

(Dis)ordering the Cisgender Norm and its Derivatives

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Abstract: *This theoretical review article investigates cisgenderedness, or the cisgender category, and its ramifications in daily interactions to understand its intelligibility, as well as the effects it (re) produces. The thinking of Foucault and of some trans authors was the theoretical reference used for the scientific investigation of the regimes of truth, of the production of resistance and of ethical and aesthetic experiences. It was possible to demonstrate the crossings between the discourses and biopolitics which modulate ways of being, calling for new advances in the studies of gender and sexuality, besides bringing to light important elements for the processes of subjectivation and for the problematization of cisgenderedness, thus recognizing the importance of the term for a more equal analysis of human experience.*

Keywords: *Cisgenderedness; Transsexuality; Gender; Biopolitics.*

(Trans)tornando a norma cisgênera e seus derivados

Resumo: *Este artigo de revisão teórica tem como objetivo abordar a cisgeneridade, ou o termo cisgênero, e sua ramificação nas interações cotidianas de modo a compreender as inteligibilidades que a acompanham, bem como os efeitos que são (re)produzidos. O pensamento de Foucault e de algumas autoras trans foi o referencial teórico utilizado para a investigação científica dos regimes de verdade, da produção de resistência e de experiências éticas e estéticas. Assim, foi possível demonstrar os atravessamentos percebidos entre discursos e biopolíticas que modulam formas de ser e de estar no mundo, convocando novos avanços para os estudos de gênero e sexualidades, além de expor importantes elementos para os processos de subjetivação e da busca de problematização da cisgeneridade para reconhecer a importância da utilização do termo para uma análise mais igual da experiência humana.*

Palavras-chave: *cisgeneridade; transexualidade; gênero; biopolíticas.*

Introduction

This study deals with problematizations concerning the categories of gender and sexuality, emphasizing the production of power games that rely on the different contexts in which discourse, resistance and various forms of domination interrelate in everyday social interactions. In this sense, the study aims at investigating cisgender norms, from a subaltern point of view, which puts in evidence the term in use and some interests in which intelligibilities are built to (re)produce ways of being, living and acting in the world. Such plots and strategies are called for by society to maintain the *status quo* of domination of hegemonic sex and gender categories over dissident minorities. It reflects, therefore, the need to think about the kind of language being used for categorization, from an institutional perspective, promoting rigid modes of subjectivation and the production of crystallized meanings which are naturalized for the organization and ordering of society. Thus, different fields are called for, from such norm, to reproduce it by means of a normative path considered

pertinent and appropriate, but that can also resist this logic, by refusing identitarianism and subjectivation.

The study also proposes to bring to the surface, in our daily micropolitics, the macropolitical elements which constitute them, demonstrating how they are created and become significant. This perspective integrates problematizations based on categories which are not fixed at all, as in the field of gender and sexuality, which justify certain everyday experiences and existences in contemporary times, but which are not fixed or given, being socially constructed through historical and cultural processes (Jaqueline Gomes de JESUS, 2012; Viviane Vergueiro SIMAKAWA, 2015; Amara Moira RODOVALHO, 2017).

The analysis of linguistic and discursive practices which reverberate in various attitudes and behaviors raises a series of methodological issues that gain importance for challenging society to problematize the regimes of truth which produce both scientific and commonsense knowledge. Roughly, they expose the boundaries between different knowledges and subjectivations that either approach or move away from one another to legitimize certain interests, but which need to be addressed when a critical sociological and psychological analysis is involved.

We start from the assumption that difference and dissent are always under investigation and that they are generally sheltered in the concept of sexual diversity by the programming lines of various projects, programs and actions of the Brazilian government and of different sectors of society, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), associations and even institutions such as schools, businesses, churches, bodies in charge of establishing public policies, health services among others – in addition to several people who use the term sexual diversity as a reference for plurality. However, the use of this expression erases the different sexual and gender categories. To the extent that these differences remain unseen and often devalued by the automatic technical rationality that organizes and legitimizes the disaggregated inequalities of the demands of lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, queer, intersex, asexual and other populations (LGBTQIA+), it is important that these significations, in which this article is anchored, become effective, gaining their legitimate space to identify the initiatives which enable and promote the development of a perspective closer to critical multiculturalism (Terezinha Maria SCHUTCHER; Janete Magalhães CARVALHO, 2016).

To confront these forms of invisibilization and denigration, we adopt the methodological resource of theoretically reviewing works, articles, dissertations and theses produced by trans people¹ (Emi KOYAMA, 2003; JESUS, 2012), in order to articulate information for the understanding of minorities. This strategy attempts exactly to turn to other voices and visibilities in spaces which are often closed off, such as the academy and the construction of scientific knowledge, among others. Based on this scientific knowledge and linked to an analytical and institutional foucauldian investigation, we hope to advance in the process of reflection on gender and sexuality, through the problematization of visibility lines, brought under the gaze of trans people (KOYAMA, 2002, 2003; Julia SERANO, 2007; Jaqueline Gomes de JESUS, Hailey ALVES, 2010; JESUS, 2012, 2014b; Leila DUMARESQ, 2014; SIMAKAWA, 2015; Beatriz Pagliarini BAGAGLI, 2016; RODOVALHO, 2017), thus bringing new light to the construction and production of scientific knowledge and their current perspectives.

It is also important to emphasize that this discussion is deeply crossed by conservative contemporary liberal practices that have been leading to the elimination of gender and sexuality agendas, especially in legislative bills processed in Brazil (Dolores GALINDO; Felipe CAZEIRO; Arthur Galvão SERRA; Leonardo Lemos de SOUZA, 2017). In addition to that, through biopolitics, contemporary behaviors and subjectivities go beyond State policies by using human technologies to control others. As an example, we can mention the episodes of verbal aggression, the protests and the persecution of protesters experienced by contemporary American philosopher Judith Butler during her visit to Brazil in early November of 2017. The philosopher is an international reference for her contribution to gender and queer studies, which is the reason why Brazilian right-wing protesters condemned her actions on the basis of *gender ideology* (OPERA MUNDI, 2017).

Within this censorship framework, regimes, regulations and games of truth by means of technologies and knowledge/power devices, studies like the one undertaken here reveal the state of the art which, despite numerous obstacles and difficulties, can sustain and develop resistance, as well as a struggle for visibility, recognition and emancipation of gender issues and sexualities.

Cisgender: an inside out look!

We shall start by approaching the problem which comes from the cisgender category as widely used by the trans community, with special attention to its origin and its effects on society, whose acceptance of the term has faced great difficulties in Brazil, as pointed by Beatriz Bagagli (2018, p. 14):

¹ The trans group consists of transvestites, transsexuals and transgender people; in this sense, the term has been used to encompass a wide series of subversions of gender norms that are linked to a discontinuity between the sex attributed to one person at the time of his/her birth and his/her identity and gender expression.

The references to the term “cisgender” are rare in official texts, such as laws or resolutions, academic research and articles and even in dictionaries and in gender-studies publications. They are “rare” if not completely absent, despite the increasing use of the word on the Internet, particularly in feminist and activist blogs. The low use or visibility of the term outside these spaces, especially in official/academic discourses, differs from the use of the terms “transgender”, “transvestite” and “transsexual”, these being more commonly used academically or in everyday life.

Despite the absence of the term cisgender in official texts, it is important to recognize that it is used strategically to emphasize the current binarist perspective and, in this way, propound that gender: 1) is not a natural order; 2) is a construct of moral and social conventions; and 3) is not conditional upon the existence of a particular genitalia/reproductive organs, according to Judith Butler (2003). Viviane Simakawa (2015) advances this discussion to highlight, in her master’s thesis, the speech given by Professor Tatiana Lionço during her participation in the Cycle of Lectures and Subjectivities, Sexualities and Cultures (SUSEXCUS), in September 2013, at the Federal University of Bahia (UFBA) about transfeminism and cisgenderedness. According to Simakawa, Lionço holds that the term cisgender emerges to designate the experience of people who are identified with a fixed gender assigned at birth, besides seeking to naturalize and dichotomize experience, given that cis would be the opposite of trans, so to speak. However, in its design, the purpose for creating the concept was different, for it was meant to show that both trans and cisgender people undergo a gender identification process. From a similar perspective, Leila Dumaresq (2014) points out that the word cisgender is still undergoing a series of debate and that, in spite of being widely used, advocated and attacked, it is very little understood.

The debate here proposed does not intend to defend a division/segregation of people between cis and trans, but to produce reflections for proposing a more egalitarian analysis, so that we can understand both forms of gender identification as different features that make up the human species and its experiences, breaking with theories and paradigms that reinforce the idea of identities that are essentialized or defined by biological markers. From this prism, it is important to think terms such as cisgender and its derivatives (cisgenderedness) so as to demonstrate that they are taken as immutable norms and, thus not read socially in the same way as the non-norm. The intelligibilities which inform social relations are unjustly uneven, resulting in the most diverse ways of understanding the entire experience and existence that transcends the cis norm – as is the case of trans people, because they are read as live files of social exclusion stories (Deis SIQUEIRA, 2006). As Michel Foucault points out, in *The Order of Discourse*:

Desire says: “I should not like to have to enter this risky order or discourse; I should not like to be involved in its peremptoriness and decisiveness; I should like it to be all around me like a calm, deep transparence, infinitely open, where others would fit in with my expectations, and from which truths would emerge one by one; I should only have to let myself be carried, within it and by it, like a happy wreck”. The institution replies: “You should not be afraid of beginnings; we are all there in order to show you that discourse belongs in the order of laws, that we have long been looking after its appearances; that a place has been made ready for it, a place which honors it but disarms it; and that if discourse may sometimes have some power, nevertheless it is from us and us alone that it gets it.” (FOUCAULT, 1984, p. 109).

Thus, Foucault (1996) expresses how difficult it is to disengage oneself from the strategies operated by discourse. This procedure consists, necessarily, in examining the discursive processes that reinforce and promote the range of control of what is captured by discourse, in which interdiction, separation and will to truth would make up a set of mechanisms and systems of exclusion. At first, it is associated with the taboos of the object and the privileged or exclusive right of the speaking subject, revealing its relations with discourse, desire and power. Then it would reveal an opposition between two discursive terms, as in reason *versus* lunacy, for example. And thirdly, it would set up a tool of exclusion and separation between what is true and what is false (FOUCAULT, 1996).

About the relationship between discourse and power, Amara Moira Rodovalho (2017) considers that the origin of the term (cis)gender took place 70 years after the creation of the word “trans”, i.e. one term (transsexual) appears in the middle of the 20th century and the other (cisgender) in the 21st century. This corroborates Berenice Bento and Larissa Pelúcio (2012) when they refer to the “transsexual phenomenon”, pointing out that Harry Benjamin, an endocrinologist in the 1950s, coined the term to distinguish real transgendered people (or the true transsexual) from homosexuals. In its turn, the term cisgender was first used in 1995 by a Dutch trans man named Carl Buigis, to refer to people who are not trans (SERANO, 2007).

But what does it mean to be cis? Cisgender? What do these words mean? Some explanations point to the issue of the molecular division as a possible terminological analogy. Rodovalho, while speaking about the cis and trans issue, alludes to the “geometric isomerism in Organic Chemistry, where ‘cis’ are the atoms which, when a molecule is split in half, remain on a same side of the plane and ‘trans’ are those that remain on opposite sides” (RODOVALHO, 2017, p. 365). Thus, in the field of

human gender, starting from a reference marked by biological determinism: woman = vagina and penis = man, 'cis' would be the person whose gender and genitalia designated from birth would be equivalent – which would not be too far from geometric isomerism.

Jaqueline Gomes de Jesus (2012) proposes some advances in the understanding of this concept, going beyond the biological markers that were the basis for the understanding of gender as a diagnostic category, just as addressed by Bento (2015). For her, cisgender would have a broader meaning, if taken as an umbrella term, even if designating people who identify with the gender assigned to them from birth, but that would not define them as essentialized identities (JESUS, 2012). Transgender, then, according to the author, would be the one who escapes from this linearity imposed by biological determinism between gender identity and genitalia, in short, any person that transcends the established gender standards: transvestites, transsexuals, and transgender people, among others. Thus, both indicate an experience of gender identification.

To demonstrate that the main difference between cisgenderedness, transsexuality and other gender identities considered dissident arises from a reductionist view strictly focused on sex – understood as genitalia – also means to promote a dialogue that fosters, in a Foucauldian sense, the understanding that “the body is not ‘sexed’ in any significant sense prior to its determination within a discourse through which it becomes invested with an ‘idea’ of natural or essential sex” (BUTLER, 1990, p. 92).

To problematize through discourse the cisgender category and different concepts of man and woman, in biological terms, (Richard MISKOLCI; PELÚCIO, 2007; BENTO, 2012) makes it possible to move towards a critical deconstruction of what is attempted and to conform ontological truths about corporalities, confirming that “the body gains meaning within discourse only in the context of power relations” (BUTLER, 1990, p. 92). By that logic, when the experiences of cis and trans lives are compared, we find that trans people have the poorest conditions in the Brazilian social stratification, one reason why we can assume that biological markers become social markers of inequality (BENTO, 2015).

Many discourses in the field of cisgenderedness come to refute this idea, mainly in the cis feminist movements whose criticism refers to the lack of coherence with gender (or with what is expected by society) on the part of cisgender women. In this sense, it is worth pointing out that one tends to think that the coherence would be closely linked to the ‘idea of peace’, whose logic affirms that a cisgender woman would be at peace with her gender in such a way that she would repeat everything that is expected of her in a non-critical way. However, we must mention that, in a misogynist, patriarchal and sexist society, the possibilities for women, whether cis or trans, to be at peace with their gender are meager, or even non-existent.

Being a woman (cis or trans) in Brazil means to struggle for a category which is not often accessed: the category of humanness, given that it is one of the leading countries in the world in the number of murders of women of different kinds (BENTO, 2015). Thus, it is not possible to connect gender and the so-called ‘idea of peace’, as both gender and bodies are sites of struggle! For this reason, feminist struggles are necessary, for “it is important to show solidarity with all the women who have challenged strongly organized powers, assuming the harsh consequences brought about by this attitude in every historical period” (Maria Amélia de Almeida TELES, 1993, p. 11). Still in the words of the author:

Nobody is oppressed, exploited and dominated because she wants to. A patriarchal and chauvinist ideology has denied women the right to develop their full potential, erasing their historical contribution [...]. [...] In its broader sense, feminism is a political movement. It questions power relations, oppression and the exploitation of some groups by others. It radically opposes patriarchal power. It proposes a social, economic, political and ideological transformation in society (TELES, 1993, p. 12).

By acknowledging the cisgender term, what is intended is not to end or thwart feminist struggles, but to bring into discussion an experience, an event, a feature (among many) of living/experiencing humankind, as there will be non-cisgender experiences that will not fit the patterns of cisgenderedness: the trans experiences. In the same way, it is not possible to think of feminism as something unique, but as a hyphenated field – as João Manuel de OLIVEIRA (2010) puts it – that is, as marked by an intersectionality of theories and experiences, leading to a loss of identitarian stability, so that it becomes imperative to use more attentive lenses in order to better understand these differences, which are not just sexual, but also of gender, among other features.

In this line of thought, it is important to discuss feminisms (in the plural) as the understanding that womanhood is diverse, and there are also various sorts of feminisms (black women, lesbians, intersexuals, among others), including women who are not cisgender, with their own peculiarities and demands which will add more elements to the category woman, which will have to be reflected upon and problematized, because, otherwise, the violence and the experiences currently discussed by various feminisms run the risk of being wiped out.

The dispositif of cisgenderedness

We shall rely on the concept of dispositif (apparatus) to understand the regulatory forces and powers in our society, especially to understand how they work in the dynamics of cisgenderedness. Foucault (1988) coins the concept of dispositif to understand how a range of disparate forces, engaged for specific purposes and produced by means of discursive and non-discursive practices, institutions, laws, scientific, philosophical, moral and philanthropic statements, affect the constitution of people and their organization. Nevertheless, as the French philosopher ponders, "Power is not an institution, and not a structure; neither is it a certain strength we are endowed with; it is the name that one attributes to a complex strategical situation in a particular society" (FOUCAULT, 1988, p. 103).

In the field of discursive practices, Foucault (1996) reflects on the danger of discourse in face of its appropriations. The author advocates that discourse should be understood in its discontinuity, as neither uniform nor stable. In addition, one should not imagine a disconnection between accepted and excluded discourse, dominant and dominated discourse, but on the contrary, as a plurality of discursive elements that can take on different strategies (FOUCAULT, 1988). Maybe that is the reason why, if we look at Brazil's recent history, during the period of the civil-military dictatorship (1964-1985), the word transvestite was prohibited and heavily censored. Through capture technologies, the repressive regime promoted specific modes of subjectivation and negative social images for these gender modes over the years (Helena VIEIRA, 2015).

Yet, in earlier times (from Classical Antiquity to the end of the 18th century), being trans was qualified as something positive, belonging to the field of the divine, that is, any discourse about the issue of gender ambiguity was intrinsically related to the spiritual world and to the world of magical creatures. Modernity and the ensuing political, economic, social and epistemological transformations resulted in the suppression of this, supernatural and fantastic element, moving almost definitely away from the culture of classical antiquity that had been structured as rationalist and scientific since the 17th century (Jorge LEITE Jr., 2011). Thus, the idea of being male or female in different times held a completeness that involved other elements such as social status, degree of freedom, desires, clothing, behaviour and even spirituality, and the differentiating genitalia was just another, but not the main or essential characteristic as incorporated by modernity, because the body was seen as a single one for both sexes (Thomas LAQUEUR, 2001). This paradigm shift propagated since modernity has served as the basis for many progressive policies of the National Congress that reject the demands of the LGBTQIA+ population under the justification of defending a single family model – heterosexual and cisgender (GALINDO; CAZEIRO; SERRA; SOUZA, 2017).

Foucault, in *Microfísica do poder* (1978), proposes important concepts for a deeper understanding of western society. Breaking with the ideas of Thomas Hobbes (1997), which presupposed the centralization and possession of power in a hierarchical state, Foucault, in turn, argues that power is not there, but that it is exercised through institutions, organizations, social and moral conventions, among other structures, which join into microspheres to wield power over people. There would be, therefore, other institutions to which people would belong – as family, school, religion, morality, work, among others – that would also be in charge of disciplining them, constructing them gradually. For this purpose, a constant surveillance would be needed in order to ensure the effectiveness of the exercise of power that internalizes a behavior in people in such a way that they would take it as a practice. This process would result in the passage from a disciplinary society to a controlling society, dedicated to defending something of interest to all the people: life itself.

Thus, Foucault (1978) develops the foundation to think about the society of control that, in general terms, he calls biopower and biopolitics, concepts that sustain life production policies for the maintenance of domination over people. Biopolitics would sequence the potentiation of certain people and would result in one of the domination strands of contemporary capitalist system.

This does not deny the importance of institutions on the establishment of power relations. Instead I wish to suggest that one must analyze institutions from the standpoint of power relations, rather than vice versa, and that the fundamental point of anchorage of the relationships, even if they are embodied and crystallized in an institution, is to be found outside the institution. (FOUCAULT, 1983, p. 222)

Therefore, in the context of power relations, the cisgender dispositif would be responsible for promoting subjectivation on the one hand, but, on the other, would find resistance and (re)significations in terms of desire and of non-normative gender. It is in this field that the cisgender dispositif operates and produces meanings as a strategic form of normalization materialized in a kind of precept based on cisheterosexism which points to a private psychic and body structure, kept under control, and monogamous and reproductive constructs associated to biological markers. In other words, the operationalization of the dispositif of cisgenderedness follows biomedical discourses which defend biological determinism as the source for the understanding of gender, promoting what we can call a gender dictatorship – and which holds compulsory cisgenderedness (BAGAGLI, 2016) as its foundation.

Transfeminism: a struggle for equality!

Currently, the adoption of the concept of cisgenderedness has intensified, especially through the activism of trans people and people of other genders, referred to by Viviane Simakawa (2015) as gender-diverse people. Thinking from an intersectional perspective, and raising the trans issues, a new movement emerges: transfeminism. Emi Koyama, in *The Transfeminist Manifesto* (2003), argues that the movement would be by and for trans women, but that, while seeking their liberation, it would also be engendering the liberation of all other women. Despite its focus, the author argues that transfeminism is not closed to other categories, as it welcomes queer, intersex people, trans men, non-trans women, non-trans men and others, insofar as it includes them as participants in that struggle, recognizing it as crucial in the quest for liberation of all categories.

In this sense, contemporary Brazilian female authors propose an explanation that complements Koyama's (2003) perspective, such as the studies of Jaqueline Gomes de Jesus (2014a, p. 5), for whom transfeminism

[...] can be defined as a line of thought and a feminist practice which, in short, (re)discusses the morphological subordination of gender (as a psychosocial construction) to sex (biology), conditioned by historical processes, criticizing it as a practice which has served as a justification for the oppression of any people whose bodies do not comply with the binary norm man/penis and woman/vagina, including transgender men and women, hysterectomized and/or mastectomized cisgender women, orchiectomized and/or emasculated cisgender men, and heterosexual couples with practices and affective-sexual roles differing from those traditionally attributed to them, among other people.

Still in this conceptual scenario, an addendum becomes necessary, in view of the fact that transfeminism is also a category of feminism which is under construction, emerging as a critique of the categories of sexual dimorphism² (LAQUEUR, 2001) and cissexism³ (JESUS; ALVES, 2010), namely, referring to an essentialist feminism based on a biological matrix and which refuses to legitimize gender as a category separate from sex, being crucial for understanding the body and the social relations among people. In the same way that feminism must fight for all women, transfeminism's proposal would not be different, as Koyama (2003) defends, for it seeks the emancipation of all women with their different backgrounds and intersections, no matter whether they are trans or not, being important to recognize the differences and similarities among women and, thus, fight for all demands.

For this reason, transfeminism is called for because it is mostly in line with trans people, who have realized that current feminisms do not include them, to bring to the surface the violent and murderous element involved in trans lives. Besides a cissexist or dimorphic society, there is also a society anchored on transphobia.

We use the term Transphobia to denote forms of violence, discrimination, hatred, disgust, aggressive behaviour and negative attitudes directed at individuals or groups who transgress or do not conform to social expectations and norms around gender. It includes institutionalized forms of discrimination, criminalization, pathologization and stigmatization and manifests in various ways, ranging from physical violence, hate speech, insults and hostile media coverage to forms of oppression and social exclusion. Transphobia particularly affects gender-variant/trans people. It operates together with further forms of power and violence and entails contextualized engagements. Used in the social sciences to denominate a complex social phenomenon, it has acquired a much broader meaning than what is suggested by the term 'phobia', which is understood in psychology as an individual pathological response (Carsten BALZER; Jan Simon HUTTA, 2012, p. 18).

It is important to emphasize that the trans issue is in fact an issue of gender, not of sexual orientation. In the same way that compulsory heterosexuality (Adrienne RICH, 2010) is taken as a norm for sexual orientation, compulsory cisgenderedness is taken as a norm for gender issues (BAGAGLI, 2016). Thus, in the same way that heterosexuality is taken as the norm in our society, so is it believed that people should be cisgender. It is due to this structure of control that we see hate speeches against the homosexual population spread in different ways in our society, and the same is happening against trans people. The difference between them is that the first holds a relationship with sexual orientation and the second with gender identity. This is why the discussion of transphobia for transgender people is so necessary, for the debate on homophobia does not contemplate the specificities regarding gender prejudice against trans people (JESUS, 2012). However, the two concepts are not exclusive; what is evident is that one can complement the other and that trans people deal with an additional component.

² The categories of sexual dimorphism are presented by historian and sexologist Thomas Laqueur (2001) through a historical analysis on the creation of gender, as a criticism towards the biological justification of the conception of sex/gender within a context of struggle over gender and power.

³ Cissexism is understood as a hierarchical binarist belief from an alleged biological gender agreement in order to legitimize the superiority to cisgenderedness on the transgenderedness.

To that extent, to recognize the term cis is to realize that most cisgender people will not have to face violence along the lines of everyday transphobias – in contrast to trans people, who often have their lives taken because of transphobic oppression, for attempting to escape from society's cisnormative standards. In terms of violence, they are often expelled from home by families, and denied schooling, health services, among others. The difficulty or impossibility of access to the formal labor market directs them to unhealthy lives, below poverty lines, a situation which is intensified when we consider that their life expectancy is below the average of the Brazilian population: 35 years of age (Larissa BORTONI, 2017).

Among the multiple dynamics of violence, we find in daily social interactions various prohibitions and threats in the circulation and consumption areas, where genders considered dissident are banned, as in the use of public toilets. An example is the recent debate at the Federal University of ABC (UFABC) as to whether trans people could use the toilet assigned to their gender identity (Neto LUCON, 2017)⁴. In general terms, this debate illustrates prohibitions for a human category for whom citizenship, basic rights – presumably inalienable – are constantly suppressed. According to Butler (2003), it is gender that endows people with human endorsement, and for it to be intelligible – what the philosopher calls intelligible genders –, it would be necessary to ensure a continuous coherence between sex/gender/sexual practice/desire.

It is also worth mentioning that the trans gender identity is still seen as a pathology and that so far there have been no programmatic initiatives for the exclusion of transsexuality from the list of diseases, as with homosexuality in the 1990s (Maria Carolina F. B. ROSEIRO; Marina Francisqueto BERNABÉ; Naiara Ferreira Vieira CATELLO, 2016). Transsexuality is currently described in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM), in its fifth edition, as "Gender Dysphoria". And in June 2018, the World Health Organization, through the official publication of the final revision of the International Statistical Classification of Diseases and Related Health Problems ICD-11, began to disregard transsexuality as a mental disorder and to define it as a Sexual Health Condition (and not as a gender one) (WHO, 2018). Even suggesting new codes, categories and reallocations, the document still reveals the continuing psychopathologization of trans experiences even though changes have been a major achievement in terms of movement, given that such a description used to appear in ICD-10 under the designation of "Transsexualism" – with the suffix *ism*, that explicitly contained a connotation of disease (BENTO; PELÚCIO, 2012).

However, there is a movement that has been fighting this pathological and biomedical prescription on gender which integrates the network called Stop Trans Pathologization (2012)⁵ and that has been fiercely attempting to remove transsexuality from those medical guides, endeavoring to seek autonomy for trans people. Its manifesto refutes any surgical or medical treatment and advocates access to change of name and gender in civil documents without the person having to undergo any medical psychological assessment, in addition to demanding policies to help trans people enter the formal labor market.

To address cisgenderedness is to give name to a norm, to a hate speech which is conveyed from the moment we are born. It is also to mark a certain place as "privilege" (in quotation marks, because being a cis woman with its intersections in our society is also a field of great tension). It is also to discuss regimes of truth built on the gender, about 'real men and women', which often seem spontaneous and natural but are based on compulsory cisgenderedness (BAGAGLI, 2016). Finally, to recognize the term cis is to acknowledge it as one more gender experience and not as a transcendental norm. Seeing it as a gender possibility (KOYAMA, 2002), and thus suppressing its universal character, is intended to show that this gender possibility also exists and that it is related to a historical period, being socially constructed, besides being just another way of being human among many other possible ones.

Some (in)conclusive considerations

The purpose of the discussion addressed here is not to mark cisgender people or to confront them, but to bring to light, through a theoretical and analytical review, that to deny the term cisgender and/or the concept of cisgenderedness involves an erasure of the constant violence and violations that non-cis people have to face just because they disturb the "cis" term. By putting this norm in evidence, we are naming and problematizing it, so that we can combat its effects, demarcating the borderline areas and confluences that the norm carries and tries to establish, or in other words, to point out the instability of its excess. Through a Foucaultian approach, it is not a matter of breaking completely away from an analysis of institutions, but of avoiding the traps from a theoretical perspective that allows us to distinguish chance from necessity, to find spaces for new forms of problematizing and acting against power practices.

⁴ The discussion arose because the use of the ladies' room was prohibited to a trans employee of the institution who was forced to use the men's room and had to face moral harassment, psychological violence and became vulnerable to physical violence.

⁵ The manifesto which was created and has been posted by the International Network for Trans Despathologization in its official page, since 2009, has been promoting actions all over the world.

Therefore, this work is intended to reach a wide range of human experience, within reach of all categories, no matter their gender, sexual orientation, social class, race, ethnicity, among others, all those who fight for a more just world as, in theory, it is laid down in the Brazilian Constitution and in the Universal Declarations of Human Rights.

We would like to reaffirm that we are in agreement with non-cis activists and people who struggle for the recognition of their autonomy, the depathologization of trans identities (as we hope for their complete suppression from all the aforementioned manuals), and access to necessary treatment without the endorsement of psychologists and psychiatrists. We would also stress that we do not agree that trans experiences are taken as pathologies: they are just possible gender existences and, above all, characteristics of the human species, breaking with theories and paradigms that reinforce the idea of essentialized identities. Therefore, we leave the reflections open, as we are not protagonists of the initial ideas of this discussion, but part of this current historical process in the field of cisgenderedness in which the quest for the collective construction of a more equitable world for every person is more than a duty, a form of social justice which should be incorporated into all areas and fields of knowledge.

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