitors. Emblematic, the doorway threshold is the main meeting point between hostesses and guests in the hospitality plot of the film 'Baronesa'. Right there, at the doorway threshold, the characters connect simultaneously with both the outer and inner world, which define their very existence. Such synchrony was found in dialogues that reveal dreams, projects, relationships, abuse, sexual life, social problems and personal difficulties enunciated by those women. These themes are part of the external daily life of the outskirts. On the one hand, the outskirts are marked by violence, drug trafficking, drug use and the trivialisation of death. On the other hand, they show beautiful networks of sociability and solidarity, strong bonds of identity, affective and social ties. (Gomes & Font, 2019).

In this way, social relations are established, deepened and experienced by the characters of the film 'Baronesa' at the doorway threshold. This behaviour may seem, at first, an expression of the material precariousness experienced in that context of the outskirts. However, this behaviour shows, in reality, the richness of the relationships, culturally constituted by those women. The plot of the film 'Baronesa' reveals that the welcoming and exchange accomplished at the doorway threshold itself represents a social and cultural practice proper to the context of those individuals. This allows for considering them as hosts and guests. This possibility was not identified in the model of hospitality, which highlights the need to cross the doorway threshold for the act of hosting to happen (Montandon, 2004). In addition to instilling closer ties, in this film the encounter on the doorway threshold encompasses countless possibilities under the aegis of hospitality. With that, '[…] the result from the point of view of strengthening or weakening the human bond also serves to show that hospitality is about the relationship between human beings' (de Lima Camargo, 2015, p. 8).

The Clown is the only film analysed that presents a situation of commercial hospitality. In this case, the lodging occurs in a modest hotel in the city of Passos. In this context, one has the impression that the welcome at the hotel is more formal and less warm. This is more notable when compared to the domestic hospitality portrayed in the other films. The tone of impersonality and lack of cordiality on the part of the person who occupies the role of host is seen when the protagonist of the film goes to his hotel room, unaccompanied by the employee who welcomed him. For this reason, it is often considered that in the commercial sphere, '[…] hospitality can be called neutral, with impersonal rituals' (de Lima Camargo, 2015, p. 18). The distancing and coldness noted in the film The Clown does not mean that all commercial means of lodging, such as hotels, do not offer possibilities for the expression of reciprocity and altruistic feelings between the welcomed and the welcomer. A certain amount of hospitality can manifest itself in any space, including commercial establishments (Marques et al., 2019). Thus, hosts with genuine hospitable traits will be able to create ways to interact with guests. With this, new forms and rituals can be conceived in this context.

The analysis we have undertaken here shows that film productions have the potential to portray different societies and cultures. The films selected in the research demonstrate distinct realities, in which hospitable practices are established within human relationships. With specificities and similarities, the films analysed portray past and present, in addition to bringing future perspectives in a movement that explores both the real and the imaginary. To conclude this critical analysis, Marcel Mauss (2002) claims that hospitality focuses on interpersonal relationships. This involves sharing and intersubjective exchange, highlighting the possibilities that remain in the contemporary world: whether they are realised in an inhospitable or hostile social environment, or as an opportunity for the manifestation and recreation of the social bonds. We can see this in all the films evaluated here.

Conclusion

This paper explores how hospitality is portrayed in eight films produced with the support of a programme devised by the government in the state of Minas Gerais, located in south-east Brazil. We have mapped out how identities are constructed and contested in this mythic, narrative space (Reijnders, 2016). We have explored how hospitality is produced in the cultural context of films designed to promote tourism and awareness of a particular locale. The analysis of the relationship between host and guest integrates a social dynamic woven both by the social imaginary and by the reality experienced in the contexts represented in each film. Stakeholder theory (Barakat & Wada, 2021) does not and cannot represent the complexity of the interaction represented in the films, nor indeed the gendered identities being made and subverted at the same time. It does not capture the way hospitality constructs communicative leisure spaces and identities, just as tourism itself is a contested site that creates meaning for people just as it takes their money (Lee, 2012).

The relations established between host and guest take on varied meanings according to each context portrayed in the films, in a daily interaction in which possibilities and limitations are unveiled. For this reason, hospitality consists of an ambiguous and complex phenomenon. On the one hand, it concerns a generous way of hosting the other, encouraging the strengthening of the human bond. But, on the other hand, it is not exempt from hostility when the individuals involved in the process (hosts and guests) disrespect, even if minimally, the rules of coexistence, thus generating conflicts during the act of hosting. This is evidence of the countless representations that can emerge from the intersection of individuals in the plot of hospitality (Gotman, 2019).

The content analysis of the films selected reveals that the most striking features of hospitality assume, as a starting point, the domestic hospitality. As an offshoot of this, it is women who take on the role of hostesses and perform the functions inherent in this process. Each in their own way, are attentive, look after their guests, prepare everything that is necessary to welcome them. The exclusive exercise of the role of hostesses by women can reinforce stereotypes with regard to their role in each society. This result highlights a potential contribution of this research to the advancement of theoretical production on the subject. Thus, it is relevant to conduct studies to deepen the knowledge about gender inequalities that permeate hospitality in different areas and contexts, in a contextualised and critical way. In the films analysed, it is also women who are generally responsible for preparing and offering food and drinks to guests. The practice of commensality is present in the process of welcoming and hosting visitors. It refers to the symbolic and ritualistic act of eating together, going beyond the biological act and satisfaction. The link between hospitality and gastronomy, in addition to stimulating exchanges, sharing and reflections, has the role of mediator of conflicts during the coexistence between the individuals involved.

Our research shows that the doorway threshold can constitute a space of simultaneous connection between the outer and the inner world in contexts marked by poverty and material precariousness. In the daily life of the outskirts, this bordering space can generate situations of welcoming, reciprocity and human solidarity. This can impact and define many existential conditions, as well as hospitable practices consisting of hosts, guests and visitors.

In this sense, this paper generates contributions to the academic debate on hospitality, given the incipience of discussions regarding the doorway threshold in scenarios of those socially marginalised.

The commercial scope of hospitality was portrayed in only one film (The Clown). In it, the tone of impersonality and hotel formality emerged, denouncing a less warm welcome when compared to the domestic context. However, this does not relegate commercial hospitality to a place where it is not possible to establish relations of reciprocity and altruism between hosts and guests. The evaluative aspect that permeates hospitality can occur in different environments, introducing new practices and rituals during the process of welcoming and hosting in commercial means of lodging.

In conclusion, then, productions of the *Film in Minas Programme* show several nuances of the leisure lives and hospitality phenomenon present in the Brazilian social imaginary and in the imagined, imaginary community of film fans, tourists and locals (Spracklen, 2015, 2020). Hospitality is central to how people in Brazil imagine Minas Gerais, and the directors of these films are happy to create works of art that are informed by that imagined, imaginary community of Minas Gerais, even if their work subverts the myth in the literally performative nature of each film. Further, policy-makers in Minas Gerais, keen to promote tourism to the post-industrial, inland region, are happy to promote these films and the programme as a way of hoping they will attract bourgeois visitors from home and overseas. Different practices and contexts are represented in the films analysed that reveal a wealth of details about hospitality. The filmic plots and settings also reveal that hospitality is inscribed in human relationships through countless possibilities. In the midst of this process, human life takes on a variety of meanings and causes a tangle of social and hospitable practices to emerge.

Notes

1. The name Minas Gerais (general mines) was chosen by the colonist-surveyors to represent the extraction fields installed in the region. Even today, mining activities are performed in this state.
2. We leave the original untranslated versions of the names of each film in inverted commas.

Disclosure statement

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