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MOBILITY, MODERNITY, AND THE MIDDLE CLASS:  
TRANSMEDIATIZATION AND BRAZILIAN TELEVISION

by

JONATHAN VENTURA

Under the Direction of Ethan Tussey, PhD

ABSTRACT

Mobility, Modernity, and the Middle Class: Transmediatization and Brazilian Television examines the process of transmediatization in Brazil as a failed process of digital modernity. Following the pattern of diverse modernities and cultures of convergence, this dissertation argues that there are also multiple regimes of transmediatization. This dissertation provides a framework for analyzing the Brazilian regime of transmediatization through mobility, participation, and expansion, using the Brazilian telenovela *Cheias de Charme* (2012, TV Globo) as an extensive case study. Through an analysis of the telenovela and its transmedia extensions, industrial discourse, and sociohistorical context, I illustrate how the telenovela functioned as a site of transmediatizing modernity. In doing so, I seek to bridge the gap between theories of modernity

and studies of transmedia. With mobility, I refer to the rapid circulation of people, goods, and ideas in modernity. I connect this with audiences moving across platforms and devices with transmedia engagement as well as the potential for social mobility through transmediatization. Participation refers to the increasing potential for democracy in modernity, and I correlate this with the democratizing potential of transmediatization. Finally, with expansion I bring together the nation-building of modernity with world-building in transmedia. These dimensions of transmediatization are not independent of each other but are integrally connected. I argue that the regime of transmediatization in Brazil is an era fraught with paradox and ambivalence. The process of social mobility through transmediatization also became a process of class discrimination. While transmediatization functioned as a process of empowerment and national integration, it was also exploitative and disciplinary as participants were shaped into ideal viewers and ideal citizens.

INDEX WORDS: Transmedia, Cultures of convergence, Telenovelas, Brazil, Cheias de Charme

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A Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

in the College of the Arts

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2022

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2022

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December 2022

**DEDICATION**

For my amazing wife Julia—to forever and onward we'll climb.

For Ryder, Benjamin, and Caleb—our three wonderful children.

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ABLH	Associação Brasileira de LAN Houses (Brazilian Association of LAN Houses)
ABCID	Associação Brasileira de Centros de Inclusão Digital (Brazilian Association of Digital Inclusion Centers)
ICT	Information and Communications Technologies
LAN	local-area-network
MCMB	The Most Charming Maid in Brazil
OBITEL	Observatório Ibero-Americano da Ficção Televisiva (Ibero-American Observatory of Television Fiction)
UPP	Unidade de Polícia Pacificadora

## 1 INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 A Transmedia Awakening

Penha's first clue that something was wrong was a sudden visibility. Walking along the street in her working-class neighborhood, people call out to her, referring to Penha derisively as an "*empreguete*."<sup>1</sup> Penha initially shrugs off the newfound attention. However, she is abruptly summoned to the local LAN house—an internet café primarily used for Local Area Network gaming—where she receives surprising news: her music video, "Vida de Empreguete," (Empreguetes' Life) is going viral. Rather than being pleased with the viral success of the music video, Penha is visibly distraught. The video was supposed to be a secret, an inside joke between Penha and her friends that mercilessly made fun of their employers. However, the joke has suddenly become quite serious as the video's success also carries the threat of legal action from Penha and her friends' respective employers.

Penha and her two friends Rosário and Cida are domestic workers in the telenovela *Cheias de Charme* (Sparkling Girls) (TV Globo, 2012). They work in separate houses in the fictional upper-class neighborhood known as Casa Grande (Big House). When her employer Chayene is out of town, Rosário invites Penha and Cida over. As they commiserate over their challenges as domestic workers, they decide to make a music video poking fun at their employers. Using Chayene's mansion and clothes, the three friends lampoon both the decadent

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\* Unless otherwise noted, all translations are my own.

1. The word *empreguete* is a mash-up of the Portuguese words *empregada* and *piriguete*. *Empregada* refers to a maid or domestic worker. *Piriguete* is a pejorative slang term that is similar to the English words "hoochie," "tramp," or "floozy;" it is a slang term that refers to a promiscuous woman, especially one who dresses provocatively to attract attention. While the term *empreguete* is initially used as a derisive insult in the telenovela, Penha and her friends adopt the name "Empreguetes" for their musical group. By using the term *empreguetes* as the name of their group, the friends simultaneously embrace their origins as housemaids while also hinting at their social aspirations.

lifestyles of their employers and their own lives as domestic workers. The video includes footage of the friends dancing around with mops, brooms, and feather dusters as they turn their domestic work into a performance. The music video also shows the friends adorning themselves in fancy clothes, lounging around, and mockingly drinking champagne.

After making the music video, however, the friends realize that it could lead to serious ramifications from their powerful—and at times, even abusive—employers. They convince their friend Kleiton to destroy the DVD. Kleiton owns the local LAN house, and he is an all-around tech guru that the friends recruit to film and edit their music video. Kleiton reluctantly agrees to destroy the video, but not before he shows the DVD to a few other people. One thing leads to another, and the DVD is stolen and uploaded to the internet, becoming a viral sensation overnight.

In the diegesis of the telenovela, the music video isn't initially shown. Only brief moments from the video are shown, along with characters reacting to the music video. Instead, characters tell each other how to find the music video by simply doing an internet search for the word "*empreguete*." While the music video was going viral in the telenovela, it also became a transmedia extension on the actual internet.<sup>2</sup> By visiting the TV Globo website or by searching for the word "*empreguete*," viewers could then see the music video. The chapter or episode with

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2. I use the term "transmedia extension" here in the same way that Jason Mittell does in Jason Mittell, *Complex TV: The Poetics of Contemporary Television Storytelling* (New York and London: New York University Press, 2015). For Mittell, transmedia extensions consist of peripheral content that enhances a core text, but the distribution or weight given to these extensions is unbalanced—the core text or "mothership" is always privileged Mittell, 294-95. This differs from Henry Jenkins' vision of a more balanced transmedia approach where each medium "makes its own unique contribution to the unfolding of the story." Henry Jenkins, "Transmedia 202: Further Reflections." *Confessions of an Aca-Fan* (2011): [http://henryjenkins.org/blog/2011/08/defining\\_transmedia\\_further\\_re.html](http://henryjenkins.org/blog/2011/08/defining_transmedia_further_re.html).

the viral spread of the music video occurred on a Saturday evening (chapter 30, 19 May 2012).<sup>3</sup> That same evening, the music video became available on Globo's website. Over the weekend, the music video received four million views.<sup>4</sup>

The telenovela continued to use a similar pattern to guide viewers to transmedia extensions. The trio of friends rocketed to stardom, adopting the stage name of "Empreguetes" for their musical group. The singers appeared on various TV Globo news programs and talk shows to promote their music: *Domingão do Faustão* (TV Globo, 1989-2021), *Programa de Fátima* (TV Globo, 2012-present), *Mais Você* (TV Globo, 1999-present), and more.<sup>5</sup> These appearances occurred both inside and outside the diegesis of the telenovela, blurring the line between fiction and reality. The breakdown between fiction and reality continued with other transmedia extensions. One of the characters in the telenovela runs a blog called "Estrelas do Tom" (Tom's Stars), where his character blogs about his experiences as the manager for Chayene and the Empreguetes. Television viewers could visit Tom's blog and upload videos of themselves imitating the "Vida de Empreguete" music video. While the video submissions occurred in the real world, some of these videos also found their way into the narrative of the telenovela.<sup>6</sup> Tom would describe the videos to other characters, and at times he would even play

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3. In Latin America, individual episodes of telenovelas are typically referred to as chapters, and the show runners are referred to as authors. This harkens back to the telenovela's origins of folhetins (derived from the French feuilletons), where chapters of serialized stories would be published regularly in newspapers.

4. Bernardo Cury, "Clipe Das Empreguetes: Bombando Na Web, Da Ficção À Vida Real." *TechTudo* (2012): accessed 17 Jan, 2018, <http://www.techtudo.com.br/noticias/noticia/2012/05/clipe-das-empreguetes-bombando-na-web-da-ficcao-vida-real.html>.

5. Amanda Serra, "Com 35 Produtos, Clipes E Hits, 'Cheias De Charme' Se Destaca Por Unir Internet E TV [With 35 Products, Clips and Hits, 'Cheias De Charme' Distinguishes Itself By Uniting Internet and TV]." *UOL.com* (2012): accessed 10 Aug, 2016, <http://televisao.uol.com.br/noticias/redacao/2012/09/27/com-20-produtos-clipes-e-hits-cheias-de-charme-se-destaca-por-unir-internet-e-tv.htm>.

6. Sabrina Tomaz Batista, Carolina Tomaz Batista, and Mirna Tonus, "A Proposta Transmídia Na Televisão Aberta: As Novelas Da Rede Globo [the Transmedia Proposition in Broadcast Television: The Novelas of TV Globo]." *XXXV Congresso Brasileiro de Ciências da Comunicação* (2012), 305.



the videos for them. Television viewers at home could thus experience the videos at the same time as characters in the telenovela.

As part of Globo's transmedia strategy, various contests were also held through other programs to promote *Cheias de Charme*. One such contest was hosted by *Domingão do Faustão* (TV Globo, 1989-2021), a weekly variety program. On *Domingão*, housemaids throughout Brazil were called upon to submit videos of themselves to determine who was the most "charming maid in Brazil." While the contest was promoted on *Domingão*, it was also mentioned repeatedly on *Cheias*, with the winner of the contest making a special appearance in the telenovela as herself. During the contest, television viewers could visit Globo's website to vote for which housemaid would advance to the next round. In this case, the world-building or transmedia expansion was participatory, inviting viewers/users to participate both in the creation and selection (by way of voting) of content. However, the expansion in this case is also problematic as it reiterated the "world" not as a fictitious realm, but as the actual nation of Brazil. The function of world-building in transmedia storytelling and nation-building as a project of modernity merged here to become one and the same.

The move towards transmedia production by TV Globo occurred in response to a variety of overlapping factors, including the rise of the middle class in Brazil, increased competition from rival networks, and the growth and implementation of cable and satellite technologies. From the 1960s through the 1980s, Globo established itself as the dominant broadcaster in Brazil. Globo's dominance came about through the influx of foreign capital from the Time-Life Corporation, favorable contracts with the military regime, and through the aggressive pursuit of a *padrão de qualidade* or "pattern of quality" with its telenovela production. As Eli Carter

describes it, the “pattern of quality” was the standardization of production by Globo.<sup>7</sup> The media conglomerate invested heavily in cutting edge technology and distinguished itself from competitors with a polished aesthetic and by establishing a star system.<sup>8</sup> The quality of production was viewed favorably by the military regime that governed from 1964-1985. Globo became the unofficial propaganda arm for the regime, and in the process was able to secure vital government contracts. By the 1980s, Globo’s share of the telenovela audience hovered around 70%, while some programs captured as high as 90% of the audience.<sup>9</sup> Globo catered primarily to an upper-class demographic through its telenovelas, which depicted an upper-class sensibility and consumerism.

However, Globo began to face a sharp decline in viewership in the 2000s. From 2006 to 2013, Globo lost more than a third of its audience.<sup>10</sup> During this same time, subscription-based channels rose more than 500%, from 3.5 million subscribers in the year 2000 to 18 million subscribers by 2013. Becker et al. also illustrate that while broadcast audiences were declining, pay TV and internet penetration were steadily increasing.<sup>11</sup>

Another key factor that led to a decline in viewership was a distinct lack of representation of the emerging middle class. Socioeconomic classes are gauged by letters in Brazil, ranging from the upper and upper-middle A and B classes, through the lower-middle C class down to the

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7. Eli Carter, *The New Brazilian Mediascape: Television Production in the Digital Streaming Age* (Gainesville, FL: University of Florida Press, 2020), 8.

8. Yvana Fechine, “O Núcleo Guel Arraes E Sua ‘Pedagogia Dos Meios,” *E-Compós* 8 (2007), 5.; Randal Johnson, “Television and the Transformation of the Star System in Brazil,” in *A Companion to Latin American Cinema*, ed. Maria M. Delgado, Stephen M. Hart, and Randal Johnson (Newark: John Wiley & Sons, 2017).

9. Cacilda M. Rêgo, “Era Uma Vez...a Rede Globo De Televisão,” *Studies in Latin American Popular Culture* 22 (2003), 165.

10. Valdecir Becker, et al., “Migration of Television Audience to Digital Media: Impacts on TV Schedule and Journalism,” *Athens Journal of Mass Media and communications* 1, no. 4 (2015), 353.

11. Becker, et al.

lower D and E classes. In 2011, the A and B classes earned more than USD \$3000 a month, the C class earned between USD \$696 and \$3000, while the D and E classes earned less than USD \$696.<sup>12</sup> From 2003 to 2011, 39.6 million people moved up from the D and E classes to the C class.<sup>13</sup> The emerging middle class became a prominent cultural issue in Brazil as the C class accounted for 55% of the Brazilian population by 2012.<sup>14</sup> Joseph Straubhaar argues that some viewers began abandoning TV Globo because the lifestyle they saw depicted didn't match their own.<sup>15</sup> Estranged viewers cited a recurring phrase that encompassed both class and race representation, saying, "I don't see people like me on Globo."<sup>16</sup> Similar conclusions were reached by Antonio La Pastina, Joseph Straubhaar, and Lirian Sifuentes in their study on Brazilian telenovelas and disenfranchised viewers.<sup>17</sup>

In order to recapture audiences, Globo attempted to engage with viewers through transmedia storytelling, as well as through representation of the C class. Globo began to cater to the rising C class through the use of characters, settings, themes, and music associated with the lower-middle class. Prominent telenovelas and mini-series on TV Globo started to incorporate these elements in the 2010s, including *Cheias de Charme* (TV Globo, 2012), *Avenida Brasil* (TV Globo, 2012), *Salve Jorge* (TV Globo, 2012), *Subúrbia* (TV Globo, 2012), *O Canto da Sereia* (TV Globo, 2013), *Pé na Cova* (TV Globo, 2013), *Geração Brasil* (TV Globo, 2014), and more. In discussing the television phenomenon associated with the C class on TV Glob, Breno Cruz

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12. Marcelo Neri, *A Nova Classe Média: O Lado Brilhante Da Base Da Pirâmide* (São Paulo: Saraiva, 2011), 82.

13. Neri, 27.

14. Neri

15. Joseph D. Straubhaar, *World Television: From Global to Local* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2007).

16. Straubhaar, 238.

17. Antonio La Pastina, Joseph D. Straubhaar, and Lirian Sifuentes, "Why Do I Feel I Don't Belong to the Brazil on TV?" *Popular Communication* 12, no. 2 (2014).

argues, “It appears that fiction—previously approached many times in an elitist manner—has become a fiction of the masses in broaching the quotidian of a great part of the population of the network’s audience.”<sup>18</sup>

Apart from *Cheias de Charme*, Globo also began experimenting with transmedia in the telenovelas *Fina Estampa* (TV Globo, 2011) and *Avenida Brasil* (TV Globo, 2012), as well as the network’s news program *Jornal Nacional* (TV Globo, 1969-present). After *Fina Estampa* finished airing in 2011, two films were released that continued the storyline of one of the telenovelas characters: *Crô: O Filme* (Globo, 2013), and its sequel *Crô em Família* (Globo, 2018). The content of the first film was largely taken from online comments on various forums and social media outlets, creating an “authorized” version of “unauthorized” fan musings in what Suzanne Scott terms a “regifting economy.”<sup>19</sup> *Avenida Brasil* is notable for the way it embraced its own “meme-ability”—numerous GIFs from the telenovela appeared on Globo’s website, inviting users to repost the moving images on various social media platforms.<sup>20</sup> Crucially, *Fina Estampa*, *Avenida Brasil*, and *Cheias de Charme* all featured storylines showcasing the rising middle class in Brazil. The result is a fusion of transmedia experimentation coupled with class representation. While these other projects occurred around the same time as *Cheias de Charme*, *Cheias* stands out because of its multifaceted approach that incorporated blogs, CDs, video contests, news appearances, and music videos as part of the transmedia experience.

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18. Breno de Paula Andrade Cruz, “Classe C e o Fenômeno Social TV No Brasil,” *Revista Administração em Diálogo* 17, no. 3 (2015), 119. (my translation)

19. Ramon Queiroz Marlet, “A Formação Da Memória Narrativa Transmídia,” *Revista Eletrônica do Programa de Pós-graduação da Faculdade Cásper Líbero* 7, no. 1 (2015); Suzanne Scott, “Repackaging Fan Culture: The Regifting Economy of Ancillary Content Models,” *Transformative Works and Cultures* 3 (2009).

20. Renato Luiz Pucci Jr. et al., “Avenida Brasil: O Lugar Da Transmídiação Entre as Estratégias Narrativas Da Telenovela Brasileira,” in *Estratégias De Transmídiação Na Ficção Televisiva Brasileira*, ed. Maria Immacolata Vassallo de Lopes et al. (Porto Alegre, Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil: Editora Sulina, 2013).

In connection with the focus on the C class, transmedia extensions with *Cheias* complicate Suzanne Scott's description of the regifting economy. Fans typically operate in a gift economy regarding fan-made content: fan fiction and videos are designed to be freely shared.<sup>21</sup> As Bertha Chin argues, the impetus behind fan-made content lies primarily in generating social and cultural capital.<sup>22</sup> Corporations then take fan-made content and repackaging or regift it back to fans. Scott argues that this regifting creates a mixed economy "that obscures its commercial imperatives through a calculated adoption of fandom's gift economy, its sense of community, and the promise of participation."<sup>23</sup> While this regifting certainly obscures the attempts to exploit fan-created content with *Cheias*, I argue that what is being regifted is not just fan-made content, but class itself. As viewers participate in and create transmedia content, that same content becomes a representation of an idealized working class. Throughout the telenovela and its transmedia contests, viewers are encouraged to submit videos of themselves imitating the main characters in *Cheias* by singing and dancing while "performing" labor. The videos thus feature participants turning their domestic labor into play, conveying an image of a complacent working class that is regifted back to viewers.

## 1.2 Cultures of Convergence

The transmedia nature of *Cheias* coupled with the telenovela's focus on the C class also complicates the idea of convergence in Brazil. As Nick Couldry points out, instead of theorizing

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21. Karen Hellekson, "A Fannish Field of Value: Online Fan Gift Culture," *Cinema Journal* 48, no. 4 (2009): 113–18; Stanfill, Mel. "The Fan Fiction Gold Rush, Generational Turnover, and the Battle for Fandom's Soul." In *The Routledge Companion to Media Fandom*, edited by Melissa A. Click, and Suzanne Scott (New York: Taylor & Francis Group, 2018).

22. Bertha Chin, "It's About Who You Know: Social Capital, Hierarchies and Fandom," In *A Companion to Media Fandom and Fan Studies*, edited by Paul Booth (Hoboken, NJ: Wiley Blackwell, 2018).

23. Suzanne Scott, "Repackaging Fan Culture: The Regifting Economy of Ancillary Content Models," *Transformative Works and Cultures* 3 (2009): ¶1.5.

about a monolithic convergence culture, it is more useful to think about varied “cultures of convergence.”<sup>24</sup> Henry Jenkins defines convergence as “the flow of content across multiple media platforms, the cooperation between multiple media industries, and the migratory behavior of media audiences who will go almost anywhere in search of the kinds of entertainment experiences they want.”<sup>25</sup> However, Jenkins is quick to steer away from the “black box fallacy,” or the idea that all media is collapsing into the same device. The black box fallacy “reduces media change to technological change and strips aside ... cultural levels.”<sup>26</sup> In other words, digital convergence allows for content to be transmitted and shared across a multitude of platforms and devices, but all content doesn’t flow through the same platform or device. For Jenkins, convergence culture is democratizing in that individuals not only engage with the same content across multiple platforms, but they also participate in the production of culture. Alan Kirby also refers to this phenomenon as “digimodernism ... in which the ... term conceals a pun: the centrality of digital technology; and the centrality of the digits, of the fingers and thumbs that key and press and click in the business of material textual elaboration.”<sup>27</sup>

In connection with media convergence, Jenkins also describes what he calls “transmedia storytelling.” For Jenkins, transmedia storytelling is a “new aesthetic that has emerged in response to media convergence—one that places new demands on consumers and depends on the active participation of knowledge communities.”<sup>28</sup> Jenkins adds that a transmedia narrative is

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24. Nick Couldry, “More Sociology, More Culture, More Politics,” *Cultural Studies* 25, no. 4-5 (2011), 487.

25. Henry Jenkins, *Convergence Culture: Where Old and New Media Collide* (New York and London: New York University Press, 2006), 3.

26. Jenkins, 15.

27. Alan Kirby, *Digimodernism: How New Technologies Dismantle the Postmodern and Reconfigure Our Culture* (New York: Continuum, 2009), 51.

28. Jenkins, *Convergence Culture*, 20.

one that “unfolds across multiple platforms, with each new text making a distinctive and valuable contribution to the whole. In the ideal form of transmedia storytelling, each medium does what it does best.”<sup>29</sup> While Jenkins’ work is invaluable for understanding the evolving state of media industries and audiences, consideration of other industries, economies, and cultures is overlooked. Couldry points out how Jenkins’ work paints audiences in broad strokes, failing to account for the diversification and stratification of viewers.<sup>30</sup> This stratification stems from socioeconomic differences that affect access to technology, as well as other demographic factors such as gender, class, and ethnicity.<sup>31</sup> Additionally, Hay and Couldry argue that studies of convergence should include the multiplicity of waves of “new” media, as well as both the “successful and failed political mobilizations that attracted global attention in recent years.”<sup>32</sup>

By a similar token, Scolari and Ibrus argue that an analysis of contemporary media convergence should move away from simply acknowledging consumer empowerment.<sup>33</sup> They argue that transmediality needs to be reevaluated—instead of merely examining cultural texts and media institutions, transmediality needs to be analyzed as “new forms of scarcity, inequality, and power struggles. That is, it is necessary to become explicitly concerned about all the manifestations of social power that have conditioned the emergence of transmedia practices and about the new forms of dominance that these practices may have enabled.”<sup>34</sup> The current study takes up Scolari and Ibrus’ call to examine new forms of power struggles that emerge through

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29. Jenkins, 95-96.

30. Couldry, “More Sociology, More Culture,” 491.

31. Couldry, 498.

32. James Hay and Nick Couldry, “Rethinking Convergence/culture: An Introduction,” *Cultural Studies* 25, no. 4-5 (2011): 482.

33. Carlos A. Scolari and Indrek Ibrus, “Transmedia Critical: Empirical Investigations Into Multiplatform and Collaborative Storytelling,” *International Journal of Communication* 8 (2014), 2191-2200.

34. Scolari and Ibrus, 2193.

transmedia practices. Through a discursive analysis of the *Cheais de Charme* telenovela, its associated transmedia extensions, as well as industrial discourse surrounding the program, I illustrate how the telenovela functioned as a site of transmediatized and transmediatizing modernity. The telenovela and its extensions became more than simply a site of viewer engagement—they were framed as a space whereby viewers could become mobile, participatory, and integrated citizens. However, this space was also paradoxical in that it brought participants increasingly under the purview of TV Globo, which acted as a pseudo-gatekeeper for the nation.

### 1.3 Modernity and Transmediatization

In order to examine the connections between transmedia and modernity in Brazil, I draw on the work of Karin Fast and André Jansson in relation to transmediatization.<sup>35</sup> Fast and Jansson argue that “growing sectors of society (including work) [have] become adapted to or dependent on transmedia.”<sup>36</sup> In this regard, Fast and Jansson move beyond the conceptualization of transmedia popularized by Jenkins. In Jenkins’ early work on transmedia, the concept was integrally linked with storytelling that occurs in contemporary media franchises.<sup>37</sup> It is worth pointing out that for Jenkins, transmedia storytelling is just one facet of convergence culture, alongside participatory culture and collective intelligence. However, even the broader conceptualization of convergence culture is framed in the context of migratory audiences “in search of entertainment experiences.”<sup>38</sup> Fast and Jansson argue that transmedia encompasses far

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35. Karin Fast and André Jansson, *Transmedia Work: Privilege and Precariousness in Digital Modernity* (London: Routledge, 2019).

36. Fast and Jansson, 11.

37. Jenkins, *Convergence Culture*, 93-130; Henry Jenkins, “Transmedia Storytelling 101.” *Confessions of an Aca-Fan* (2007): [http://henryjenkins.org/blog/2007/03/transmedia\\_storytelling\\_101.html](http://henryjenkins.org/blog/2007/03/transmedia_storytelling_101.html).

38. Jenkins, *Convergence Culture*, 3. Jenkins has since revised this approach to account for a broader range of transmedia experiences outside of commercial franchises. See Henry Jenkins, “Transmedia Logics and



more than just commercial endeavors or entertainment; rather, it is “a technologically enabled mode of cultural circulation.”<sup>39</sup> Instead of looking solely at transmedia texts and institutions, Fast and Jansson examine how people have incorporated transmedia into their daily lives. They argue, “Most media today are transmedia, almost by default, which means that this is the material and cultural shape in which most people encounter media in their day-to-day lives.”<sup>40</sup> As such, transmedia technologies have become integral to everyday life, becoming “carriers of social norms, expectations and demands on how individuals should communicate with others, for what purposes, and ultimately how they should organize their lives at large.”<sup>41</sup>

The normalization of these processes is what Fast and Jansson refer to as transmediatization. They argue that the current era of digital modernity has led to a “new regime of mediatization.”<sup>42</sup> Nick Couldry and Andreas Hepp define mediatization as “a concept used to analyze critically the interrelation between changes in media and communications on the one hand, and changes in culture and society on the other.”<sup>43</sup> Hepp also describes mediatization as studying “ongoing processes of transformation.”<sup>44</sup> As part of these processes and transformations, mediatization looks at how society and culture have adjusted and continue to adjust to diverse media logics.<sup>45</sup> A key component of mediatization is how these changes are

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Locations,” in *The Rise of Transtexts: Challenges and Opportunities*, ed. Benjamin W.L. Derhy Kurtz, and Mélanie Bourdaa (New York: Routledge, 2017).

39. Fast and Jansson, *Transmedia Work*, 7 (emphasis in original).

40. Fast and Jansson, 33 (emphasis in original).

41. Fast and Jansson, 33.

42. Fast and Jansson, 13.

43. Nick Couldry and Andreas Hepp, “Conceptualizing Mediatization: Contexts, Traditions, Arguments,” *Communication Theory* 23 (2013), 197.

44. Andreas Hepp, *Cultures of Mediatization*, trans. Keith Tribe (Cambridge, UK: Polity, 2011), 38.

45. Stig Hjarvard, “Mediatization and Cultural and Social Change: An Institutional Perspective,” in *Mediatization of Communication*, ed. Knut Lundby (Berlin; Boston: De Gruyter Mouton, 2014); Sonia Livingstone,

normalized, with technologies, texts, and institutions becoming indispensable to social life.<sup>46</sup> For Fast and Jansson, mediatization has entered a new regime known as transmediatization, where texts, users, and practices move across devices and platforms. Not only do they move across devices, but they are expected to do so as societies become more dependent on transmediatized modes of production.<sup>47</sup>

An additional consideration concerning mediatization and transmediatization is the connection between modernity/digital modernity. As I discuss further in chapter 2, mediatization is viewed as a process of modernity, acting alongside other processes such as globalization and individualization.<sup>48</sup> As a process of modernity, mediatization both affects long-term change and is also in turn impacted by socioeconomic changes. Fast and Jansson carry this further, arguing, “Transmediatization manifests the extension and reshaping of modernization processes in digital times.”<sup>49</sup> In order to illustrate this, they build on Anthony Giddens’ framework of modernity. For Giddens, modern social life was predicated on the separation of time and space, disembedding mechanisms, and institutional reflexivity.<sup>50</sup> According to Giddens, time and space were “connected through the situatedness of place” in pre-modern life.<sup>51</sup> However, this connection was disrupted by the development of an “empty dimension of time” with the invention of the

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and Peter Lunt, “Mediatization: An Emerging Paradigm for Media and Communication Research?,” in *Mediatization of Communication*, ed. Knut Lundby (Berlin; Boston: De Gruyter Mouton, 2014).

46. Fast and Jansson, *Transmedia Work*, 5.

47. Fast and Jansson, 6.

48. Freidrich Krotz, “Mediatization as a Mover in Modernity: Social and Cultural Change in the Context of Media Change,” in *Mediatization of Communication*, ed. Knut Lundby (Berlin: De Gruyter, Inc., 2014), 131-61.

49. Fast and Jansson, *Transmedia Work*, 21.

50. Anthony Giddens, *Modernity and Self-Identity: Self and Society in the Late Modern Age* (Cambridge, UK: Polity Press, 1991).

51. Giddens, 16.

mechanical clock and a standardization of calendaring systems and time zones.<sup>52</sup> This is closely connected with the second component of Giddens' argument, namely disembedding mechanisms or abstract systems. Through symbolic tokens (such as money) and expert systems, social relations are lifted out of local contexts and rearticulated across indefinite conceptions of time and space.<sup>53</sup> This leads to a condition of reflexivity in which knowledge is not absolute; social activity is chronically revised as additional information or knowledge is brought to light.<sup>54</sup>

Fast and Jansson adapt Giddens' framework to the current era of digital modernity by outlining three trends in modern society that are integrally linked with transmediatization: the liquidization of lifestyle sectors, extended reliance on abstract systems, and ontological vulnerability. In regard to the liquidization of lifestyle sectors, Fast and Jansson argue that information, data, and text are paramount. Information, data, and text circulate across diverse technologies and platforms, and they are also subject to change through the active involvement of media users.<sup>55</sup> The circulation of digital data across platforms also results in data that can be surveilled and commodified. As such, "Transmedia devices and platforms enable people to plan, coordinate and represent a steadily growing range of lifestyle practices regardless of where they are."<sup>56</sup> Fast and Jansson also see an increased reliance on abstract systems in an era of digital transmedia. They argue that an increasing number of sectors and institutions in everyday life have adapted to—or are in the process of adapting to—transmedia technologies. For instance, modern banking utilizes mobile payment systems, smartphones, credit cards, and so on in a

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52. Giddens, 16-17.

53. Giddens, 18.

54. Giddens, 20.

55. Fast and Jansson, *Transmedia Work*, 36.

56. Fast and Jansson

process that is “entirely transmediatized.”<sup>57</sup> Finally, Fast and Jansson argue that transmediatization has resulted in ontological vulnerability. On the one hand, transmedia offers new ways of connecting with people across time and space. However, it also carries with it the imperative to spread and to share, turning friends, clicks, and “likes” into currency.<sup>58</sup> As such, individuals have to constantly re-evaluate their identities based upon the latest information and recommendations.

While Fast and Jansson provide a useful starting point for the present study, their work also risks homogenizing modernity and transmediatization. However, modernity is not a single, unified process that occurred everywhere at the same time. For instance, Néstor García-Canclini borrows from Habermas to illustrate that modernity in Latin America is incomplete.<sup>59</sup> García-Canclini argues, “Why should we go around worrying about postmodernity if, on our continent, all modern advances have neither arrived nor reached everyone?”<sup>60</sup> As García-Canclini points out, modernity has emerged differently in relation to “multiple logics of development,” resulting in multiple, unequal modernities.<sup>61</sup> Returning to Couldry’s work cited earlier, just as there are multiple modernities, there are also diverse digital modernities and cultures of convergence.<sup>62</sup> These developments occur according to different logics and socioeconomic contexts.

This brings me to one of the main interventions of the present study. Following the pattern of diverse modernities and cultures of convergence, so too are there regimes of

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57. Fast and Jansson, 37.

58. Fast and Jansson, 38.

59. Jürgen Habermas, “Modernity—an Incomplete Project,” in *The Anti-Aesthetic: Essays on Postmodern Culture*, ed. Hal Foster (Port Townsend, Wash.: Bay Press, 1983).

60. Néstor García Canclini, *Hybrid Cultures: Strategies for Entering and Leaving Modernity* (Minneapolis; London: University of Minnesota Press, 1995), 6-7.

61. García Canclini, 9.

62. See note 24

transmediatization. As the term is used here, a regime of mediatization refers to “the dominant social ordering of media as cultural forms.”<sup>63</sup> This is not to say that media is the dominant social form. Rather, media influences and is in turn influenced by other social fields in a reciprocal process.<sup>64</sup> The particular configuration of these relationships is thus viewed as a regime of mediatization. However, instead of looking at a singular regime of transmediatization as Fast and Jansson do, we need to account for multiple regimes that emerge in various contexts around the world. A process of transmediatization in Sweden—the focus of Fast and Jansson’s work—functions differently than transmediatization in Brazil or other nations in Latin America. For instance, the process of transmediatization in Brazil emerged amid the social backdrop of a rising middle class. Brazilians also follow a different set of logics with regard to the consumption of media products and the use of media technologies. This study provides a framework for examining the regime of transmediatization in Brazil.

I identify three main facets or dimensions to transmediatization in Brazil, namely mobility, participation, and expansion. These stem from various theories of modernity, mediatization, and transmedia which will be discussed in greater detail below. With mobility, I refer to the rapid circulation of people, goods, and ideas in modernity. I connect this with audiences moving across platforms and devices with transmedia engagement as well as the potential for social mobility through transmediatization. Participation refers to the increasing potential for democracy in modernity, and I correlate this with the democratizing potential of transmediatization. Finally, with expansion I bring together the nation-building of modernity with world-building in transmedia. These dimensions of transmediatization are not independent

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63. Fast and Jansson, *Transmedia Work*, 32.

64. Hjarvard, “Mediatization and Cultural,” 202.

of each other but are integrally connected. Using the telenovela *Cheias de Charme* as an extensive case study, I argue that the regime of transmediatization in Brazil is one of paradox and ambivalence. While transmediatization was viewed as a process of social mobility, it also became a process of class discrimination. Transmediatization functioned as a process of empowerment and national integration, but it was also exploitative and disciplinary as Globo attempted to shape participants into ideal viewers and ideal citizens.

#### 1.4 Mobility and Modernity

The first aspect I'll address is that of mobility. Modernity ushered in a new era of mobility. Developments in transportation and communication technologies facilitated the widespread dispersal of people, goods, and ideas. Not only do these elements move around the world, but they do so at increasingly faster speeds. Giddens describes modernity as having a "restless, mobile character."<sup>65</sup> Harvey situates this mobility in connection with a compression of time and space, arguing, "[T]he history of capitalism has been characterized by speed-up in the pace of life, while so overcoming spatial barriers that the world sometimes seems to collapse inwards upon us."<sup>66</sup> Appadurai describes this rapid circulation in the context of cultural flows or "landscapes" that interact with each other, and each flow is in turn impacted and interpreted by history, language, and political background.<sup>67</sup> These landscapes encompass ethnoscaples, mediascaples, technoscaples, financescaples, and ideoscaples; in other words, the various flows of people, media images/technology, mechanical/information technology, money, and ideologies.

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65. Anthony Giddens, *The Consequences of Modernity* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1990), 11.

66. David Harvey, *The Condition of Postmodernity: An Enquiry Into the Origins of Cultural Change* (Cambridge, MA: Blackwell, 1989), 240.

67. Arjun Appadurai, *Modernity At Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996), 33.

Each of these categories is underpinned by the facility with which they travel or flow. For instance, when describing technoscapes, Appadurai emphasizes, “By technoscape, I mean the global configuration, also ever fluid, of technology and the fact that technology, both high and low, both mechanical and informational, now moves at high speeds across various kinds of previously impervious boundaries.”<sup>68</sup>

Transmedia is also characterized by mobility. I’m not referring to mobile technologies, but rather the mobility of individuals to move or migrate from one device to the next. A recurring theme in discussions of transmedia is the ability for people to migrate across devices and platforms. Fast and Jansson argue, “The regime of transmedia implies that any kind of information or data, and thus users and ‘audiences’ themselves, can migrate between platforms—and also beyond them through other modes of communication.”<sup>69</sup> Similar language is used by Jenkins to describe convergence culture and “the migratory behavior of media audiences.”<sup>70</sup> Caldwell also outlines how corporations “must learn to master textual dispersals and user navigations that can and will inevitably migrate across brand boundaries.”<sup>71</sup> With the rise of modernity, there was an increased mobility or flow of people, goods, and information across boundaries. Transmediatization also is characterized by a mobility that cuts across boundaries as individuals are able to float between various devices and platforms. However, what is significant about this mobility is how it affects production and consumption at the individual level. As Fast and Jansson argue, “Transmedia is much more than an industrial mode of operation and a

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68. Appadurai, 34.

69. Fast and Jansson, *Transmedia Work*, 34.

70. Jenkins, *Convergence Culture*.

71. John T. Caldwell, “Second-Shift Media Aesthetics: Programming, Interactivity, and User Flows,” in *New Media: Theories and Practices of Digitextuality*, ed. Anna Everett, and John T. Caldwell (New York and London: Routledge, 2003), 136.

platform for semiotic processes of translation. Most media today are transmedia, almost by default, which means that this is the material and cultural shape in which most people encounter media in their day-to-day lives.”<sup>72</sup>

As it pertains to Brazilian modernity, mobility is characterized by a combination of both physical mobility (e.g., the ability to travel via modern transportation throughout all regions of Brazil) and social mobility (i.e., class mobility). While these two categories initially seem distinct, they frequently overlap in Brazil. For instance, Bianca Freire-Medeiros and Leo Name illustrate how aerial cable cars in Brazil are used in poor areas to reinforce “the spectacular dimension of landscapes usually associated with poverty, violence, and segregation.”<sup>73</sup> Aerial cable cars functioned not just as a means of transportation; they also turned *favelas* or shantytowns into tourist spectacles. Thomas Skidmore argues that rapid industrialization resulted in an exodus of individuals from marginalized areas to urban cities. Despite making up a significant portion of the labor force, these individuals were viewed as the “dangerous classes,” a threat to established social order.<sup>74</sup> Zygmunt Bauman similarly describes a fear among elites that stems from the “*mobile vulgus*—the inferior kind of people on the move, dribbling or gushing into places where only the right kind of people should have the right to be.”<sup>75</sup>

While these issues of physical and social mobility come to bear with *Cheias*, there is a lack of scholarly work on transmediatization and class. In studies of transmedia, class is typically

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72. Fast and Jansson, *Transmedia Work*, 32-33.

73. Bianca Freire-Medeiros and Leo Name, “Does the Future of the Favela Fit in an Aerial Cable Car? Examining Tourism Mobilities and Urban Inequalities Through a Decolonial Lens.” *Canadian Journal of Latin American and Caribbean Studies / Revue canadienne des études latino-américaines et caraïbes* 42, no. 1 (2017): 1–16.

74. Thomas E. Skidmore, *Brazil: Five Centuries of Change* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 142.

75. Zygmunt Bauman, *Liquid Modernity* (Cambridge, UK; Malden, MA: Polity Press, 2000), 93.



mentioned only in passing. For instance, Anna Kérchy argues that Disney employs “classist commodification” to draw in consumers through “[s]lugary fantasies about upward social mobility and wealth conjoined with the myth of romantic true love.”<sup>76</sup> However, Kérchy doesn’t address the class makeup of these consumers, describing them only as “little girls [who] can become princesses at the price of becoming playthings in the consumer mothers’ hands.”<sup>77</sup> In their study of transmedia work, Fast and Jansson subsume a discussion of class into a broader category of “privilege,” but their definition of privilege is centered more on existential qualities rather than on signs of success or status.<sup>78</sup>

There is also a curious gap in studies of transmedia in Brazil. Studies tend to focus either on the representation of the rising middle class or on the use of transmedia as a branding strategy by TV Globo. However, few studies examine these crucial elements together. Mauricio Piqueira’s study of class relations in *Cheias* focuses on the telenovela’s advocacy for domestic workers’ rights as Globo positions itself as a socially conscientious network.<sup>79</sup> While Piqueira’s work does account for social mobility as it relates to *Cheias*, the transmedia nature of the telenovela is largely ignored. On the other hand, Klênnia Feitosa provides an in-depth study on the various transmedia products associated with *Cheias*, illustrating how Globo used these extensions to expand the narrative universe and create a co-creative space with viewers.<sup>80</sup>

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76. Anna Kérchy, “Transmedia Commodification: Disneyfication, Magical Objects, and *Beauty and the Beast*.” In *The Routledge Companion to Transmedia Studies*, edited by Matthew Freeman, and Renira Rampazzo Gambarato (New York: Routledge, 2019), 228.

77. Kérchy, 228.

78. Fast and Jansson, *Transmedia Work*, 6.

79. Mauricio Tintori Piqueira, “Representações Das Relações Entre Classes Sociais Em Duas Novelas Brasileiras: Cheias De Charme E Avenida Brasil,” diss., Pontifícia Universidade Católica de São Paulo, 2017.

80. Klênnia Nunes Feitosa, “Narrativa Transmídia E a Expansão Do Universo Ficcional: Os Princípios E as Estratégias De Transmídiação Da Telenovela Cheias De Charme,” diss., Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do Norte, 2015.

However, a discussion of class is limited to a brief description of the target audience of *Cheias*. Patricia Biegging examines how Globo used transmedia to create a new form of telenovela with increased interaction and immersion as the network attempted to adapt to changing patterns of consumption.<sup>81</sup> Samantha Joyce similarly argues that Globo embraced transmedia production as a way to extend its own “pattern of quality” and to keep telenovelas relevant in an era of digital media.<sup>82</sup> However, their work doesn’t address the rising middle class that played a significant role in the shifting patterns of consumption surrounding telenovelas in the 2010s. By isolating their respective studies to these different areas, scholars either fail to situate *Cheias* in a developing culture of convergence, or their work is ultimately divorced from the socioeconomic reality of Brazil.

This study attempts to bridge that gap, analyzing *Cheias* both as a transmedia product and as a transmediatizing space of mobility. Using *Cheias* as a model, I argue that the potential for social mobility was tied to the process of transmediatization in Brazil in the early 2010s. However, this was ultimately a failed experiment that was complicated by the economic downturn in 2013 and the ensuing decline of the C class.<sup>83</sup> Mobility in the telenovela cuts across aspects of social mobility, physical mobility, and transmediatization. The telenovela revolves around social mobility as the three maids rocket to stardom on the heels of their viral music video. Significantly, their success is integrally connected with mediaticization and transmediatization. When the music video begins to go viral in the telenovela, montage

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81. Patricia Biegging, “Transmídiação Como Ferramenta Estratégica: Cheias De Charme Explora Uma Nova Forma De Fazer Telenovela [Transmediation as Strategic Tool: Cheias De Charme Explores a New Form of Making Telenovela].” *Revista Novos Olhares* 2, no. 2 (2013): 60–71.

82. Samantha Nogueira Joyce, “Thriving Telenovelas: TV Globo’s Strategies for Keeping the Genre Relevant.” *Popular Communication* 20, no. 1 (2022): 29–41.

83. Pearson, Samantha, “Brazil’s Middle Class Starts to Lose Ground.” *Financial Times* (2015): <https://www.ft.com/content/70f8b4c4-d3e0-11e4-99bd-00144feab7de>.

sequences show various characters viewing the music video on a variety of devices in both public and private spaces. As the protagonists move upwards socially, their success is also intertwined with physical mobility in the form of a new car, a touring limousine, and a tour bus. Just as characters learn to use various media tools in order to move upwards socially, viewers were also invited to do the same through various video contests and dance contests. As such, the ability to navigate across various platforms became inextricably linked with improving class status.

### **1.5 Participation and Democratization**

In connection with social mobilization, I also examine transmediatization as a process of participation. In modernity, participation is more commonly described in the context of democratization. The process of democratization goes hand in hand both with the rise of modern nation-states and an increasing level of mediatization. Greenfield argues, “Democracy was born with the sense of nationality. The two are inherently linked, and neither can be fully understood apart from this connection.”<sup>84</sup> For Greenfield, the very foundation of a nation lies in the promise of sovereignty. As it extends to the people, the promise of nationhood implies “symbolic elevation of the populace (and therefore the creation of a new social order, a new structural reality).”<sup>85</sup> Anderson’s work illustrates the role that mediatization plays in the development of the nation as an imagined community. While Anderson doesn’t use the term mediatization, the author illustrates how print-capitalism “made it possible for rapidly growing numbers of people

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84. Liah Greenfield, *Nationalism: Five Roads to Modernity* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1992), 10.

85. Greenfield

to think about themselves, and to relate themselves to others, in profoundly new ways.”<sup>86</sup>

Hjarvard adds, “With the rise of modern democracy, the exercise of political power had to be based on popular consent and participation, and the mass media came to play a crucial role in this process—and continue to do so.”<sup>87</sup> The media provided political information and facilitated debate and participation.<sup>88</sup> However, the development and adoption of mass media was not uniform, resulting in a wide array of complex relationships between democratic participation and mass media throughout the world. State-run media, censorship, regulations, distribution, and access all play a role in the process (or lack thereof) of democratization.

Of particular relevance to the present discussion is the development of the television industry in Brazil and its connection to democratic participation. The television industry began in September 1950 with the launch of TV Tupi and it was initially elitist in nature. Programming catered to the upper-class, and television sets were prohibitively expensive. Over the next decade, television became both a sign of modernity and a status symbol.<sup>89</sup> In 1964, the military regime gained control of the government and sought to promote a national, integrated culture. However, the regime also censored broadcasters, limiting dissent against the ruling party. The regime’s vision of the country included industrialization and modernization, leading to the “Brazilian economic miracle” through the 1970s. Sinclair and Straubhaar argue that this vision was simultaneously nationalistic and consumer-oriented, i.e., a good citizen invests in the

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86. Benedict R. Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London; New York: Verso, 2006), 36.

87. Stig Prof Hjarvard, *The Mediatization of Culture and Society* (London and New York: Routledge, 2013), 41.

88. Hjarvard

89. Nico Vink, *The Telenovela and Emancipation: A Study on Television and Social Change in Brazil* (Amsterdam, Netherlands: Royal Tropical Institute, 1988).

country through consumption.<sup>90</sup> As part of this modern vision for Brazil, the regime saw television as a tool for the promotion and integration of a national identity. In addition to being a sign of modernity and a symbol of class, owning a television set also demonstrated that an individual was a good citizen who was participating in the construction of a modern national identity. Mattelart and Mattelart show how the terms “network”—as in television networks—and “national integration” became virtually synonymous in the history of Brazilian television.<sup>91</sup>

In 1985, an indirect election for president was held, marking a democratic transition away from the military regime. A new constitution was ratified in 1988, which included a prohibition on censorship. Porto illustrates how this led to an “opening up” of the media, allowing for more diverse and independent voices to be heard.<sup>92</sup> From the late 1990s into the 2000s, the rise of the internet in Brazil presented another layer of “opening up,” granting more individuals a platform for democratic participation. Matos illustrates how internet use in Brazil “is contributing to the undermining of media concentration, boosting political pluralism and stimulating political participation.”<sup>93</sup> However, the expansion of the internet also contributed to a sharp decline in broadcast viewership.<sup>94</sup>

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90. John Sinclair and Joseph D. Straubhaar, *Latin American Television Industries* (London: BFI/Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 70.

91. Michèle Mattelart and Armand Mattelart, *The Carnival of Images: Brazilian Television Fiction*, trans. David Buxton (New York: Bergin & Garvey, 1990).

92. Mauro Porto, *Media Power and Democratization in Brazil: TV Globo and the Dilemmas of Political Accountability* (New York: Routledge, 2012).

93. Carolina Matos, “The Internet for the Public Interest: Overcoming the Digital Divide in Brazil,” in *The International Political Economy of Communication: Media and Power in South America*, ed. Ernesto Vivares, Cheryl Martens, and Robert W. McChesney (Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 117.

94. Becker et al., “Migration of Television Audience.”

It is at this juncture when *Cheias* was released in 2012. As mentioned earlier, the decade prior to *Cheias* saw 39.6 million people move up from the lower D and E classes to the C class.<sup>95</sup> TV Globo attempted to cater to the rising middle class through a combination of representation and transmedia engagement. The telenovela illustrates how transmediatization was promoted as a tool of social mobility. Characters use cell phones and social media as a method of surveillance to document injustices suffered at the hands of their employers. The telenovela also portrays internet forums and social media campaigns as democratizing in nature, with characters organizing and collaborating in order to bring about social change.

I argue that democratic participation in Brazil meant becoming transmediatized. The process of transmediatization was more than just a means for entertainment or narrative fulfillment. The ability to navigate across various platforms was viewed as a process of democratic participation and class mobility. Participation meant becoming a transmediatized digital citizen, one who could harness the technological tools around them to engage with their community and nation. Krotz argues that mediatization is a mover of modernity.<sup>96</sup> I carry this concept further by situating the process of transmediatization as an essential mover of digital modernity. As the process of transmediatization in Brazil became increasingly intertwined with other fields, it became a potential mover of socioeconomic status. This also suggests an inverse of transmedia participation—failure to engage with the process of transmediatization limited social mobility and restricted access to the democratic process.

One of my contributions here is to examine transmedia participation along a spectrum of individual and collective participation. In the Brazilian context, these types of participation

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95. See note 13.

96. Krotz, “Mediatization as a Mover.”

perform different functions. Individual participation occurred with contests that called upon individuals to produce their own content, such as fan-made videos or pictures. This type of participation revolved around social mobility as participants sought to improve their individual status through content creation. Collective or communal participation occurred with efforts geared towards the circulation of content, such as hashtag campaigns or sharing/re-sharing content. Collective participation was more closely aligned with a democratic process as individual contributions worked together in aggregate to increase visibility.

Initially, collective participation appears to follow Jodi Dean's description of communicative capitalism. Dean argues that the impact of networked communications is marked by a fantasy of abundance, a fantasy of participation, and a fantasy of wholeness.<sup>97</sup> With the fantasy of abundance, circulation is paramount. According to Dean, "Messages are contributions to circulating content—not actions to elicit responses...The only thing that is relevant is circulation, the addition to the pool."<sup>98</sup> By contributing to the abundance of content, individuals in turn take part in a fantasy of participation. In other words, "I contribute; therefore, I participate." However, this participation is viewed with skepticism by Dean. For Dean, this participation leads to passivity, causing individuals to become depoliticized through technological fetishism. As Dean puts it, "The paradox of the technological fetish is that the technology acting in our stead actually enables us to remain politically passive. We don't have to assume political responsibility because again, the technology is doing it for us."<sup>99</sup> Abundance

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97. Jodi Dean, "Communicative Capitalism: Circulation and the Foreclosure of Politics." In *Digital Media and Democracy: Tactics in Hard Times*, edited by Megan Boler (Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 2008).

98. Dean, 107.

99. Dean, 111-112.

and participation then lead to a fantasy of wholeness, where the internet functions as “a fantasy of global unity.”<sup>100</sup>

In contrast to Dean’s work, I argue that the “contributions to circulating content” provide a means for individuals to become united with others to elicit change. Sharing, retweeting, or “liking” a post may seem like mindless actions. An individual post contributing to a hashtag campaign may not be widely read. But these actions increase visibility for their respective content. Certainly this is often used by corporations to drum up interest in their own intellectual properties. However, the process of sharing and contributing to a larger pool of content also reflects democratic principles of organizing and collaborating. As Jenkins, Ford, and Green argue, “The spreadability paradigm assumes that anything worth hearing will circulate through any and all available channels, potentially moving audiences from peripheral awareness to active engagement.”<sup>101</sup>

Far from leading to depoliticization through technological fetishism, contributing to content circulation also reflects the broader socioeconomic context of participants. Jeffrey Omari illustrates how some *favela* residents in Brazil use technology in limited capacities not because of access, but because of drug traffickers that control the *favela*. Residents are wary of using their phones in certain locations lest they be perceived as recording identifying information for the police or for rival gangs.<sup>102</sup> David Nemer also points out how *favela* residents in the city of Vitória use social media in creative ways. *Favela* residents are hesitant to produce content for

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100. Dean, 117.

101. Henry Jenkins, Sam Ford, and Joshua Green. *Spreadable Media: Creating Value and Meaning in a Networked Culture* (New York; London: New York University Press, 2013), 7.

102. Jeffrey Omari, “Digital Access Amongst the Marginalized: Democracy and Internet Governance in Rio De Janeiro.” *PoLAR: Political and Legal Anthropology Review* 41, no. 2 (2018): 277–89.



several reasons. According to Nemer, some residents feel incapable of producing “good” content, and they are also afraid of posting content that could bring retaliation from the drug traffickers.<sup>103</sup> Instead, they often rely on sharing or circulating content that others produce. Participants are not inactive or passive simply because they don’t produce messages to elicit responses.<sup>104</sup> They are attempting to navigate the paradoxes of living in a disjunctive democracy.<sup>105</sup>

With my analysis of transmedia participation surrounding *Cheias de Charme*, I show how production and circulation of content functioned respectively as social mobility and democratic participation. However, I also show how such participation was laden with ambivalence. As it occurred with *Cheias*, participation was simultaneously emancipative and exploitative. Participants were shown how transmediatization could be a mobilizing and democratizing process. At the same time, the same process of transmediatization drew them further into the multimodal web of Globo properties.

## 1.6 Expansion

In addition to mobility and participation, I also examine expansion as another facet of transmediatization in Brazil. Giddens describes modernity as possessing “a constant disposition for the system to expand.”<sup>106</sup> García-Canclini also situates the expansive project as one of the movements of modernity, alongside the emancipative project, the renovating project, and the

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103. David Nemer, “Online Favela: The Use of Social Media By the Marginalized in Brazil.” *Information Technology for Development* 22, no. 3 (2016): 364–79.

104. Dean, “Communicative Capitalism,” 107.

105. James Holston, *Insurgent Citizenship: Disjunctions of Democracy and Modernity in Brazil* (Princeton University Press, 2008).

106. Giddens, *Consequences of Modernity*, 11.

democratizing project.<sup>107</sup> For García-Canclini, the expansive project encompasses “the tendency of modernity that seeks to extend the knowledge and possession of nature, and the production, circulation, and consumption of goods.”<sup>108</sup> Coinciding with the expansion of capitalism is the formation of modern nation-states, which Greenfield describes as “the constitutive element of modernity.”<sup>109</sup>

Both transmedia and modernity deal with the building or expansion of worlds, whether it is expansion of the storyworld (transmedia) or nation-building and integration (modernity). The role of the imaginary becomes critical in either case. As Gibbons points out, the role of the imaginary in the construction of transmedia storyworlds has not been extensively studied.<sup>110</sup> However, it is the imaginary that forms the foundation of what Jenkins defines as “the art of world making,” where viewers become “hunters and gatherers, chasing down bits of the story across media channels, comparing notes with each other via online discussion groups, and collaborating to ensure that everyone who invests time and effort will come away with a richer entertainment experience.”<sup>111</sup> The vision of this expansive world making is remarkably similar to what Arjun Appadurai describes as the imagined world of mediascapes or “landscapes of images.”<sup>112</sup> Appadurai argues that these mediascapes provide “large and complex repertoires of images, narratives, and ethnoscapess” that viewers experience as “a complicated and

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107. García Canclini, *Hybrid Cultures*.

108. García Canclini, 12.

109. Greenfield, *Nationalism: Five Roads*, 18.

110. Alison Gibbons, “Reading Across Media: Transmedia Storyworlds, Multimodal Fiction, and Real Readers,” *Narrative* 25, no. 3 (2017).

111. Jenkins, *Convergence Culture*, 21.

112. Appadurai, *Modernity At Large*, 35.

interconnected repertoire of print, celluloid, electronic screens, and billboards. The lines between the realistic and the fictional landscapes they see are blurred.”<sup>113</sup>

The imaginary comes into play with *Cheias* with the expansion of the transmedia storyworld. Moreover, the imaginary also connects with the building of the nation as *Cheias* blurs the line between fiction and reality. One aspect that sets this study apart from other work on transmedia is my approach to world-building. Scholarly work on world-building has tended to revolve around the science fiction and fantasy genres.<sup>114</sup> Colin Harvey posits that that these genres lend themselves well to transmedia storytelling because of diegetic traits such as parallel universes, time travel, and magic.<sup>115</sup> Freeman adds that these genres are “crucial for techniques of transmedia storytelling.”<sup>116</sup>

*Cheias* didn’t use time travel or magic. The telenovela is more realistic in nature, dealing with real-world problems such as class hierarchy, unemployment, and workers’ rights. However, I argue that it created a “parallel universe” by expanding the narrative into the real world through its transmedia extensions. This complicates the dichotomy that Jenkins proposes between immersion and extractability. Jenkins writes, “In immersion, then, the consumer enters the world of the story, while in extractability, the fan takes aspects of the story away with them as

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113. Appadurai

114. see Mark J.P. Wolf, *Building Imaginary Worlds: The Theory and History of Subcreation* (New York and London: Routledge, 2012); Carlos A. Scolari, Paolo Bertetti, and Matthew Freeman, *Transmedia Archaeology: Storytelling in the Borderlines of Science Fiction, Comics and Pulp Fiction* (Houndsmill, Basingstoke, Hampshire; New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014); Colin B. Harvey, *Fantastic Transmedia: Narrative, Play and Memory Across Science Fiction and Fantasy Storyworlds* (Houndsmill, Basingstoke, Hampshire; New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015); and Dan Hassler-Forest, *Science Fiction, Fantasy, and Politics: Transmedia World-Building Beyond Capitalism* (London: Rowman & Littlefield, 2016).

115. Colin B. Harvey, “Transmedia Genres: Form, Content, and the Centrality of Memory.” In *The Routledge Companion to Transmedia Studies*, edited by Matthew Freeman, and Renira Rampazzo Gambarato (New York: Routledge, 2019), 160.

116. Matthew Freeman, “Superman: Building a Transmedia World for a Comic Book Hero.” In *Transmedia Archaeology: Storytelling in the Borderlines of Science Fiction, Comics and Pulp Magazines*, edited by Carlos A. Scolari, Paolo Bertetti, and Matthew Freeman (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 44.

resources they deploy in the spaces of their everyday life.”<sup>117</sup> The telenovela extended the immersion into the real world, while at the same time providing contests that seemed to grant upward social mobility (with prizes ranging from remodeled cars to funded bank accounts). Rather than being polar opposites, immersion and extractability worked hand in hand to provide a deeper experience that tapped into the quotidian life of viewers in Brazil.

## 1.7 Chapter Overview

This study approaches transmedia grounded in the socioeconomic context of Brazil. Through a close examination of *Cheias de Charme*, I illustrate how the telenovela functioned as a site of transmediatized and transmediatizing modernity. By situating the transmedia extensions of *Cheias* in their socioeconomic context, I argue that this regime of transmedia wasn't just a development of convergence culture. Through mobility, participation, and expansion, the Brazilian regime of transmediatization acted as an extension of modernity itself, together with all of its encompassing paradoxes.

In Chapter Two, I connect theories of mediatization with different concepts of mobility: mobility in relation to modernity, social mobility, and physical mobility. I look at key uses of mediatization in the telenovela, namely the use of both LAN houses (internet cafes) and television as layered symbols of modernization and digital inclusion. I provide a brief historical overview of LAN houses, illustrating how they came to be viewed as sites of social mobility and democratic participation. The history of LAN houses informs the representation of these internet cafes in *Cheias de Charme*. The medium of television in Brazil follows a similar trajectory, transitioning from being an upper-class status symbol to a mass medium. In the telenovela,

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117. Henry Jenkins, “Revenge of the Origami Unicorn: The Remaining Four Principles of Transmedia Storytelling.” *Confessions of an Aca-Fan* (2009): [http://henryjenkins.org/blog/2009/12/revenge\\_of\\_the\\_origami\\_unicorn.html](http://henryjenkins.org/blog/2009/12/revenge_of_the_origami_unicorn.html)

Penha's television is used as a symbol of upward mobility and modernization. Through these examples, I argue that the process of mediatization is framed both as a component of modernity and as an act of social mobility.

This argument is further developed by connecting mediatization with physical mobility in the telenovela. As characters in the telenovela become mediatized, they are able to move upwards socially. Upward mobility is also integrally connected with physical mobility as characters encounter tour buses, limousines, and newly purchased cars. Television viewers were invited to engage in a similar process of mobility by becoming mediatized, by adopting the image of the fictional housemaids and transforming themselves into a media product. Viewers were thus able to gain access to new benefits, including a bank account, disposable money, and a remodeled car.

In Chapter Three, I analyze the ambivalent nature of transmedia participation using Johnson's concept of enfranchisement.<sup>118</sup> Johnson uses the term to illustrate how transmedia engagement is simultaneously empowering and exploitative. On the one hand, audiences may become co-creators of content, thus allowing them to become empowered or enfranchised. However, participation and co-creation are also exploitative as audiences become extensions of a corporate product. In this case, "enfranchisement" carries a double meaning as participants become incorporated into the media franchise. I connect the concept of enfranchisement with product placement on TV Globo and the Brazilian phenomenon of social merchandising. Product placement in telenovelas often situates products as solutions to problems that viewers may encounter. Social merchandising is a process where a media product is created that is designed to

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118. Derek Johnson, "Participation is Magic: Collaboration, Authorial Legitimacy, and the Audience Function," in *A Companion to Media Authorship*, ed. Jonathan Gray, and Derek Johnson (Malden, MA: Wiley Blackwell, 2013).

both entertain and educate audiences, promoting changes in social behavior.<sup>119</sup> Brazilian telenovelas routinely incorporate social merchandising, with past storylines raising awareness about issues such as bone marrow transplants,<sup>120</sup> human trafficking,<sup>121</sup> environmental sustainability,<sup>122</sup> and domestic abuse.<sup>123</sup>

With *Cheias*, transmedia digressions invited viewers to participate with other Globo properties. These digressions functioned as product placement, guiding viewers to engage with the telenovela across multiple media outlets. However, transmedia participation was also framed as social merchandising, educating viewers on how transmedia functions both as a mode of participation and as a tool for social mobility. Telenovela characters used various technological tools to organize, protest, and record abuses suffered at the hands of employers. Hashtag campaigns in the telenovela became transmedia extensions in which viewers could participate. Transmedia contests were also held, inviting viewers to participate as an act of social mobility. Transmedia participation in *Cheias* was thus constructed as a way for underprivileged and underrepresented citizens to protect themselves and make their voices heard.

Chapter Four examines the connection between nation-building and transmedia world-building. Jenkins describes the immaterial space where transmedia participation occurs as a playground where infinite possibilities for creativity emerge.<sup>124</sup> Other scholars are less optimistic about the potential for fan productivity, describing these sites of participation as a “walled

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119. Samantha Nogueira Joyce, *Brazilian Telenovelas and the Myth of Racial Democracy* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2012), 87-88.

120. *Laços da Família* (Globo, 2000-2001)

121. *Salve Jorge* (Globo, 2012-2013)

122. *Velho Chico* (Globo, 2016)

123. *Mulheres Apaixonadas* (Globo, 2003) and *A Regra do Jogo* (Globo, 2015-2016)

124. Jenkins, *Convergence Culture*, 113.

garden,”<sup>125</sup> a “fenced-in playground,”<sup>126</sup> and a “digital enclosure.”<sup>127</sup> I situate these concepts in the context of Foucault’s governmentality.<sup>128</sup> For Foucault, one of the key methods of government control is through the use of enclosures such as prisons, hospitals, factories, and schools. In these various enclosures, activity is controlled through several parameters, such as the organization of time and the division of occupants into different ranks or orders. In the case of *Cheias*, the digital enclosure surrounding the telenovela attempted to shape viewers into ideal audience members.

The case study for this chapter is the “Most Charming Maid in Brazil” (MCMB) contest which was hosted by the variety show *Fantástico* (Globo, 1973-present). The contest called on domestic workers throughout Brazil to submit videos of themselves “performing” their labor by singing and dancing in the home of their employer(s). Viewers were encouraged to imitate the “Vida de Empreguete” music video that launched the careers of the fictional maids in the telenovela. Promotional materials for the contest emphasized the contest as an opportunity for participants to “live the dream.” However, participants needed to have their *carteira assinada*, a signed contract between domestic workers and their employers. The rule excluded more than 60% of all domestic workers in Brazil, since most domestic work was done under the table at

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125. Will Brooker, “Going Pro: Gendered Responses to the Incorporation of Fan Labor as User-Generated Content,” in *Wired TV: Laboring Over an Interactive Future*, ed. Denise Mann (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2014), 74.

126. Marta Boni, “Introduction: Worlds, Today,” in *World Building: Transmedia, Fans, Industries*, ed. Marta Boni (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2017), 16.

127. Hye Jin Lee and Mark Andrejevic, “Second-Screen Theory: From the Democratic Surround to the Digital Enclosure,” in *Connected Viewing: Selling, Streaming, & Sharing Media in the Digital Era*, ed. Jennifer Holt, and Kevin Sanson (New York: Routledge, 2014).

128. Michel Foucault, “Governmentality,” in *The Foucault Effect*, ed. Graham Burchell, Colin Gordon, and Peter Miller (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991).; Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, trans. Alan Sheridan (New York: Vintage Books, 1975).

that point.<sup>129</sup> The contest ran for six weeks, and viewers were constantly reminded on *Fantástico* and on Globo's website that the videos needed to show the participants singing and dancing in their place of employment. Participants also needed to have permission from their employers for filming to occur, along with signed work papers. Video submissions that failed to follow the rules were mercilessly roasted on Globo's website. On the flipside, videos that followed the rules were praised for their adherence to contest guidelines. Participants were especially commended for having their work papers officially signed. What was initially a playground for participants quickly became a digital enclosure to discipline and mold them into ideal viewers and ideal citizens.

While modernity promised social and physical mobility, transmedia storytelling allows for mobility across platforms and devices. These two configurations became fused in *Cheias* with the process of transmediatization being presented as a process of social mobility. This carried over into the process of participation. Transmedia participation with *Cheias* was about more than just exploring narrative possibilities—it meant becoming a digital citizen, one who was integrated and who could participate with the ongoing, expansive development of the nation.

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129. IBGE (Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística), “Notícias: Especial Dia Do Trabalho: 82,4% Dos Empregados Do Setor Privado Possuíam Carteira De Trabalho Assinada Em 2012.”



## 2 MOBILITY AND MODERNITY

### 2.1 Jewel of Brazil

The tour bus hurtles down the road, with an image of the three Empreguetes printed on the side. The Empreguetes are embarking on their first concert tour, and a montage is presented that compresses the entire two-month tour down to approximately three minutes of screen time. Images of the various destinations fade in and out, while a map of Brazil periodically appears to illustrate where the tour bus has been and where it is going. Various states throughout Brazil are outlined in sequins and glitter, and a shimmering billboard appears with the names of the cities and states as they are visited. The sequence suggests that Brazil is a vast network of roads and images, a nation shaped by modernity. Figuratively, the nation is also presented as a glittering jewel ripe for the taking, echoing how Brazil was envisioned in pre-colonial and colonial cartography.<sup>130</sup> However, in order to capture the “jewel” of Brazil, one must become mediatized.

In this chapter, I argue that social mobility was grounded in the process of transmediatization in Brazil. There is a complex relationship between mediatization, class, and mobility in Brazil. As illustrated in the introduction to this dissertation, television has been used as a tool for national integration and social mobility. While television remains the dominant form of entertainment in Brazil, the nature of the viewing experience has shifted in recent years. From 2000 to 2013, broadcast networks in Brazil lost an average of 28% of their audiences.<sup>131</sup> Becker et al. argue that the rise of pay television and broadband internet access are largely responsible for the decline of broadcast audiences.<sup>132</sup> During the same time period, 40 million people rose

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130. Darlene J. Sadlier, *Brazil Imagined: 1500 to the Present* (Austin, Texas: University of Texas Press, 2008).

131. Becker et al., “Migration of Television Audience,” 276.

132. Becker et al., “Migration of Television Audience.”

out of the lower D and E classes into the (lower-middle) C class.<sup>133</sup> The same era also carried a renewed sense of Brazilian national identity as the country was seeking to host the 2014 World Cup and the 2016 Summer Olympics. In a developing culture of convergence, what changes in the relationship between television and class status? How are the processes of mediatization and mobility reconfigured for a new regime of transmediatization in Brazil? How is television consumption reconfigured or redefined in light of shifting class demographics? How is Brazilian national identity (re)constructed or (re)negotiated in an era of convergence culture?

In order to answer these questions, I draw on theories of mediatization to examine the shifting relationship between television and class. I adapt Arjun Appadurai's theory of global cultural flows to examine the imagined worlds of class mobility.<sup>134</sup> I also use Friedrich Krotz's work on mediatization and Benedict Anderson's theory of imagined communities to illustrate how socioeconomic changes may coincide with a mediatization of society.<sup>135</sup> While mediatization is not the sole agitator of socioeconomic change, it plays a central role in a contemporary, media-saturated society. The process of mediatization is presented in *Cheias de Charme* as a blueprint for social mobility. Social mobility is also intertwined with physical mobility throughout the telenovela as characters frequently interpret their social status through modes of transportation: Penha purchases a new car after her newfound success; Cida abandons her life as a maid and joins the *Empreguetes* in their stretch limousine; and Penha's success is reaffirmed when she sees her image emblazoned on the side of the *Empreguetes*' new tour bus.

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133. Vaguinaldo Marinheiro, "Meet the 'C' Class - Brazil's Rising Middle Class, the Hope of a Nation." *World Crunch* (2012): Accessed 18 August, 2016. <http://www.worldcrunch.com/culture-society/meet-the-c-class-brazil-s-rising-middle-class-the-hope-of-a-nation/c3s5888/>.

134. Appadurai, *Modernity at Large*.

135. Krotz, "Mediatization as a Mover;" Anderson, *Imagined Communities*.

Each of these moments also revolves around images. While the telenovela champions the rights of domestic workers, social mobility is ultimately located in the consumption, creation, and circulation of images. In this manner, the fusion of physical and social mobility became mediatized. The process of mediatization itself was also presented as a form of mobilization—as individuals engaged with various media technologies and platforms, they could move upwards socially.

This chapter consists of three main sections of analysis. The first section provides a brief history of LAN houses or internet cafes and their respective representation in *Cheias*. Specifically, this section illustrates how LAN houses function as a mediatization of class. The next section focuses on how characters in *Cheias* interpreted their own experiences with class mobility through images and consumption. The final section analyzes the participation of Selma, a domestic worker in Brazil who appeared on the variety program *Caldeirão do Huck*. Selma's appearance on the program required her and her friends to assume the personas or images of different characters from *Cheias*. A common thread running through each of these sections is how mobility and mediatization were intertwined. In each case, social mobility was linked with symbols of modernity such as cars and buses. The result is a multilayered representation of mobility—individuals could move upwards socially as they became mediatized and modernized.

## **2.2 History of LAN Houses**

One of the key areas of mediatization and mobility in *Cheias* is the use of LAN houses throughout the telenovela's narrative. The representation of LAN houses is significant because of their status in Brazilian culture as places of mobility and democratic participation. LAN houses, or internet cafes, were initially spaces for cultural elites. The first LAN house was founded in 1998 in São Paulo by Sunami Chun, a Brazilian with Korean heritage. Patterned after South

Korean *PC-bangs*, LAN houses were primarily used for gaming over a local-area-network (LAN). While they were often compared with *flipperamas*, or arcades, LAN houses became notable for how they presented a different atmosphere. *Flipperamas* were described as dark, dirty places filled with alcohol and cigarette smoke. LAN houses, on the other hand, were cleaner and tended to have better lighting. Instead of cigarettes and alcohol, LAN houses typically had *lanchonetes*: snack bars that sold soft drinks and pastries.<sup>136</sup>

In 2002, just four years after the first LAN house opened in Brazil, several articles appeared in São Paulo newspapers which described LAN houses in the context of a lifestyle.<sup>137</sup> In these articles, São Paulo is referred to as “the city that doesn’t sleep.” At any hour of the day, the city streets were filled with music, art, and 24-hour shops. As part of a “bohemian lifestyle,” teenage boys from affluent neighborhoods in São Paulo could stay up all night playing computer games in LAN houses.<sup>138</sup> LAN houses were primarily located in the city center of São Paulo, alongside other attractions and shops that catered to more of an upper-class clientele. Essenfelder points out that while many customers had their own personal computers, they would still frequent the LAN houses.<sup>139</sup> LAN houses were perceived not as spaces of connectivity and information, but as communal spaces of entertainment and leisure.

Over time, LAN houses also began providing additional services. Customers could rent digital cameras and webcams, copy CDs, and also use printing and scanning services.<sup>140</sup> LAN

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136. Renato Essenfelder, “Casas De Games Em Rede Viram Febre,” *Folha de São Paulo*, September 15, 2002. Factiva. 2.

137. Adriana Carranca, “A cidade que não deixa dormir,” *O Estado de São Paulo*, October 13 2002. C5; Adriana Carranca, “A cidade que não dorme,” *O Estado de São Paulo*, October 13, 2002. C4.

138. Carranca, “Cidade que não deixa;” Carranca, “Cidade Que Não Dorme.”

139. Essenfelder, “Casas De Games.”

140. Renato Essenfelder, “Depuração Do Mercado Já Fecha Lojas.” *Folha de São Paulo*, September 15 2002. Factiva. 3.

houses started making productivity software available for customers conducting business or research. While catering to the general public with these services, some LAN houses used these services to attract traveling business executives.<sup>141</sup> The idea that business executives would be comfortable in these spaces serves as another indicator of the upper-class clientele associated with LAN houses during this time.

LAN houses were also met with criticism, primarily because of the prevalence of violent video games. There was a public outcry as people clamored for regulations to govern how much access children had to violent games and pornography.<sup>142</sup> In response to this outcry, owners of LAN houses claimed that their businesses were more than just places of entertainment. Frank Onish, vice-president of Monkey—a LAN house franchise in Brazil—said, “In LAN houses, people have a social cohabitation, a clean, high-tech ambience. LAN houses are there to contribute to social and digital inclusion.”<sup>143</sup> Marcos Itiro, the manager of another LAN house, added, “The end goal of LAN houses is digital inclusion.”<sup>144</sup> The framing of LAN houses as spaces of digital inclusion drew users into an imagined community of modern citizens, a community encountering newfound social mobility through technological literacy.

Alexander Hlebanja, president of the Associação Brasileira de LAN Houses [Brazilian Association of LAN Houses] (ABLH), defended LAN houses, saying, “LANs shouldn’t be seen simply as places of entertainment: communities are formed in them, important applications are used, helping to disseminate information... You want to prohibit *CounterStrike*? Fine! But to

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141. Regina Neves, “Cyber Games Cria Primeira Lan-House 24 Horas De SP,” *Gazeta Mercantil*, 9 September 2002. Factiva.

142. Carranca, “Cidade que não deixa”; Greice Rodrigues, “Jogos Do Barulho,” *Istoé* (2003).

143. Angélica Freitas, “Idéia É Virar Centro De Convivência,” *O Estado de São Paulo*, May 25 2003. A15.

144. Freitas

leave the population stupider isn't reasonable."<sup>145</sup> A judge countered Hlebanja, arguing, "If LAN houses were created to promote digital inclusion, they wouldn't be placed only in rich shopping centers...[LAN house owners] want to promote digital inclusion? Then why not place a LAN in the Morro do Vidigal or on Roçinha [two of the biggest *favelas* in Rio]?"<sup>146</sup> The statement proved to be more than a challenge; it anticipated the proliferation of LAN houses that would occur in or near *favelas* over the next five years.<sup>147</sup>

From 2003 to 2008, the number of LAN houses skyrocketed from around 3,000 to 108,000, with more than 90% of LAN houses operating illegally.<sup>148</sup> The sharp increase in the amount of LAN houses coincides with the dramatic rise of the working class in Brazil. Under President Lula, various welfare programs and incentives allowed the working class—known as the C class—to grow exponentially from 2003 to 2012. One development in particular had a resounding effect on the perception of LAN houses. In 2005, the government initiated a program known as “Computador para Todos,” or “Computer for All.” As part of this program, individuals from the lower classes in Brazil could purchase a low-cost computer on credit. Lemos and Martini illustrate how enterprising individuals took advantage of this credit to purchase multiple computers, realizing that they only had to pay off the minimum each month (roughly USD \$25 per computer).<sup>149</sup> In purchasing multiple computers and sharing a broadband internet connection, individuals from a previously underprivileged background became new proprietors of LAN

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145. Elis Monteiro, “Caça Às Lan Houses,” *O Globo*, September 15 2003. 1-2.

146. Monteiro

147. Within seven years of the judge's challenge, the Rocinha *favela* alone would have approximately 130 LAN houses. See Ronaldo Lemos and Paula Martini, “Lan Houses: A New Wave of Digital Inclusion in Brazil,” *Information Technologies & International Development* 6, no. SE (2010).

148. Lemos, and Martini

149. Lemos, and Martini

houses.

Coterminous with the rise in the middle class was a transition in the perception of LAN houses. Instead of being viewed primarily as entertainment hot spots for the cultural elite, LAN houses came to be seen as spaces of democratizing, digital inclusion. The Associação Brasileira de LAN Houses died out by 2006,<sup>150</sup> and a new lobbying organization was established: Associação Brasileira de Centros de Inclusão Digital [Brazilian Association of Digital Inclusion Centers] (ABCID). Laws were abolished that previously prohibited the proximity of LAN houses to schools.<sup>151</sup> By 2006, 48% of LAN house users were from the lower classes. While LAN houses were on the rise, the government established *telecentros* or telecenters that were free and open to the public, providing basic technology services as well as technology classes and workshops. However, despite several thousand telecenters being scattered throughout the country, only 6% of internet users from the D and E classes actually used the telecenters—they preferred to use LAN houses.<sup>152</sup> Rather than competing with privately-owned business, the government began appropriating LAN houses, describing them as “Centers of Digital Inclusion”:

Centers of Digital Inclusion (LAN houses) have come to be recognized as entities of special social interest for the universal access to the worldwide web of computers—internet—to the end of guaranteeing the exercise of citizenship, as well as being recognized as entities offering multipurpose services.<sup>153</sup>

However, as much as the spaces became focused on being centers of digital inclusion,

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150. ABLH refers to the Associação Brasileira de LAN houses, or the Brazilian Association of LAN Houses. See page 40.

151. Governo do Estado do Rio de Janeiro, “Lei 5885/11: Lei Nº 5885, De 14 De Janeiro De 2011.” (2011): accessed 6 July, 2019, <https://gov-rj.jusbrasil.com.br/legislacao/1026539/lei-5885-11>.

152. Renato Cruz, “Lan House Leva Internet À Periferia,” *O Estado de São Paulo*, December 24 2006. Factiva. B7; Lemos and Martini, “Lan Houses.”

153. Governo do Estado do Rio de Janeiro, “Lei 6235/12: Lei Nº 6235, De 07 De Maio De 2012.” (2012): accessed 6 July, 2019, <https://gov-rj.jusbrasil.com.br/legislacao/1031882/lei-6235-12>.

LAN houses also gained an association with “Big Brother” surveillance. In 2009, LAN house customers were required to register with their CPF in order to use a computer.<sup>154</sup> This applied to all visitors, not just those under the age of 18, and the collected information had to be preserved for five full years.<sup>155</sup> Additionally, LAN houses could no longer have tinted film or fogged windows; people walking by had to be able to clearly see who was inside and what was occurring.<sup>156</sup> One of the underlying reasons for the surveillance was to act as a deterrent for illicit activities. However, while LAN houses accounted for 45% of the internet access in Brazil, only 11.6% of illegal activities originated in LAN houses.<sup>157</sup> The disparity surrounding suspected illegal activity in LAN houses also highlights a disparity in how the lower classes were perceived; while the lower classes were to be digitally included in the nation, they were simultaneously viewed as being dangerous, needing to be contained and surveilled within the space of the LAN house.

The historical trajectory of LAN houses shifting from elite spaces of entertainment to sites of digital inclusion connects with David Morley’s description of a “double life.” For Morley, technologies can be “mobilized in different ways in different contexts, sometimes for other purposes than those foreseen by their designers.”<sup>158</sup> The use of technology in ways that differ from their intended purpose or audience thus results in a “double life.” Such an approach

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154. Governo do Estado da Bahia, “Lei 11608/09: Lei Nº 11.608 De 07 De Agosto De 2009.” (2009): accessed July 6, 2019, <https://governo-ba.jusbrasil.com.br/legislacao/818605/lei-11608-09>. A CPF, or Cadastro de Pessoa Física, is roughly equivalent to a Social Security number in the United States.

155. Câmara Municipal de Camboriu, “Lei 2033/09: Lei Nº 2033 De 08 De Julho De 2009.” (2009): accessed July 6, 2019, <https://camara-municipal-de-camboriu.jusbrasil.com.br/legislacao/943058/lei-2033-09>.

156. Governo do Estado do Rio de Janeiro, “Lei 6396/13: Lei Nº 6396, De 17 De Janeiro De 2013.” (2013): accessed July 6, 2019.

157. Mario Brandão, “Regulamentação das Lan Houses.” *O Estado de São Paulo*, June 1, 2011. Factiva. A2.

158. David Morley, *Home Territories: Media, Mobility and Identity* (London and New York: Routledge, 2000), 86.



avoids technological determinism by accounting for the way audiences/users engage with communication tools. Morley's description of a double life also connects with issues of modernity. He argues that technologies have both an embedding and disembedding effect. The embedding comes from the way technologies are incorporated into domestic life, while disembedding comes from "connect[ing] individuals within the home to others, geographically elsewhere."<sup>159</sup> While Morley was referring to technology within the home, the disembedding effect is similar when applied to LAN houses. Patrons are simultaneously embedded and disembedded in a fluid process. Embedding occurs as patrons incorporate LAN house visits into their daily or weekly routine, and they may be surrounded by others from their own neighborhood or community inside the LAN house. While patrons socialize and interact with each other in the LAN house, they also engage with absent others via the internet in a disembedding process. Through the various policies promoting digital inclusion, people are encouraged not just to frequent LAN houses but also to adopt the media logic of a contemporary, connected citizen. Here, mediatization functions as a mover of modernity, channeling flows of information and connecting people across geographical boundaries. In doing so, the process of mediatization also facilitates the creation of imagined communities as individuals are digitally integrated into the nation.<sup>160</sup>

Taking Anderson's concept of imagined communities even further, the process of mediatization also functions as class mobility. Anderson argues that in the early stages of print capitalism, the primary market consisted of elite bilinguals who spoke Latin.<sup>161</sup> While the print

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159. Morley, 87.

160. Anderson, *Imagined Communities*.

161. Anderson, 39.

market in Europe expanded and literacy grew—as did the amount of publications in languages other than Latin—by 1840 almost half of the population in Europe was still illiterate.<sup>162</sup>

Anderson describes the social status of the literate population (what Anderson refers to as “the reading classes”) as “people of some power: ... [a] rising middle strata of plebeian lower officials, professionals, and commercial and industrial bourgeoisies.”<sup>163</sup> As print capitalism spread, so too did the imagined community of a bourgeois class. Anderson illustrates that while these individuals largely didn’t meet, “they did come to visualize in a general way the existence of thousands and thousands like themselves through print-language.”<sup>164</sup> The bourgeoisie can thus be viewed as a social class formed through long-term processes of mediatization. Anderson writes, “An illiterate bourgeoisie is scarcely imaginable. Thus in world-historical terms bourgeoisies were the first classes to achieve solidarities on an essentially imagined basis.”<sup>165</sup> As people shared a common, mediated experience, they interpreted their own status in society in relation to that experience.

Similarly, the process of mediatization with LAN houses also functions as a process of social mobility. Fábio Sá Earp argues:

We get stuck with the idea that a youth goes to a LAN house just to play. However much he or she wants to play, they are appropriating information technology. From the moment in which a 10-year-old child leaves school and accesses the internet after lunch to update their blog or Orkut, copy videos on YouTube, download MP3s and chat on MSN, they are doing the same thing as that a 10-year-old child from the middle class that lives in São

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162. Anderson, 75.

163. Anderson, 76.

164. Anderson, 77.

165. Anderson

Paulo or New York does.<sup>166</sup>

The overview of LAN houses given here shows how they serve as a focal point for class, citizenship, and mobility. LAN houses have moved far beyond being spaces for elites; they are now a primary source of digital connectivity for poorer communities throughout Brazil. The focus on entertainment in LAN houses has also lessened over time, prompting the government to view LAN houses as spaces of digital inclusion. However, in order to utilize these spaces, individuals also have to provide legal identification and subject themselves to potential surveillance. Participation in the virtual world requires participation in the nation.<sup>167</sup> Returning to Anderson's work here, LAN house patrons participate in multiple communities that are mobilized through the imaginary and the process of mediatization. The process of mediatization functions here as a mover of modernity, as patrons foster relations between absent others.<sup>168</sup> However, this process also functions as social mobility, echoing the mediatized rise of the bourgeoisie in Anderson's work. The overlap between social mobility and modernity carries over into the representation of LAN houses in *Cheias de Charme*.

### 2.3 Representation of LAN Houses in *Cheias*

Couldry and Hepp argue, “with regard to qualitative aspects, mediatization refers to the specificity of certain media within sociocultural change: It matters what kind of media is used for

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166. Carlos Gustavo Yoda, “Estudo Busca Compreender Impactos Das Lan Houses Em Comunidades Periféricas,” *Carta Maior* (2007): accessed November 30, 2018, <https://www.cartamaior.com.br/?/Editoria/Midia/Estudo-busca-compreender-impactos-das-lan-houses-em-comunidades-perifericas/12/13320>.

167. A similar approach will be explored in greater detail in chapter 4, when I discuss participation in the “Most Charming Maid in Brazil” contest. Briefly, the contest functioned as a site of transmedia participation for *Cheias de Charme*, and was directed towards domestic workers in Brazil. However, in order to participate in the contest, domestic workers needed to provide proof of legal employment, which excluded millions of potential participants. Participation is again linked with citizenship.

168. Giddens, *Consequences of Modernity*, 18.

what kind of communication.”<sup>169</sup> To carry Couldry and Hepp’s argument a little further, it also matters how media and its uses are represented. In the telenovela *Cheias de Charme*, the representation of media occurs through LAN houses, television sets, mobile phones, and the production and consumption of images. These various media technologies and platforms are often equated with a sense of mobility that is both literal and figurative. In particular, the portrayal of LAN houses is significant because of its status in Brazilian society as a locus of digital inclusion and social mobility.

Various people in the telenovela use Kleiton’s LAN house to play games, send e-mail, watch DVDs, or to chat with a friend over a webcam. The LAN house also functions as a key setting at different points in the telenovela’s narrative. It is in the LAN house where Socorro steals the “Vida de Empreguete” DVD that launches the Empreguetes to fame. In this regard, the LAN house acted as a mediatized space of social mobility; by engaging with the various resources in the LAN house, individuals could gain visibility and climb the social ladder. The LAN house is also where Kleiton and Penha first learn of the viral spread of the music video, and where the music video is finally shown to television audiences. After the Empreguetes are arrested, the LAN house becomes the base of operations for a campaign to have the Empreguetes released. The LAN house thus becomes a space of social mobilization where individuals rally together in order to affect change within their community. However, the social mobility and social mobilization of LAN houses in *Cheias* is deeply rooted in the production and consumption of images.

For Kleiton, the LAN house represents a significant degree of self-fulfillment. In chapter 9 (25 April 2012), Kleiton tells his best friend Elano, “I was thinking today about everything I’ve

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169. Couldry and Hepp, “Conceptualizing Mediatization: Contexts, Traditions, Arguments,” 197.

accomplished in life: opened a LAN house, became a musical producer...all that's left is to get a woman." Kleiton's two great achievements of opening his own business and becoming a musical producer are intertwined. Kleiton lives directly above the LAN house, and his living space even serves as an extension of the LAN house. Additional technical services are available in Kleiton's living space, the most notable of which is his audio recording studio. It is in Kleiton's home studio that Rosário records a CD to give to Fabian, where Kleiton edits some of the *Empreguetes*' music videos, and where Kleiton and Elano hang out, sampling different musical beats. The first prominent look into Kleiton's recording studio occurs in chapter 11 (27 April 2012). At this point in the telenovela, Rosário is obsessed with Fabian and decides to record a CD for him in the hopes of launching her own musical career. Rosário visits Kleiton and his home recording studio, and he eagerly shows her around, saying, "Come in, come in! You'll see. It has acoustic lining, a microphone on a stand, and the mixer pumps it out—this is my home studio." Rosário is initially less than impressed at the cobbled together nature of Kleiton's studio. While there is a computer and a mixing panel, other elements of the studio are underwhelming. The microphone stand is held together with duct tape. Instead of a pop filter, nylons are wrapped around the microphone. The "acoustic lining" Kleiton was so proud of consists of egg crates mounted on one of the walls (see Figure 2.1). Rosário asks if the sound is even any good, and Kleiton reassures her, "Here you have all the instruments in the world! You just need to get in front of the mic for your vocals."

Initially, Kleiton's recording studio is viewed from a purely functional standpoint, but this functionality is grounded in a globalized perspective. The "instruments of the world" Kleiton refers to are not actual musical instruments. While an acoustic guitar and a keyboard can be seen in the background, Kleiton instead gestures to the computer, mixer, and studio monitors

(speakers) as the “instruments of the world.” The instruments function as mobility by bringing the world to Rosário, but they are also the means by which Rosário’s voice will be carried to the world. The idea of mobility through mediatization comes full circle in the telenovela when Rosário accepts an award in chapter 139 (24 September 2012). In her acceptance speech Rosário declares, “I think that we need to dedicate this award to all the artists from the periphery who got tired of waiting for an opportunity and decided to show their work. If culture didn’t reach the periphery before, now it is the culture of the periphery that reaches the entire world through the



*Figure 2.1: Rosário in Kleiton’s studio*

internet.” In the telenovela, the internet isn’t portrayed as a nebulous, disconnected entity; rather, it is grounded in LAN houses as a particular space of social mobility. The telenovela acts as a roadmap for how the periphery can use the resources available at LAN houses to carry their culture to the world.

Chayene’s home studio stands in contrast to the hodgepodge nature of Kleiton’s studio. Later in the same episode where Rosário sees Kleiton’s studio, she also enters Chayene’s studio.

Instead of egg crates mounted on the walls, Chayene's studio has acoustic foam lining the walls. The microphone is firmly mounted on a gold-plated microphone stand. A digital keyboard stands ready, while Chayene's guitar is a shimmering, sequined absurdity. There is also a sound-proof booth for the recording engineer, complete with a variety of mixers and a computer to master the sound. The disparity between Kleiton's studio and Chayene's studio functions as a visual distinction between social classes. The majority of Kleiton's studio is cobbled together and likely consists of second-hand equipment. While Kleiton is more concerned about the functionality of his studio, Chayene's studio revolves primarily around her image: larger-than-life posters of Chayene tower over everyone in the room (including Chayene herself), pictures of Chayene with various celebrities adorn the walls, and a giant mirror rests on the floor. The mirror is angled slightly upward in such a way that the reflection Chayene sees is what she looks like to someone standing beneath her. All of the posters, pictures, and mirror convey a collective image of how Chayene wants to be viewed—she is above everyone because of her socioeconomic status, and she wants everyone to see her in that way.

The disparity between Kleiton and Chayene's studios becomes even more evident when Rosário finally records the CD for Fabian in chapter 12 (28 April 2012). The scene begins with Rosário already in the middle of recording a song in Kleiton's studio. She sings into the microphone while Kleiton records the audio on his computer, but underlying the scene are ambient sounds of the Borrvalho neighborhood: car horns sound sporadically, while the sound of traffic acts as an ever-present wall of white noise. It's a far cry from the isolated, sound-proof booth at Chayene's house. After finishing a take, Kleiton instructs Rosário to sing with more energy, and he tells her, "And back away a little from the pop filter so your voice doesn't

clip<sup>170</sup>.” Rosário looks confused, then gestures at the nylons wrapped around the microphone, asking, “Pop filter?” Kleiton nods, saying, “Nylon stockings on the microphone—I made it homemade like that, the heart of the kludge.”

Despite its appearance as being shoddy with some of the components, the nature of Kleiton’s studio also speaks of ingenuity and tenacity. While he initially lacks the financial means to obtain more professional equipment, he is clearly knowledgeable about the equipment. The knowledge transfers over when the *Empreguetes* decide to record a song in Chayene’s studio. In chapter 24 (12 May 2012), the *Empreguetes* ask Kleiton to record them singing, as he is the only person with the technical knowledge to run the equipment. Upon entering Chayene’s studio, Kleiton exclaims, “This is a Formula One race car compared to my little cart.” The comment is significant for the way it connects technology with mobility. Kleiton doesn’t simply describe the studio as being expensive or modern—he describes it in terms of transportation. The metaphor suggests that the functionality between Kleiton’s studio and Chayene’s is largely the same; what changes is the scale and the speed of that functionality.

However, the connotation of Chayene’s studio expressing an image of upper-class sensibility carries back over to Kleiton’s home studio. Later in the telenovela, in chapter 94 (2 August 2012), Kleiton shows Elano the latest upgrades to his home studio. Elano can’t believe how sleek the new equipment looks, and he tells Kleiton everything is “Class A,” referring to the designation for upper-class individuals. Kleiton chimes in, “Top of the line!” Kleiton then tells Elano, “Now my guests can see that money has arrived.” While there is a clear connection with

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170. “Clipping” is a technical term related to both audio and video recording, as well as digital photography. Clipping is essentially a loss of data that occurs when the recording equipment is pushed beyond its capabilities: washed out highlights in a photograph or video recording, shadows that are so dark they register as pure black, or audio that is too loud to be recorded, resulting in static or distortion.



increased functionality that comes with upgraded audio equipment, Kleiton himself acknowledges that the underlying reason for the purchases is about visibility. Kleiton wants his guests to *see* him as being socially mobile.

The use of music and music production as a means of social mobility are integrally linked with the portrayal of LAN houses and the internet in *Cheias*. While the *Empreguetes* record the actual music video in Chayene's house, it is in the LAN house where Kleiton edits the video and mixes the sound. It is also in the LAN house where Socorro finds the DVD and steals it, and where Kleiton, Penha, Sandro, and Alana ultimately see the clip circulating online. While the circulation of the video initially causes problems for the *Empreguetes*, it ultimately becomes their path towards social mobility. This marks a turning point in the telenovela where media technologies are no longer viewed as luxuries, but as necessities. Jansson describes the normalization of media tools as a process of material indispensability, where media systems are viewed as essential for leading a "comfortable and socially integrated life."<sup>171</sup> However, the normalization of media tools also involves "buying into" a particular method of communication and restructuring one's life to account for the material presence of media.<sup>172</sup> In this case, restructuring occurs as the *Empreguetes* are launched from the periphery into the process of transmediatization. Felipe da Costa Trotta argues that the music in *Cheias* functions as a signifier of the cultural emergence of the periphery.<sup>173</sup> Trotta uses the break-out song "Vida de

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171. André Jansson, "Indispensable Things: On Mediatization, Materiality, and Space." In *Mediatization of Communication*, edited by Knut Lundby (Berlin; Boston: De Gruyter Mouton, 2014), 278.

172. Jansson

173. Felipe da Costa Trotta, "Entre O Borracho E O Divino: A Emergência Musical Da 'Periferia'," *Galáxia* 26 (2013).

Empreguete” as a key example, noting how the song fuses electronic pop music with a *funk carioca* opening. This fusion:

establishes a place of speaking (and singing) for the Empreguetes. It is a physical and symbolic space recognized as peripheral—the *favela*, public transport, the workday, manual labor—, young, cosmopolitan, festive. LAN houses, electronic sounds and the spoken rap song are sonic signifiers of this belonging, which speaks of a connected periphery that is integrated with society and critical of the exclusions and submissions of the hierarchy of classes.<sup>174</sup>

The LAN house thus became a space of mediatized production. In using the resources available at LAN houses, social mobility was possible through the production of (peripheral) cultural goods. As Gisela Grangeiro da Silva Castro observes, the use of digital culture in the telenovela served two primary functions.<sup>175</sup> First, viewers who were already users of digital media could find themselves in the representation of these practices that were already part of their daily life. Second, viewers who were not already users were shown step-by-step how to interact with digital media. This resulted in a simultaneous interpretation and interpellation of the internet-viewer.<sup>176</sup> Additionally, I argue that the representation of digital culture was grounded in social mobility. Like the characters portrayed on the telenovela, viewers could interact with digital media and gain a platform for speaking that would allow them to reach beyond the limitations of their peripheral communities.

## 2.4 “Is it one of those 3D televisions?”

Similar to the use of LAN houses in the telenovela, the medium of television also became

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174. Trotta, 164-65.

175. Gisela Grangeiro da Silva Castro, “Cheia De Charme: A Classe Trabalhadora No Paraíso Da Cibercultura [Cheias De Charme (Full of Charm): The Working Class in Cyberculture Paradise],” *Ciberlegenda* 2, no. 27 (2013).

176. Castro, 63.

a multilayered symbol of modernity, consumption, and social status in *Cheias*. This is primarily found in the home of Penha, a domestic worker from the C class who rockets to fame and fortune after the viral success of the “Vida de Empreguete” music video. In the earlier episodes of *Cheias*, Penha has a modest-sized television in her living room. The television set is largely unremarkable in appearance or function, appearing to be under 32 inches in size. The television serves as a medium for both leisure and information. Penha’s lazy ex-husband Sandro is frequently seen lounging about on the sofa, having a beer and watching a soccer game. Penha and her family also watch live musical performances on TV, sharing popcorn as they comment on Chayene’s shenanigans.

Along with the other *Empreguetes*, the viral success of the music video catapults Penha to fame. While Penha is away on her first concert tour with the other *Empreguetes*, she has her friend and fellow domestic worker Ivone oversee renovations to Penha’s house. A welcome party awaits Penha upon her return, celebrating not only the success of the *Empreguetes* but also the new renovations in Penha’s home. Upon returning to her newly renovated house in chapter 78 (14 July 2012), Penha is ecstatic with her new TV, and she runs a hand lovingly across the top of the new television set. While the television set is new, it is not discussed initially. Instead, Penha is shown the other latest additions to her house by Ivone: a five-burner stove, a new duplex refrigerator that has a freezer compartment, and a washing machine. This serves a dual function in the telenovela. On the one hand, it serves as a convenient moment for product placement, showcasing appliances from the Brazilian company Esmaltec. However, the moment also highlights Penha’s newfound social mobility, and it grounds that mobility in consumption. Significantly, each of the appliances is highlighted for their convenience and modernization.

The mediatized, image-loaded nature of consumer goods has led to a blurring of the

boundaries between consumer culture and media culture. As Jansson writes, “Throughout social life, objects appear as components and outcomes of cultural practice and cultural communities; they become important for the creation of webs of significance, and through the very same processes they themselves become culturally meaningful.”<sup>177</sup> Drawing on Lash and Urry’s theory of reflexive accumulation, Jansson argues that because of the mass media, “material commodities have a greater non-material component...people today are to a great extent encountering semiotic representations of commodities, rather than the commodities themselves.”<sup>178</sup> The appliances in Penha’s house serve as semiotic representations in several different ways. First, Penha purchases the appliances sight-unseen, suggesting that she herself relies on the symbolic status of the appliances rather than their strictly functional nature. Additionally, Penha’s new appliances function as a disembedding of class. Penha lives in the Borrvalho neighborhood, a fictional working-class suburb that is derisively described as “practically in the *favela*.” Instead of moving to an upper-class neighborhood, Penha instead chooses to modify her existing domicile in order to convey an upper-class sensibility. Consumption was thus situated as an act of social mobility. Television viewers could seemingly elevate their working-class surroundings by purchasing the latest and greatest appliances.

The new television set is finally addressed in Chapter 83 (20 July 2012), five chapters or episodes after the welcome-home party. Penha is seen making dinner in the kitchen, when her son Patrique calls out from the other room, “Holy cow, what a huge television!” The television set is shown on top of the entertainment center, tuned in to *A Cura* (TV Globo, 2010), one of Globo’s other television series. The new set dominates the living space, leaving hardly any room

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177. Jansson, “Mediatization of Consumption,” 9.

178. Jansson, 14.

for any decorations on the entertainment center. Patrique and Penha's sister Alana are shown standing next to the TV, providing a sense of scale as to how large the new television set is (see Figure 2.2). Alana chimes in, "It really is beautiful. Is it one of those 3D televisions?" Still in the kitchen, Penha responds, "I don't know how many Ds it has, I just know that the salesperson guaranteed it was one of the most modern ones." Penha's response indicates that she doesn't fully comprehend what she actually purchased. As Jansson illustrates, it is the knowledge of the *meanings* associated with the consumer good that prevails here, rather than the functional use of that good.<sup>179</sup> The purchase of the TV wasn't so much about its function as it was about its visual appeal and the sense of being modern. The television set thus acts as a node of communication. On the one hand, the television set is a medium through which sounds and images are received. However, the purchase of the set is also an act of enunciation by Penha, communicating meanings associated with the television-as-object: a life of luxury is necessarily a modern one, with the ability to consume bigger and better things acting as the mark of mobility.



*Figure 2.2: Patrique and Alana admire Penha's television*

Significantly, the new television set also receives its own celebration. To commemorate the new TV, Penha tells Alana and Patrique that she is making *bobó de camarão*, a shrimp stew with African origins. Sandro barges into the house with his friends Ruço, Jiló, and Mafado, with each of them holding a beer in their hands. He comments on the smell coming from the kitchen, saying that it's making his mouth water, and Ivone tells him it's *bobó de camarão*. Sandro then turns to his friends and excitedly tells them they're invited to stay as his guests. Penha interjects, and Mofado reassures her that they're just going to finish their beer. Jiló also chimes in that they understand how shrimp is, and how it needs to be counted to make sure there's enough. Penha then tells Jiló, "This house doesn't have any more of this business of 'counting things.' Poverty's over! Seeing as how I know there's a lot of 'hide-and-see' around here, I bought three kilos of shrimp! The big ones!"<sup>180</sup> The new television set thus warrants a celebration that is also emblematic of Penha's newfound mobility. Not only does Penha have the means to purchase a modern television set, she is also able to buy enough shrimp to treat her family and friends. The celebration fuses media consumption with food consumption, and both forms of consumption are grounded in conveying a sense of privilege and upward mobility. Social mobility isn't just about having disposable income; it's about *being seen* as having disposable income, which Kleiton also expresses when he upgrades his recording studio.

The use of television as a symbol has a prominent role in Brazilian film and television. José Carlos Avellar argues, "Television has been a constant presence in Brazilian films, not only as an object in the corner of the set but as a character the same as any other."<sup>181</sup> He expands this

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180. Penha's comment about "hide-and-see" refers to the way Sandro seems to run away from any work or problems around the house, but he always shows up when there's food around.

181. José Carlos Avellar, "Imagination," in *The New Brazilian Cinema*, ed. Lúcia Nagib (London; New York: I.B. Tauris, 2003), 247.

argument by illustrating how television has played a significant role as a symbol in Brazilian film:

Television is the villain who kills Paco's mother in *Terra estrangeira* when it broadcasts Fernando Collor's new economic policy, the magician who gives sweets to Nininha in *A terceira margem do Rio*, the policeman who closes in on Japa and Branquinha, the two shantytown kids holed up in an American's house in Rio in Murilo Salles' *Como nascem os anjos* (*How Angels Are Born*, 1996), the policeman who invades the personal drama of Dalva and Vítor in *Um céu de estrelas* (*A Starry Sky*, 1997) by Tata Amaral, the corrupt policeman who rigs the elections in Lúcia Murat's *Doces poderes* (*Sweet Powers*, 1996), and the surrogate lover who moves in with Dora, bought with the money that she earned by selling the young boy Josué in Walter Salles' *Central do Brasil* (*Central Station*, 1998).<sup>182</sup>

To Avellar's list could be added the use of television as a status symbol in *Cheias de Charme* as described above.

Penha's television and appliance upgrades revolve around a mediatization of consumption. The purchases are largely made based on the meanings associated with those particular consumer goods. For Jansson, such meanings stem from a mediatized process where meanings are conveyed through advertising and product placement.<sup>183</sup> Drawing on Debord and Baudrillard, Jansson argues, "[T]he emerging forms of consumption, predominantly governed by the mechanisms of commercialized media culture, are not concerned with use-value in its original sense, but with the illusion of use-value; what things *seem* to be, and what solutions they *seem* to provide."<sup>184</sup> Penha's actions function as a relay of mediatization: she consumes products

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182. Avellar, 247-48.

183. Jansson, "Mediatization of Consumption."

184. Jansson, 17. See also Guy Debord, *The Society of the Spectacle*, trans. Donald Nicholson-Smith (New York: Zone Books, 1995); and Jean Baudrillard, "Simulacra and Simulations," in *Selected Writings*, ed. Mark Poster (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1988).

based on their semiotic representations, but she also illustrates to television viewers how such actions exemplify and enable social mobility. Appadurai summarizes the role of mediation in modernity by saying, “As with mediation, so with motion.”<sup>185</sup> In other words, motion and mediation are intertwined as “both viewers and images are in simultaneous circulation.”<sup>186</sup> I adapt Appadurai’s statement to examine the *mediatization of motion* as well as *motion through mediatization* in Brazil. In this context, mediatization of motion refers to media portrayals of class mobility. In *Cheias*, these portrayals largely revolve around consumption as characters purchase television sets, appliances, and designer clothing. These purchases are grounded in both literal and symbolic images as characters consume products to convey an image of upward mobility.

## 2.5 “Lata Velha”

In addition to the purchase of her television, Penha also uses media images to interpret the world around her. In chapter 77 (13 July 2012), the *Empreguetes* embark on their first concert tour, which would last for a period of two months. Just before the tour begins, their manager surprises the group with a new tour bus, complete with an image of the *Empreguetes* in costume emblazoned on the side of the bus (see ). Penha wants to remember the moment, and she strikes a pose in front of the bus, inviting Rosário and Cida to guess who she looks like (see Figure 2.4). Rosário and Cida instantly chime in, “Xuxa!” Penha’s pose mimics the iconic album cover of *Xou da Xuxa* (1986), a CD from the Brazilian children’s television host Xuxa (see Figure 2.5). What initially seems like a throwaway moment becomes a microcosm of modernity and consumption. As Amelia Simpson argues, Xuxa developed a distinct multimedia brand of

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185. Appadurai, *Modernity at Large*, 4.

186. Appadurai, 4.



modernity that was grounded in consumerism.<sup>187</sup> Simpson points out how Xuxa's audience subscribed to "the supremacy of consumerism as the defining characteristic of modernity, and the adequacy of the dominant ideology for promoting access to the modern Brazil thus postulated."<sup>188</sup> In other words, access to a modern Brazil was only possible through consumerism. Xuxa's image is imitated here just as Penha is similarly engaged in a multimedia blitz of consumerism. Penha's newfound social mobility is visibly signified through the image on the bus, and Penha herself associates the image with Xuxa. It is also somewhat ironic that Penha is the one posing like Xuxa in front of the bus. Penha is portrayed by Taís Araújo, who is one of the few black performers on the show. As Amelia Simpson illustrates, whiteness was a key element of Xuxa's brand. The connection between whiteness and modernity is rooted in the Brazilian ideology of *branqueamento* or "whitening." At the beginning of the 20th century, Brazilian modernists promoted the idea of miscegenation as a way to propagate a "superior race." João Batista de Lacerda, a leading doctor and anthropologist, spoke at the "First Universal Race Congress" in London in 1911. At the congress, Lacerda declared, "[I]n the course of another century the mixed bloods will have disappeared from Brazil. This will coincide with the extinction of the black race in our midst."<sup>189</sup>

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187. Amelia Simpson, *Xuxa: The Mega-Marketing of Gender, Race, and Modernity* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1993).

188. Simpson, *Xuxa: Mega-Marketing*, 171.

189. Cited in Skidmore, *Brazil: Five Centuries*, 78. For more detailed studies of race in Brazil, see Jerry Dávila, *Diploma De Brancura: Política Social E Racial No Brasil, 1917-1945* (São Paulo: Editora UNESP, 2006); Eli L. Carter, "Representing Blackness in Brazil's Changing Television Landscape: The Cases of Mister Brau and O Grande Gonzalez," *Latin American Research Review* 53, no. 2 (2018); Fábio Almeida de Carvalho, "Makunaim: Um Herói a Serviço Da Ordem Social," *Revista de Crítica Literaria Latinoamericana* 37, no. 75 (2012); Bruno Guaraná, "Taís Araújo: The Black Helena Against Brazil's Whitening Television," *Black Camera: An International Film Journal* 10, no. 1 (2018); Robert Stam, *Tropical Multiculturalism: A Comparative History of Race in Brazilian Cinema and Culture* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1997); Robert J. Cottrol, "No País Do Futuro: Brazil's Journey From National Whitening to Racial Democracy," in *The Long, Lingering Shadow: Slavery, Race, and Law in the American Hemisphere* (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 2013).



*Figure 2.3 The Empreguetes see their tour bus for the first time*

Penha's actions suggest both an awareness and approval of her own reproduced and reproducible (whitened) image. The image is simultaneously a representation of the social mobility of the Empreguetes as well as an indicator of their status as "products" to be consumed. As Krotz argues, "We communicate with the help and in the presence of media and refer to knowledge and norms, values and emotions, that we learned and experienced by media, and thus communication, culture, and society cannot be understood without such a reference in media."<sup>190</sup> Through the process of mediatization, Penha interprets her own mobility through media consumption and media images.

The tour bus thus functions as a multi-layered symbol of mobility and modernity. The bus goes hand in hand with other symbols of modernity associated with accelerated transportation of people and goods, such as trains, automobiles, steamships, and airplanes.<sup>191</sup>

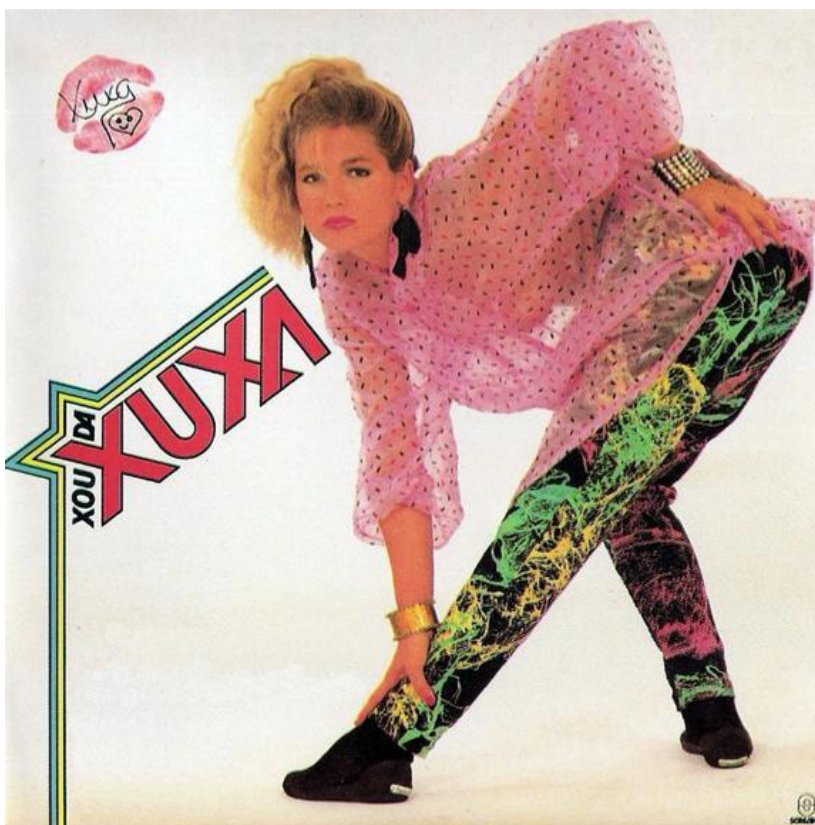
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190. Krotz, "Mediatization as a Mover," 139.

191. Appadurai, *Modernity At Large*, 29.



*Figure 2.4: Penha poses as Xuxa in front of the tour bus*



*Figure 2.5: The iconic album cover for "Xou da Xuxa"*

While modern transportation facilitated mass migrations, such movement is also grounded in a mass-mediated imaginary. Appadurai argues:

Those who wish to move, those who have moved, those who wish to return, and those who choose to stay rarely formulate their plans outside the sphere of radio and television, cassettes and videos, newsprint and telephone. For migrants, both the politics of adaptation to new environments and the stimulus to move or return are deeply affected by a mass-mediated imaginary that frequently transcends national space.<sup>192</sup>

While the *Empreguetes*' tour bus wasn't involved with migrations that transcended national borders, it became an object of mass-mediated imaginary that fused social and physical mobility. Buses have a historical tradition tied with urban development, facilitating transit between various points within the city. Along with intracity transit, buses also connect peripheral areas to urban centers. As mentioned above, the image of the *Empreguetes* on the side of the bus represents both their social mobility and their emerging status as media producers. The tour bus is also an image that circulates—it travels throughout Brazil, visiting numerous locations on the concert tour. Significantly, the bus isn't just visible at its various destinations but can be seen anywhere along the way. It is a moving image that traverses the highways of modernity as physical and social mobility have been mediatized. Moreover, the social mobility of the *Empreguetes* is grounded in consumerism. In this regard, Penha's vision of herself as Xuxa reiterates Jansson's argument that "the media function as an image bank from which individuals may adopt specific cultural attributes according to lifestyle."<sup>193</sup> The mediatization of mobility comes to bear here in two overlapping aspects: 1) The bus was mediatized by becoming a medium for the circulation of images; and 2) The physical and social mobility of the

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192. Appadurai, 6.

193. Jansson, "Mediatization of Consumption," 15.

Empreguetes occurred through the process of mediatization. By becoming media images, the Empreguetes could move freely through the country via the bus, and they were also able to travel or circulate through television and the internet to a virtually infinite number of places. As Bauman puts it, “The game of domination in the era of liquid modernity is not played between the ‘bigger’ and the ‘smaller,’ but between the quicker and the slower.”<sup>194</sup> The ability to move is now the realm of “global nomadic elites.”<sup>195</sup>

Consumption, production, and transportation all fused together in a particularly salient image of social mobility in an episode of *Caldeirão do Huck* (2000-present, TV Globo). *Caldeirão* is a weekly variety program broadcast on Saturday afternoons on TV Globo, combining interviews, music performances, and competitions. The program routinely involves charity work, with segments providing disadvantaged individuals an opportunity to improve their situation. One segment that appears periodically is “Lata Velha” or “Clunker.” In the segment, a participant’s old car is restored to a new, updated look: fresh paint, a new engine, and oftentimes a new sound system as well. In exchange for their “new” car, participants have to complete a challenge. Often, the challenge revolves around a musical or dance performance, or a combination of the two.

On 11 August 2012, the “Lata Velha” segment of *Caldeirão* featured a domestic worker named Selma.<sup>196</sup> The host of the program, Luciano Huck, arrives at Selma’s house to inspect her car. He comically rips out old parts of the car and repeatedly slams the car door trying to get it to close. After “verifying” that the car is indeed in poor condition, Huck informs Selma that he was

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194. Bauman, 188.

195. Bauman, 198.

196. Globo, “‘Empreguete’ Selma é a participante do Lata Velha.” *GloboPlay* video, 31:11. August 11, 2012, <https://globoplay.globo.com/v/2085167/programa/>

impressed with her letter, and that domestic workers are in vogue at the moment thanks to *Cheias de Charme*. Selma briefly describes her life story, from growing up in a home with dirt floors to watching her father drown when she just five years old. Huck then tells Selma what she needs to do in order to get her car restored. He asks if she watches television, and which novela she likes. Selma responds, “The one at 7:00pm.” Huck confirms that she’s referring to *Cheias de Charme*, and he outlines the challenge: Selma has to get two friends and perform on *Caldeirão*’s stage on national television. The inspiration for their performance will come from *Cheias*. Selma and her friends have to perform two songs from the show, “Vida de Empreguete” and “Maria Brasileira.” Not only were both songs the biggest hits for the Empreguetes in the telenovela, but both songs focus on female domestic workers and their desire for social mobility. Huck tells Selma, “If you do it like the Empreguetes, just like in the novela—dancing and singing on *Caldeirão*’s stage—[your car] will be returned to you restored.”

Selma’s participation on *Caldeirão* revolved around a process of mediatization. Her ability to move upwards socially hinged on her ability to remove the image of herself and allow herself to be re-created in the image of an Empreguete. The change in images occurs both figuratively and literally as Selma practices for and appears on *Caldeirão*. As they prepare for the performance, Selma and her friends meet with Victor Maia, one of the choreographers for their performance. Maia asks the trio if they’ve already decided which of the Empreguetes from the telenovela they are going to be. As the three friends respond, images of Cida, Penha, and Rosário appear, indicating which role each of the friends will play (see Figure 2.6). The images that appear are of the respective characters dressed as Empreguetes and not as domestic workers. Selma and her friends are thus tasked with “becoming” the Empreguetes through their performance.

While practice initially goes well for the three of them, tensions arise after two weeks of practice. Selma's friends complain that she is asking too much of them, and that the choreography is too challenging. Selma claims that she desperately wants to get her car back, and even the choreographers doubt that the trio of friends will be able to resolve their differences



*Figure 2.6: Selma (middle) and her friends, with the respective roles they will play and perform on Caldeirão.* The framing of their story mirrors the storyline of *Cheias*, as three friends have the chance to turn their lives around by singing and dancing their way to fame. However, complications arise when the priorities of the three friends create conflict within the group, threatening to tear them apart and cause them to fail.

Finally, Selma performs on *Caldeirão do Huck*. Instead of the audience voting on whether Selma successfully completed the challenge, the show brings in Isabelle Drummond—who played the role of Cida in *Cheias de Charme*—as a guest judge.<sup>197</sup> When Selma enters the

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197. A similar situation occurs with “The Most Charming Maid in Brazil” contest. The contest was hosted by another TV Globo program called *Fantástico*, and it called upon domestic workers throughout Brazil to submit videos of themselves singing and dancing in their places of employment. After several rounds of voting, the

stage with her friends, the three of them are dressed in maid outfits while they perform “Vida de Empreguete” (see Figure 2.7). After a minute and a half, the song transitions to “Maria Brasileira.” Three male dancers enter and pull off the maid outfits worn by Selma and her friends, revealing silver dance costumes underneath as they become “Empreguetes” (Figure 2.8 and Figure 2.9). The silver costumes recall typical costumes worn by the Empreguetes throughout *Cheias* (Figure 2.10). Moreover, the transformation from maid to Empreguete in Selma’s performance imitates a key moment from the telenovela. After enduring a number of injustices and various forms of psychological and emotional abuse, Cida decides to quit working as a maid in the Sarmento household. During Isadora and Arielle’s wedding to their respective husbands, Penha and Rosário crash the party by pulling up in a bright pink limousine (Figure 2.11). Rosário calls out to Cida, “Cinderella, your carriage has arrived!” Cida promptly quits in the middle of the wedding (Figure 2.12). She walks over to the limousine and rips off her uniform, revealing a silver costume underneath (Figure 2.13).



*Figure 2.7: Selma and her friends dressed up as maids on “Caldeirão do Huck”*

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final vote was cast by the three main actresses from the telenovela: Leandra Leal, Taís Araújo, and Isabelle Drummond. The contest will be discussed in greater detail in chapter 4.





*Figure 2.8: Selma and her friends having the maid outfits removed*



*Figure 2.9: Silver costumes hidden underneath the maid outfits*



*Figure 2.10: Costumes worn by the Empreguetes on “Cheias de Charme”*



*Figure 2.11: Penha and Rosário crash the wedding party in a pink limousine*



*Figure 2.12: Cida (middle) quits during Arielle's wedding*



*Figure 2.13: Cida removes the maid uniform to embrace becoming an "Empreguete"*

Selma's performance on *Caldeirão* and Cida's rejection of her status as a domestic worker both hinge on the promise of social mobility. In both cases, vehicles serve as a signifier of class mobility. On the one hand, Cida's mobility comes as she transitions from manual labor

to a mediatized life with the production of music videos, songs, and the overall image that accompanies the life of an *Empreguete*. Her newfound mobility is signified through the pink limousine awaiting her immediately after her transformation. On the other hand, Selma's remodeled car also awaits her, but only after she has undergone the transformation into an *Empreguete*. After Drummond confirms that Selma won the challenge, Selma is presented with her prize: her restored car, eighteen months of car maintenance, insurance, and a bank account opened in her name with \$10,000 Brazilian reals.<sup>198</sup> Huck tells her to “invest in [her] dreams,” a common theme that emerges in discourses surrounding the telenovela.<sup>199</sup> The segment ends with footage of Selma and her friends riding in her new car, but they don't appear as themselves: they are dressed up in wigs and costumes as *Empreguetes*, reiterating how this newfound mobility occurred. They have adopted an image that is not an image of the real; it is “a real without origin or reality: a hyperreal.”<sup>200</sup> They have become media images that in turn reference other media texts and images, or what Fiske describes as “an infinite chain of intertextuality.”<sup>201</sup>

Whether it is Penha's new car, the *Empreguetes'* pink limousine, the *Empreguetes'* tour bus, or Selma's remodeled Volkswagen on *Caldeirão*, the various modes of transportation described here functioned both as symbols of modernity and as symbols of social mobility. In the case of the tour bus and Selma's appearance on *Caldeirão*, transportation was integrally linked with a process of transmediatization. For television viewers, social mobility was promised

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198. When the program aired, the exchange rate from Brazilian reals to U.S. dollars was \$0.50. The amount Selma received was about \$5,000 U.S. dollars.

199. The concept of “living the dream” will also be analyzed in chapter 4 with the MCMB contest. Also see note 167 on page 46.

200. Baudrillard, “Simulacra and Simulations,” 166.

201. John Fiske, *Television Culture: Popular Pleasures and Politics* (New York: Routledge, 1987), 116.

through the same process: in order to move in a transmediatized society, one must also become transmediatized.

## 2.6 Conclusion

This chapter examined overlapping aspects of mediatization in *Cheias*, from the cultural uses of technology with LAN houses and television, to the use of image processing and image making to interpret the world. In each of these processes, mediatization functioned as both a mover of modernity and a mover of social status, to the point where it was virtually impossible to separate the two. As it was presented in *Cheias*, to become modern was to move upwards socially, and in moving upwards socially one became modernized. However, this process of mediatization and mobility was also framed in the context of Globo properties; as people engaged with media texts and platforms, they could engage with more Globo properties. And it was these properties that could seemingly grant upward mobility.

This brings me to one last example from Brazil, the Naves do Conhecimento (Ships of Knowledge) project. The Naves project began in 2012 in Rio de Janeiro as a digital inclusion initiative that targeted disenfranchised neighborhoods in Rio's North Zone. Information and Communications Technologies (ICT) centers were built in the North Zone, providing digital technologies for public access. The centers functioned as transmediatized spaces with free internet access, use of laptops, interactive displays, and courses on information technologies, entrepreneurship, and robotics and programming. According to Franklin Dias Coelho, Secretary of Science and Technology for the City of Rio de Janeiro, the centers were designed to address the disparity between the rich and the poor. The centers are "physical elements in the landscape

that reinforce the need to bridge the difference.”<sup>202</sup> The design of the centers reinforces the concept of mobility: the architecture creates the appearance of a futuristic ship hurtling through space, carrying its patrons into a regime of transmediatization.

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202. Tyler Sutton, “Rio’s Rise to Intelligent Global City: Building Knowledge From the Ground Up.” *Public Sector Digest* (2015): n.p., <https://www.publicsectordigest.com/articles/view/1442>. Accessed through <https://web.archive.org> (Archived 1 August 2016).

### 3 PARTICIPATION AND DEMOCRATIZATION

#### 3.1 “Understand and Demand Your Rights”

Lygia looks directly at the camera and declares, “You who are the boss, protect yourself by acting within the law.” The image cuts to Penha who adds, “You who are an employee, understand and demand your rights.” Kleiton, Elano, Stela, and Otto cheer after Penha finishes speaking; they have just finished watching a commercial featuring Lygia and Penha directed at domestic workers and their employers. Stela excitedly states that she’ll be posting the commercial on the domestic workers’ website. She continues, “Internet users will be able to stay up to date on all work-related questions, including the importance of a *carteira assinada*. Type this in Dr. Otto: [www.trabalhadordomestico.com.br](http://www.trabalhadordomestico.com.br).” Penha emphasizes the website again when she appears on the talk show *Encontro com Fátima Bernardes* (TV Globo, 2012-present). Mirroring the commercial just mentioned, Penha addresses the television audience directly, “You who are domestic workers and bosses, check out our website. The address is here.” She points towards the bottom of the screen and a graphic appears with the website. After saying the site address, she points to the television viewer and says, “It’s for you!”

“Trabalhador Doméstico” (Domestic Worker) is a real website hosted by Globo containing information for domestic workers and employees. The most prominent part of the website is a video describing the importance of a *carteira assinada*. A *carteira assinada* is a signed work card that is a contract between employers and employees. The signed card is also registered with the government, granting both parties legal protection. While Brazilians are required to have a work card, the vast majority of domestic workers operate under the table.<sup>203</sup>

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203. IBGE (Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística). “Notícias: Especial Dia Do Trabalho: 82,4% Dos Empregados Do Setor Privado Possuíam Carteira De Trabalho Assinada Em 2012.” *Instituto Brasileiro de*

The website also features articles discussing the rights of domestic workers and the amount of workers who still don't have a *carteira assinada*. While the website appears to provide a social good, it is firmly entrenched in Globo properties. The website is actually a sub-page of the *Cheias de Charme* portal on Globo's website. The telenovela's title is displayed prominently across the top of the page, with "Trabalhador Doméstico" appearing as a smaller subheading underneath.

By encouraging viewers to visit the website, the telenovela positioned Globo as a source of information and not just entertainment. As internet users visited the website and interacted with the various resources, they could learn about their rights as domestic workers. Moreover, the process of looking for and finding information online was itself an act of participation and mobility. Globo didn't just point viewers to transmedia content—it situated transmedia participation as a process of empowerment and democratization. However, this participation was also exploited. The telenovela used hashtag campaigns that created the appearance of affecting the narrative but served as free promotional material for the telenovela. Another form of participation was a contest that called on viewers to submit videos of themselves dancing *passinho*, a dance style that emerged from the *favelas* or slums. The contest functioned as a colonization and normalization of peripheral culture, what Márcia Pereira Leite refers to as *favelismo*.<sup>204</sup>

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*Geografia e Estatística: Censo 2010* (2013): <https://censo2010.ibge.gov.br/noticias-censo.html?busca=1&id=1&idnoticia=2368&t=especial-dia-trabalho-82-4-empregados-setor-privado-possuiam-carteira-assinada-2012&view=noticia>. The topic of *carteiras assinadas* will be explored further in chapter 4, illustrating how legal requirements surrounding transmedia participation draw viewers into a discourse of nationalism.

204. Márcia Pereira Leite, "Entre a 'Guerra' E a 'Paz': Unidades De Polícia Pacificadora E Gestão Dos Territórios De Favela No Rio De Janeiro." *Dilemas: Revista de Estudos de Conflito e Controle Social* 7, no. 4 (2014), 625–42.



In this chapter, I look at how *Cheias de Charme* was constructed as a transmediated text. How did the telenovela guide or direct viewers to transmedia content? What role did intertextuality play in the experience of *Cheias*? How did transmedia participation connect with the telenovela's broader conceptualization of class? In order to answer these questions, I examine key moments of transmedia participation in the telenovela. These moments occurred when the narrative pointed to an external media source, guiding viewers to engage with particular content on their own. The result of such engagement connects with Henry Jenkins' description of two fundamental elements of transmedia storytelling, namely radical intertextuality and multimodality.<sup>205</sup> "Radical intertextuality" refers to the way a given text is interwoven with other texts in the same medium. The example Jenkins uses is *Battlestar Galactica* (Sci-Fi, 2004-2009), where a television mini-series became a recurring series, which then led to a prequel television show. "Multimodality" refers to the way a text can change based upon the mode of engagement. Whether it be through a different medium or platform, each mode of engagement contributes something that other modes cannot. Transmedia storytelling involves elements of both intertextuality and multimodality as audiences move across texts and media.

However, with both radical intertextuality and multimodality, audiences are required to have some form of existing knowledge in order to make connections with the various transmedia extensions. With intertextuality, audiences have to be aware of other texts; not only of their existence, but also of how they are interrelated. As Colin Harvey argues, "In all examples of crossmedia storytelling, elements from elsewhere in the transmedia network are necessarily

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205. Henry Jenkins, "The Reign of the 'Mothership': Transmedia's Past, Present, and Possible Futures," in *Wired TV: Laboring Over an Interactive Future*, ed. Denise Mann (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2014), 245.

invoked.”<sup>206</sup> Similarly, multimodality requires audiences to know in what medium or format material can be found, as well as how to utilize those respective outlets. *Cheias* addressed these factors by taking a pedagogical approach in its use of transmedia content. In the diegesis of the telenovela, viewers were simultaneously shown how transmedia functions, how transmedia content could be accessed, and how the same platforms used for storytelling could become tools for civic engagement.

In this chapter, I examine how these transmedia extensions operated as a locus of participation. While transmedia participation is often viewed in a positive light for its democratizing potential, this chapter takes a more ambivalent approach. I use Elizabeth Evans’ work on transmedia storytelling as a framework for studying transmedia as both text and technology.<sup>207</sup> I also draw on Henry Jenkins’ work on transmedia participation, particularly with Jenkins’ focus on participation as a pedagogical tool to engage with democracy.<sup>208</sup> I connect Jenkins’ work with Nestor García Canclini’s elaboration of modernity in Latin America, illustrating the overlapping ideas of political participation as it intersects with grassroots organization and media.<sup>209</sup> Derek Johnson’s concept of enfranchisement is also used for its ambivalent approach to transmedia participation.<sup>210</sup> I view transmedia participation here as a potentially democratizing force in its collaborative and cross-media functions. Telenovela

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206. Colin B. Harvey, *Fantastic Transmedia: Narrative, Play and Memory Across Science Fiction and Fantasy Storyworlds* (Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire; New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), 33.

207. Elizabeth Evans, *Transmedia Television: Audiences, New Media, and Daily Life* (New York and London: Routledge, 2011).

208. Jenkins, *Convergence Culture*; Henry Jenkins, “Youth Voice, Media, and Political Engagement,” in *By Any Media Necessary: The New Youth Activism*, ed. Henry Jenkins, et al. (New York: New York University Press, 2016).

209. García Canclini, *Hybrid Cultures*.

210. Derek Johnson, *Media Franchising: Creative License and Collaboration in the Culture Industries* (New York: NYU Press, 2013).

audiences were shown how to interact with various media platforms and how to use those platforms to collaborate, share, and engage. However, such actions only created the illusion of civic engagement while ultimately furthering Globo's own interests.

The first section of analysis looks at product placement and social merchandising in Brazilian television. Product placement often highlights how products are solutions to various problems viewers face. Social merchandising is related to product placement, but instead of specific products, changes in social behavior are promoted. The next section looks at transmedia extensions in the telenovela as product placement, which functioned on multiple layers. Viewers were guided to other transmedia extensions—i.e., Globo properties—but they were also sold on the concept of transmedia consumption itself. I then examine three different sites of transmedia participation, illustrating how they were used to promote social mobility and social justice: the “Estrelas do Tom” blog, the “Vida de Patroete” music video, and the hashtag campaigns for #EmpreguetesLivres (FreeEmpreguetes) and #EmpreguetesParaSempre (EmpreguetesForever). Across these various extensions, viewers were encouraged to participate in a transmediated form of consumption. In doing so, participants could become digital citizens who were actively involved in both their communities and nation. The transmedia extensions ultimately illustrated platform mobility as being integrally linked with civic engagement in this new regime of transmediatization.

### **3.2 Product Placement and Social Merchandising**

Transmedia participation in *Cheias* was framed in the context of social mobility and digital citizenship. Viewers were invited to engage with the telenovela across a range of different platforms, and this engagement was portrayed as a social benefit for the participants—by engaging with transmedia content, participants could seemingly climb the social ladder, to keep

the upper class in its place through surveillance, and even to become actively engaged in communal activism. However, each of these practices was grounded in commodification, implicitly guiding participants to further engage with Globo properties. As such, transmedia participation with *Cheias* was ambivalent in nature; it was both emancipative and exploitative.

To illustrate the ambivalent nature of transmedia engagement with *Cheias*, I first look at how the telenovela constructs such engagement as a social good. By incorporating aspects of product placement and the Brazilian phenomena of social merchandising, transmedia engagement was presented both as a means of engaging with narrative material and as a means of participating in civic engagement. It did so by adopting a pedagogical approach in its presentation of transmedia extensions, guiding viewers to possible nodes of interaction. This occurred through digressions in the telenovela where characters discussed websites, music videos, books, or other materials. As these items were discussed, viewers were shown within the diegesis how to access that content. The character Tom frequently drew attention to his blog “Estrelas do Tom” by using air quotes whenever he mentions its name. Tom, Graçinha, and Ticiane guided other characters on how to find (transmedia) music videos online by using particular search terms, implicitly prompting viewers at home to do the same. Numerous characters also used hashtags associated with the telenovela, whether it was on hand-painted signs, on t-shirts, or verbally cueing someone else how to use the hashtag.

The structure of these framing moments followed the pattern used for product placement and social merchandising in telenovelas. While product placement is a widespread practice in numerous media industries, “social merchandising” is more closely associated with Brazilian telenovelas. Social merchandising is viewed as an evolution of Miguel Sabido’s

conceptualization of “entertainment with proven social benefit.”<sup>211</sup> Over time, the concept came to be known as “entertainment-education.” Arvind Singhal and Everett Rogers define entertainment-education as “the process of purposely designing and implementing a media message to both entertain and educate, in order to increase audience members’ knowledge about an educational issue, create favorable attitudes, shift social norms, and change overt behavior.”<sup>212</sup> In entertainment-education, the focus remains largely on the “education” aspect. Social merchandising applies those same qualities of entertainment and education, but the primary impetus is to be commercially successful. Samantha Nogueira Joyce argues, “[W]hile entertainment-education has as its main characteristic the altruistic desire to be a process of purposely designing and implementing a media message to both entertain and educate ... social merchandising has marketing strategies and profits as its main objective.”<sup>213</sup> At times, the difference between product placement and social merchandising in telenovelas is not clearly delineated; the advertisement of a particular product often coincides with the promotion of a broader change in social behavior.

Product placement—or *merchandising*, as it is known in Brazil—has a long history in Brazilian television.<sup>214</sup> The production and broadcast of daily telenovelas in Brazil began with TV Excelsior’s *2-5499 Ocupado* in 1963. Product placement began just five years later with the

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211. Miguel Sabido, “The Origins of Entertainment-Education,” in *Entertainment-Education and Social Change: History, Research, and Practice*, ed. Arvind Singhal, *et al.* (Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 2004), 61.

212. Arvind Singhal and Everett M. Rogers, “The Status of Entertainment-Education Worldwide,” in *Entertainment-Education and Social Change: History, Research, and Practice*, ed. Arvind Singhal, *et al.* (Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 2004), 5.

213. Joyce, *Brazilian Telenovelas*, 87-88.

214. While product placement is referred to as merchandising in Brazil, I refer to it as product placement throughout this project to avoid any confusion between merchandising and social merchandising.

landmark telenovela *Beto Rockefeller* (TV Tupi, 1968-1969). *Beto Rockefeller* is notable for how it incorporated a variety of changes to become “the veritable archetype of the modern Brazilian telenovela.”<sup>215</sup> These developments include the use of common vernacular in the dialogue, the use of outdoor locations, an anti-hero as the main protagonist, and a faster rhythm to the narrative.<sup>216</sup> Luiz Gustavo, who portrayed the eponymous Beto Rockefeller, struck an agreement with Engov, a company that produces medicine for alleviating hangovers. The agreement was directly between Gustavo and Engov, bypassing TV Tupi altogether. In the telenovela, Gustavo’s character frequently enjoyed alcoholic drinks, leading the character to take frequent hangover medicine. According to Gustavo, “Every time I said the word ‘Engov,’ the advertiser would pay me three thousand cruzeiros, a fortune.”<sup>217</sup> Esther Hamburger adds that this type of product placement draws viewers into the universe of the characters on-screen.<sup>218</sup> Significantly, the universe of *Beto Rockefeller* was a modernized, urban location with style, cigarettes, whiskey, telephones, and motorcycles. Hamburger argues, “The impersonal and urban atmosphere of the big city is the privileged space where these icons of modernity would be accessible also to those who come from outside, or from below.”<sup>219</sup>

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215. Mattelart and Mattelart, *The Carnival of Images*, 15.

216. Mattelart and Mattelart, 15-17; Esther Hamburger, “Beto Rockefeller, a Motocicleta E O Engov,” *Significação: Revista de Cultura Audiovisual* 41 (2014).

217. Rose Esquenazi, *No Túnel Do Tempo: Uma Memória Afetiva Da Televisão Brasileira* (Porto Alegre, Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil: Artes e Ofícios Editora, 1993), 107. The Brazilian *cruzeiro* was going through a period of transition in 1968-1969, as the currency was devalued and replaced several different times throughout the 20th century. At the time *Beto Rockefeller* aired, the *cruzeiro* (novo) had just been instituted the year before in 1967. The earliest available exchange rates were from 1970, which listed the *cruzeiro* at Cr \$4.86 to the US dollar. In other words, Luiz Gustavo received the equivalent of approximately \$617 US dollars every time he mentioned the word Engov. As Oliveira notes, in one episode alone, Gustavo mentioned Engov 33 times. see Rafael Ricardo de Oliveira, “A Memória Do Merchandising Através Das Telenovelas Da Rede Globo,” *XVIII Colóquio Internacional da Escola Latino-Americana de Comunicação/Fórum Brasileiro das Tendências da Pesquisa em Comunicação* (2014).

218. Hamburger, “*Beto Rockefeller*, a Motocicleta.”

219. Hamburger, 30.

The incorporation of product placement continued to increase over the ensuing decades. As Bonadio and Guimarães point out, virtually everything contemporary telenovela characters interact with is a product that can be sold: clothes, nail polish, lipstick, cell phones, etc.<sup>220</sup> In 1986, TV Globo established the Central de Atendimento ao Telespectador (CAT) (Call Center for Viewers). Initially, the call center was established as a place where viewers could voice criticisms or ask questions related to different programs. Over time, the CAT became the primary source where viewers could call and obtain information about products seen on different shows.<sup>221</sup> In 2007, the GloboMarcas website was established (<http://www.globomarcas.com>), which allowed visitors the ability to purchase items featured in the latest telenovelas.

Products featured in telenovelas are often highlighted for their usefulness in addressing the various problems characters encounter, such as the title character's use of hangover medication in *Beto Rockfeller*. Another key example is the use of merchandising in *O Rei do Gado* (TV Globo, 1996-1997). This telenovela featured a rural setting, and advertisers were given a list of materials that could be promoted, such as farm equipment, fertilizer, and animal vaccines. It was emphasized to advertisers that "farmers in [*O Rei do Gado*] would use the most modern technology, associating the products with efficiency and efficacy."<sup>222</sup> Antonio La Pastina argues that product placement encourages viewers to "read the product as a quality of the characters using and approving it."<sup>223</sup> Whether the problem is explicitly stated or only implied,

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220. Maria Claudia Bonadio, and Maria Eduarda Araujo Guimarães, "Telenovelas: Consumption and Dissemination of a Brazilian Fashion," *Fashion Theory* 20, no. 2 (2016).

221. Ricardo Feltrin, "'Sac' Da Globo Faz 30 Anos E Ouve Mais De 50 Mil Telespectadores Por Mês." *TV e Famosos* (2016): accessed 4 March, 2019, <https://tvefamosos.uol.com.br/noticias/ooops/2016/09/04/sac-da-globo-faz-30-anos-e-ouve-mais-de-50-mil-telespectadores-por-mes.htm>.

222. Antonio La Pastina, "Product Placement in Brazilian Prime Time Television," *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media* 45, no. 4 (2001), 548.

223. La Pastina, 541.

the product is always presented as a way to improve the situation. Frequently, the results or outcome of using the product are also shown.

In addition to consumer products, problems presented in telenovelas may also be solved through broader changes in social behavior. Joe Straubhaar points out that product placement in telenovelas includes more than just the advertisement of products; it also includes the promotion of activities.<sup>224</sup> The example that Straubhaar uses involves one character teaching another how to use a checking account in the lobby of a bank. While a particular product is advertised—in this case, a particular bank—services and activities that are beneficial to viewers are also promoted. The promotion of behavioral change or social merchandising often overlaps with product placement in Brazil, creating a slippage between “consumption of goods” (i.e., product placement) on the one hand, and “a consumer good” on the other.<sup>225</sup> Products are placed in scenes that are informational or educational in nature. These scenes serve a dual purpose, providing viewers with information about a product, while at the same time TV Globo is portrayed as a socially responsible network.

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224. Straubhaar, *World Television: From Global to Local*, 138.

225. Andrea Sant’Anna Clemente, “Merchandising Social: A Caixa De Pandora Da Telenovela Brasileira,” *Comunicação e Inovação* 11, no. 20 (2010), 64.



Social merchandising, like product placement, has also been used extensively in Brazilian telenovelas.<sup>226</sup> By the 1990s, social merchandising was a staple of telenovela production.<sup>227</sup> The use of social merchandising has resulted in social changes because of the attention drawn to specific issues. For instance, Rosas-Moreno points out how the telenovela *Laços da Família* (TV Globo, 2000-2001) incorporated information on bone marrow transplants after one of the main characters was diagnosed with leukemia. As the telenovela neared the end of its run, the amount of bone marrow donors surged from 20 to 900 per month.<sup>228</sup> Other studies have examined how social merchandising has been used to raise awareness of various issues, such as human trafficking in *Salve Jorge* (TV Globo, 2012-2013), environmental sustainability in *Velho Chico* (TV Globo, 2016), racism in *Duas Caras* (TV Globo, 2007-2008), and domestic abuse in *Mulheres Apaixonadas* (TV Globo, 2003) and *A Regra do Jogo* (TV Globo, 2015-2016).<sup>229</sup>

One last key point in regard to social merchandising is its intertextual nature. Social merchandising isn't just included in one program; it is reinforced through a variety of

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226. See Antonio La Pastina, Dhaval S. Patel, and Marcio Schiavo, "Social Merchandizing in Brazilian Telenovelas," in *Entertainment-Education and Social Change: History, Research, and Practice*, ed. Arvind Singhal, et al. (Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 2004).; Gisela G. S. Castro, and Beatriz Braga Bezerra, "Merchandising Social Na Telenovela Brasileira: Notas Sobre a Promoção Da Sustentabilidade Ambiental Em Velho Chico," *Intercom: Revista Brasileira de Ciências da Comunicação* 41, no. 3 (2018); Plábio Marcos Martins Desidério, "Merchandising Social E Os Códigos Da Imagem Televisiva: A Construção De Significados Na Telenovela," *Revista GEMInIS* 1, no. 1 (2010); Samantha Nogueira Joyce, and Monica Martinez, "From Social Merchandising to Social Spectacle: Portrayals of Domestic Violence in TV Globo's Prime-Time Telenovelas," *International Journal of Communication* 11, no. 2017 (2017); Anderson Lopes da Silva, Thais P.P. Jerônimo Duarte, and Aline de Fátima Siqueira Silva, "A Relação Entre O Uso Do Merchandising Social E a Teoria Do Agenda Setting Nas Telenovelas 'Vale Tudo' E 'o Clone'," *Revista Univap* 19, no. 33 (2013); Tania Cantrell Rosas-Moreno, "Brazilian Telenovelas and Social Merchandising: Becoming What You Watch," *ReVista: Harvard Review of Latin America* 17, no. 1 (2017); Lidia Miranda Coutinho, and Elisa Maria Quartiero, "O Merchandising Social Em Malhação: Estratégias Socioeducativas Para Adolescentes," *Revista Educação em Questão* 39, no. 25 (2010).

227. Joyce, *Brazilian Telenovelas*, 91.

228. Rosas-Moreno, "Brazilian Telenovelas and Social Merchandising: Becoming What You Watch," 52.

229. See Denise Avancini Alves, "Interesse Público E O Poder Da Telenovela: Merchandising Social E Repercussão Do Tráfico De Pessoas Em Salve Jorge," diss., Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do Sul, 2015); Castro and Bezerra, "Merchandising Social Na Telenovela Brasileira: Notas Sobre a Promoção Da Sustentabilidade Ambiental Em Velho Chico"; Joyce, *Brazilian Telenovelas*; Joyce and Martinez, "From Social Merchandising."

entertainment programs. Rosas-Moreno emphasizes that social merchandising in Brazilian telenovelas has “media resonance, when themes or ideas or products presented in telenovelas are included in other (entertainment) programming. In other words, social merchandising occurring as part of the telenovela plot will have elements of the narrative reinforced through other entertainment shows.”<sup>230</sup> In this manner, social merchandising connects with the “radical intertextuality” described by Jenkins as one of the elements of transmedia storytelling.<sup>231</sup> The intertextuality of social merchandising occurs in a synergistic manner, with various programs—fiction and non-fiction alike—orbiting the telenovela mothership through their respective discussions of social issues.

Product placement and social merchandising in Brazilian telenovelas provide the framework in which transmedia participation is incorporated into *Cheias*. As illustrated above, product placement frequently presents a consumer good as the solution to a problem. Social merchandising also presents solutions to problems, but these solutions are grounded in changes of behavior. Transmedia digressions in the telenovela integrated both approaches. First off, the digressions were presented as moments of product placement, guiding viewers to other Globo properties. Second, the digressions also functioned as social merchandising, educating viewers on how transmedia functions as a mode of participation. This participation was framed as civic engagement and social mobility as characters in the telenovela utilized various technological tools to organize, protest, and record abuses suffered at the hands of employers. Transmedia participation in *Cheias* was thus constructed as a way for underprivileged and underrepresented citizens to protect themselves and make their voices heard.

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230. Rosas-Moreno, “Brazilian Telenovelas and Social Merchandising: Becoming What You Watch,” 52.

231. Jenkins, “Reign of the ‘Mothership’,” 245.

### 3.3 Transmedia Extensions as Product Placement

In *Cheias de Charme*, transmedia participation was portrayed as a product, a different mode of consumption that was presented to audiences. The previous section briefly examined product placement in Brazilian television, focusing on how products were emphasized as solutions to problems. Additionally, social merchandising was also utilized to emphasize the benefits of changes in behavior, which was then reinforced through media resonance. All of these factors come to bear in the way that transmedia participation was framed in *Cheias*. The ability to navigate across media outlets connects with Henry Jenkins' work on transmedia storytelling. Jenkins takes a rather utopian view of transmedia participation. In Jenkins' approach, transmedia audiences are inherently active and participatory as they seek out narrative elements that are diffused across diverse media platforms.<sup>232</sup> For Jenkins, audience mobility across media channels precedes the contemporary corporate turn towards transmedia storytelling. In an era of convergence culture, people already engage with numerous media outlets. As Jenkins puts it, "Ready or not, we are already living within a convergence culture."<sup>233</sup> It is because of the ability of audiences to move across and between platforms and channels that conglomerates invested in transmedia storytelling as a corporate strategy. In this section, I examine how transmedia participation was framed as product placement in *Cheias* as audiences were shown how to engage with numerous Globo media products using multiple platforms and technologies in order to enrich the telenovela-viewing experience. The ensuing sections look at transmedia participation as social merchandising in which audiences were shown how to use multiple media platforms as a vital component of being contemporary citizens.

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232. Jenkins, *Convergence Culture*.

233. Jenkins, 16.

The first significant moment of transmedia participation occurred with the launch of the music video “Vida de Empreguete.” In the telenovela, the three main characters—Penha, Rosário, and Cida—make a music video to poke fun at their employers. The DVD with the music video is stolen by Socorro, who delivers it to Chayene in the hopes of getting into Chayene’s good graces. The video is sent to Chayene’s lawyer, Ernani Sarmiento, to see what sorts of legal action can be taken against the *Empreguetes*. Sarmiento advises Chayene not to do anything, to which Tom Bastos (Chayene’s manager) replies, “Yeah, if the video hasn’t already hit the internet.” He quickly adds, “Let’s check this out right now.” Tom grabs a laptop and starts searching for the video online, saying, “Just type in ‘*empreguetes*’ here, and let’s see...that’s it. The video’s already online.” The camera cuts to Tom’s computer screen, prominently displaying the link <<http://www.globo.com/empreguetes>>.

The visual digression to display the link to the website followed the same pattern as product placements in Brazilian telenovelas. The product—in this case, the music video—was specifically mentioned, and the brand (TV Globo) was prominently displayed. Significantly, the music video wasn’t shown in the telenovela at that time. This enticed audiences to visit the displayed website or search for the term “*empreguetes*” in order to see the video. The music video was immediately available online right when Tom Bastos declared, “That’s it. The video’s already online.” Audiences were thus able to access the video before it was actually shown in full in the telenovela, blurring the line between fiction and reality. While the video was spreading virally in the diegesis of the telenovela, audiences could be a part of that same experience of accessing and sharing the music video online. Over the weekend, the video on Globo’s website received more than four million views.<sup>234</sup>

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234. Cury, “Clipe Das *Empreguetes*.”

The link to the website was just an initial step in grounding transmedia participation in the context of product placement. The following episode (Monday, May 21, 2012) framed the music video as a product that “needs” to be consumed, and that the video appeals to people regardless of their social class. This occurred primarily in two sequences that showed audiences how to find the music video. In the first sequence, Graçinha arrives in Messias’ Market, a local bodega. She is a nursemaid to one of the upper-class families in the Casa Grande condominium, and she proceeds to get the attention of Messias and Niltinho saying, “Guys, you aren’t going to believe it! The clip is amazing. The girls are tearing it up. I sent a link to your computer—did you get it?” When Messias confesses that he didn’t receive the email, Graçinha tells him, “Just go to a search engine and type in ‘*empreguetes*’.” Messias pulls up the video on the store’s computer, and they all watch the video clip together. Moments later, an almost identical conversation takes place between Lygia and Ticiane (respectively, a lawyer and a secretary at Sarmento’s law firm). Ticiane asks, “The clip I sent you yesterday, did you get to see it yet?” When Lygia admits that she hasn’t seen it yet, Ticiane interjects, “The clip is on the internet! It’s the biggest uproar on social media. It’s spreading virally—everyone likes it. Type it in on your computer there, ‘*empreguetes*’.”

There are several observations to make here concerning the manner in which transmedia content is referenced. Characters within the telenovela essentially ask viewers at home if they’ve seen the music video, and if they haven’t seen it yet, the characters clearly explain how the music video can be found. In each case, there is a problem or question surrounding the clip, whether it is available or if someone has seen it. The problem is addressed by searching for the word “*empreguete*,” and the video is always found. In both situations listed above, it is emphasized that the video can be shared with a friend or acquaintance, and it can also be found through an

internet search. Transmedia participation was thus framed as being social in nature—the content was meant to be shared as well as consumed. By framing the music video as a viral object waiting to be discovered, Globo positioned viewers as socially networked participants who could also contribute to Chayene’s downfall. Social hierarchies could seemingly be disrupted through “enfranchised consumer participation.”<sup>235</sup>

While the two conversations described above are strikingly similar, they occurred between different social classes. Graçinha and the employees at Messias Market are part of the working C class, while Lygia and Ticiane fall more in line with the B class. When discussing product placement in Brazilian television, La Pastina argues, “These insertions are not intended to break away from the narrative but to be an integral part of the text, attempting to create an organic relationship between the advertised product and the narrative, encouraging viewers to ‘read’ the product as a quality of the characters using and approving it.”<sup>236</sup> Not only do the characters “use and approve” the music video, but that use cuts across social classes—it is for everyone to enjoy, regardless of their social status. However, apart from the music video, transmedia participation with *Cheias* largely catered to the lower class as a form of social merchandising.

### **3.4 Participation as Social Mobility — “Estrelas do Tom” blog**

The telenovela targeted the lower class by discussing relevant social issues in the narrative, especially topics centered on domestic workers. A recurring theme throughout the entire show was the rights of domestic workers, with a focus on promoting *carteiras assinadas*, or legal work papers. Other prominent themes included copyright and piracy, the rights of

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235. Johnson, *Media Franchising*, 223.

236. La Pastina, “Product Placement,” 541.

individuals engaging with online content, and digital technology as a tool of social mobility. Initially, these themes don't seem to resonate with the lower class, but as the telenovela progressed, each of these issues became associated with members of the working class engaging in digital citizenship. The rights of domestic workers and *carteira assinadas* will be further discussed in the following chapter. The focus of this chapter is how transmedia participation became an embodiment of social mobility. The ability to engage with narrative content across multiple platforms was not solely transmedia consumption; as it is situated in *Cheias*, this ability was also transmediatized citizenship.

I draw on Elizabeth Evan's work to illustrate how transmedia was incorporated into the lives of audience members. Evans in turn draws on Roger Silverstone's model of "double articulation." Silverstone argues that the medium of television should be viewed as both an object in people's daily lives as well as the content that is transmitted through that medium.<sup>237</sup> Evans takes this even further, arguing for the validity of the double articulation model in studying transmedia. For Evans, transmedia can be studied from a textual standpoint as transmedia storytelling, or what Jenkins describes as "integrating multiple texts to create a narrative so large that it cannot be contained within a single medium."<sup>238</sup> However, Evans also calls for an analysis of transmedia distribution and engagement, referring to "changes in distribution and reception practices as content is made available simultaneously or near-simultaneously on multiple platforms."<sup>239</sup> While Evans analyzes how audiences use the internet and mobile devices to engage with television, my analysis looks at how Globo situated these

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237. Roger Silverstone, *Television and Everyday Life* (London: Routledge, 1994).

238. Jenkins, *Convergence Culture*, 95.

239. Evans, *Transmedia Television: Audiences*, 2.

technologies in relation to the audience. I examine how Globo shaped audience interaction, and by extension, how Globo attempted to shape the daily life of audience members.

A key site of transmedia participation was the blog run by Tom Bastos called “Estrelas do Tom,” or “Tom’s Stars.” In the telenovela, Tom Bastos becomes the manager for the *Empreguetes*. Throughout the show he frequently refers to his blog using an air quotes gesture to draw attention to its name. He also frequently comments in the telenovela on what new content is available on his blog, inviting viewers to visit and explore the blog in the real world. The main features available on Tom’s blog construct a narrative about his career as the manager for several musical artists. The blog consists of entries posted by Tom, including behind-the-scenes photographs and videos of the *Empreguetes* and other musical celebrities, details about upcoming events, and various promotional contests that invite viewers to participate. One contest encouraged viewers to submit videos of themselves imitating “Vida de Empreguete,” the music video that went viral and launched the musical career of the *Empreguetes*. Another contest called for video submissions of participants dancing *passinho*, or “little step.” Selected videos from these contests then appeared on the blog or even on the telenovela itself.

What is striking about these contests is how they were constructed and framed as a way for members of the lower classes to express themselves. This leads me to Derek Johnson’s work on enfranchisement.<sup>240</sup> For Johnson, transmedia engagement is paradoxical in nature. Audiences engage with and at times even co-create a variety of content, but this content is firmly grounded in the confines of corporate franchises. Johnson uses the term “enfranchisement” to explore the duality of empowerment and exploitation, arguing:

In discussions of creativity and digital media cultures especially, collaboration bears a utopian connotation, suggesting a social and

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240. Johnson, *Media Franchising*.



even egalitarian co-creation of culture. However, in a political sense, collaboration can be understood in much different and more problematic terms: as the cooperation of social subjects with the occupational forces of ruling regimes.<sup>241</sup>

Johnson goes on to say that this creates a tension between “empowering cooperation and disempowering compliance.”<sup>242</sup> On the one hand, participants become enfranchised or empowered through the production of content. However, those same participants are exploited, becoming an extension of a corporate franchise (i.e., “enfranchised”) by providing free labor for a given transmedia extension.

In chapter 85 (23 July 2012), Tom Bastos appears on Gentil Soares’ radio show to talk about a *passinho* contest occurring in the telenovela, which would be held in the multifunctional quad in the Borrvalho neighborhood. Tom Bastos discusses the *passinho* dance style as a cultural expression of the lower classes, saying, “*Passinho* is another cool display that came out of the *morros*<sup>243</sup> and the peripheries, another cultural manifestation that emerged thanks to the pacification in the Rio communities—I think it’s here to stay.” He goes on to say that he is running his own *passinho* contest, and he encourages internet users to visit his blog and submit their entries. Gentil chimes in that it is through contests like this one—the one hosted on Tom’s blog—that new talent is discovered, to which Tom adds, “Without a doubt! Talent is something that isn’t lacking in Brazil.”

The discussion between Gentil and Tom reflects the social condition in Rio de Janeiro. While Tom acknowledges the peripheral origins of *passinho*, he declares that it emerged “thanks

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241. Johnson, 198.

242. Johnson

243. The literal translation of *morro* is a hill, but the term is also commonly used to refer to *favelas* or slums. The term is particularly associated with Rio de Janeiro, and the prevalence of slums in the hills surrounding the city center.

to the pacification in the Rio communities.” The pacification to which Tom refers is the social program that was launched in 2008 known as the Unidade de Polícia Pacificadora (UPP), or Pacifying Police Units. The objective of these police units was to reclaim or pacify the *favelas* from the control of drug traffickers. This coincided with a broader move by the Brazilian government to clean up the country’s image in preparation for hosting global events.<sup>244</sup> In 2007, Brazil won the bid to host the 2014 World Cup, and throughout the first half of 2008, Brazil also sought to win the bid to host the 2016 Summer Olympics. The establishment of these pacifying units was controversial for a number of reasons. Some *favela* residents felt that while the police presence aided security, the police did nothing to address the underlying social problems that contributed to crime. Accusations also were leveled against the police for abusing their power, restricting the movements of *favela* residents, and prohibiting residents from congregating in public areas.<sup>245</sup> The move to clean up *favelas* was also criticized because it gave the image or appearance of progress, without actually addressing the underlying problems. As Cano and Ribeiro point out, “Indeed, most of the existing 38 UPP units, particularly the earlier ones, were located in *favelas* that privileged rich neighbourhoods, tourist zones, the city centre and areas that contained major thoroughfares and neighbourhoods associated to sports mega-events.”<sup>246</sup> While *favelas* near richer areas or tourist attractions were targeted by the UPP units, areas with higher homicide rates were neglected.<sup>247</sup> A sentiment expressed by *favela* residents was that the

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244. Rogerio F. Pinto and Maria Scarlet Do Carmo, “The Pacifying Police Units of the State of Rio De Janeiro (UPPs): Incremental Innovation or Police Reform?,” *Public Administration and Development* 36, no. 2 (2016).

245. Pinto and Do Carmo, “The Pacifying Police Units of the State of Rio De Janeiro (UPPs): Incremental Innovation or Police Reform?”

246. Ignacio Cano and Eduardo Ribeiro, “Old Strategies and New Approaches Towards Policing Drug Markets in Rio De Janeiro,” *Police Practice and Research* 17, no. 4 (2016), 370.

247. Cano and Ribeiro

pacification was “*para inglês ver*,” or “for the English to see.”<sup>248</sup> The expression carries the connotation of keeping up appearances or making a promise without any intention of being fulfilled.<sup>249</sup> However, Tom Bastos portrays the pacification as solely beneficial not only to the pacified communities, but to society as a whole—it was because of pacification that new cultural expressions emerged, particularly *passinho*.

While opportunities for fan participation have been viewed as democratizing in nature, Mel Stanfill argues that these opportunities are also how corporations exploit fans. Borrowing from Foucault, Stanfill argues, “Power does not only repress; it also produces. This means that making something more possible, more normative, or more common sense is also a form of constraint—one that encourages that outcome...[P]roviding something is as enmeshed in power as preventing it; and it asks what power incites, encourages, or produces.”<sup>250</sup> In other words, by providing opportunities for fans to participate, media corporations exert control over those interactions. Fans may engage with certain properties on social media by liking or sharing content, which in turn serves as free promotional material for media corporations.<sup>251</sup> Media corporations may also provide opportunities for fans to create or alter content, which in turn becomes the property of the corporation.<sup>252</sup> Fans are presented with a semblance of power while these moments of interaction are harnessed by media corporations for their own ends, as fans become another “resource” to be “managed.”<sup>253</sup>

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248. Omari, “Digital Access,” 284-286.

249. Omari, 285.

250. Mel Stanfill, *Exploiting Fandom: How the Media Industry Seeks to Manipulate Fans* (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 2019), 6.

251. Stanfill, *Exploiting Fandom*, 145-46.

252. Stanfill, *Exploiting Fandom*, 148.

253. Stanfill, *Exploiting Fandom*, 3.

The discussion of *passinho* as a cultural expression of the periphery also connected transmedia participation with social mobility. The same day Tom discussed the contest in the telenovela, a post appeared on the “Estrelas do Tom” blog detailing how participants could enter the contest.<sup>254</sup> The blog post includes an image that portrays the *passinho* contest as urban art. The image contains a sign that says “Concurso de Passinhos do Tom” (“Tom’s Little Steps Contest”) and stenciled graffiti that recalls the style used by Banksy and Blek le Rat. The announcement reads:

Do you know how to dance in the funk *passinhos* style? Do you want to show off your talent? After the incredible Borrhalho Passinhos Contest [the fictional contest in the telenovela], I decided to create my own event for internet users! My blog is now accepting *passinho* videos. Record your video showing off your *passinho* moves and send it here! You can become famous!<sup>255</sup>

Visitors to the blog were then instructed to use music that was written by the fictional Kleiton—a LAN house owner and musical producer in the telenovela—just for the contest (see Figure 3.1).

The call to “[show] off your *passinho* moves” with the potential to become famous created an illusion of social mobility and digital participation. The *passinho* dance style was born in the *favelas* of Rio de Janeiro. It started to emerge in the *baile funk* dance scene during the early 2000s, but it was catapulted into the mainstream through social media. In 2008, a dancer named Beißola recorded himself and some of his friends dancing *passinho* on a hand-held camera. The video was uploaded to YouTube, where it quickly became a viral sensation.

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254. Globo. “Inscreva-Se No Concurso De Passinhos Do Tom!” *Estrelas do Tom* (2012): Accessed January 1, 2019, <http://gshow.globo.com/novelas/cheias-de-charme/estrelas-do-tom/platb/2012/07/23/concurso-de-passinhos-do-tom/>.

255. Rede Globo

globo.com | g1 | globoesporte | gshow | videos

ASSINE JÁ | MINHA CONTA | E-MAIL | ENTRAR >

ESTRELAS DO TOM

AS EMPREGUETES | Chayene | Fabian

SOBRE MIM | BLOG | SHOWS | CHAYENE | FABIAN | AS EMPREGUETES

Buscar

## Inscriva-se no concurso de passinhos do Tom!

seg, 23/07/12 por Editor | categoria Blog, Concurso de Passinhos do Tom, Notícias

Você sabe dançar a moda dos passinhos de funk? Quer mostrar seu talento? Depois do incrível Concurso de Passinhos do Borrinho, resolvi criar o meu próprio evento para os Internautas! Está aberta a temporada de vídeos de passinhos aqui no meu blog. Grave seu vídeo dando show na dança do passinho e mande para a gente! Você pode ficar famoso!

Para participar do concurso, é só baixar o arquivo de música que o Kleiton produziu e usá-lo no seu vídeo. [BAIXE A MÚSICA AQUI.](#)

Depois, mande o vídeo pronto clicando [AQUI](#)

Boa sorte, galera!

navegue

- As Empreguetes
- Blog
- Chayene
- Concurso de Passinhos do Tom
- Empreguetes da Internet
- Fabian
- Notícias
- Shows
- Sobre mim

Visite o site da novela **Crônicas e Chame**

Figure 3.1: The announcement of the passinho contest on the “Estrelas do Tom” blog

A flood of copycat videos began circulating on YouTube and the now defunct social media platform Orkut.<sup>256</sup> Many of the *passinho* videos were recorded on cell phones with zero budget, and the videos became a means of social mobility.<sup>257</sup> Dancers had both an opportunity to express themselves and a way to escape from the reality of drug-trafficking common to many *favela* residents. As one DJ noted, “*Passinho* is bringing peace to the city.”<sup>258</sup>

256. Ludmilla de Lima, “A ‘Velha Guarda’ Que Bombou O Passinho Para Além Dos Bailes De Favela.” *O Globo*, October 21, 2018.

257. Jez Smajda, “Passinho: The Sugarloaf All-Stars of Rio’s New Dance Craze.” *The Guardian* (2014): accessed 9 April, 2019, <https://www.theguardian.com/stage/2014/may/21/passinho-rio-de-janeiro-brazil-dance>.

258. Smajda

The *passinho* contest hosted on Tom’s blog allowed viewers to both participate with the telenovela experience and to recreate the success of early *passinho* videos. Selected videos were featured on the blog, with comments geared specifically towards what the participants did well. The contest winners also made an “embedded” cameo appearance in the telenovela. In chapter 98 (7 August 2012), Tom shows the *Empreguetes* the winners of the contest. He connects his laptop to the large-screen television, and the videos of the winners are shown embedded on Tom’s blog, which is in turn embedded on the television screen within the telenovela (see Figure 3.2). Audiences at home see the videos play in a frame (on Tom’s blog) within a frame (the television in the telenovela) within a frame (the viewer’s own television set). The embedded nature of the videos emphasizes how these videos existed on other platforms. While there are practical reasons for not showing the videos full screen (particularly the challenge of showing vertically recorded videos in a horizontal television format), the embedded videos remind viewers that the content was transmedia in nature—it existed outside of the telenovela on the “Estrelas do Tom” website. The embedded videos also reinforced the centrality of TV Globo as a gatekeeper for the winners’ success. Videos are hosted on Globo’s website, and they are only featured on Globo’s telenovela. The pathway to viral success wasn’t found in independent production and distribution, but rather through the Globo corporation and its related properties.<sup>259</sup> Viewers at home could learn to see the “Estrelas do Tom” blog as a transmedia extension, as a place of engagement that existed outside of the telenovela. Moreover, this engagement suggests increased opportunities for visibility, as evidenced by the *passinho* dancers.

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259. The same theme emerges later in the analysis of the “Most Charming Maid in Brazil” contest, which will be discussed in chapter 4.

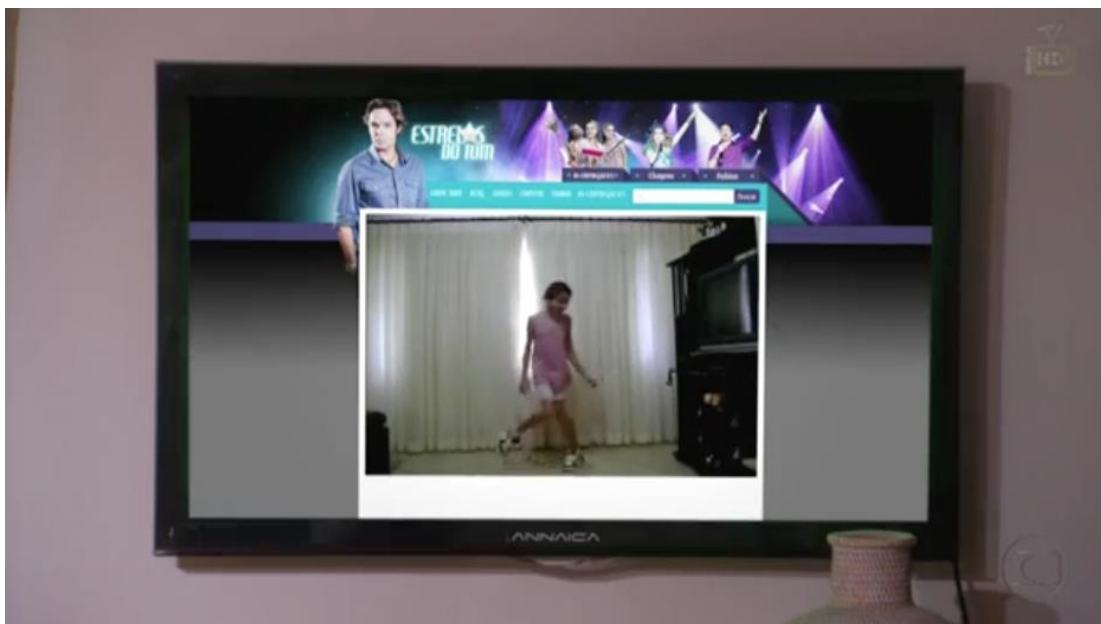


Figure 3.2: Winners of the *passinho* contest appear on the telenovela as a video embedded on Tom's blog

However, by participating in the *passinho* contest, contestants became transmedia products themselves. Contestants were lured in by what Suzanne Scott describes as “regifting,” where the commercial nature of participation is masked by the “elusive promise of credibility.”<sup>260</sup> What was regifted was more than just a transmedia product though—it was a vision of class mobility. Members of the lower class were portrayed not as individuals but as a cultural manifestation for the consumption of others. The selected videos were shown in a rapid montage, and the participants' names aren't even mentioned. Returning to Tom's comment about the origins of *passinho* and the UPP units in the *favelas* on page 92, Tom situates *favela* residents within the cultural expressions they can provide. The pacification of the *favelas* was thus presented not as a benefit for the *favela* residents, but as a benefit for society as a whole—now “everyone” could enjoy the dance styles emerging from the periphery. The appropriation of cultural content through the *passinho* contest illustrates the contradictions inherent in transmedia

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260. Scott, “Repackaging Fan Culture,” ¶1.6.

participation. Johnson outlines this contradiction by illustrating how NBC created “gamified” experiences for users to engage with transmedia content related to *The Office* (NBC, 2005-2013). Johnson argues, “As much as gamification empowered consumers to interact with franchised media in new, meaningful ways, it also impelled and managed that social interaction and brought its productivity under corporate direction.”<sup>261</sup>

This mentality towards *favelas* and *favela* residents is what Márcia Pereira Leite describes as *favelismo*.<sup>262</sup> For Leite, *favelismo* stems from Edward Said’s conceptualization of orientalism. For Said, orientalism refers to the “corporate institution for dealing with the Orient—dealing with it by making statements about it, authorizing views of it, describing it, by teaching it, settling it, ruling over it: in short, Orientalism as a Western style for dominating, restructuring, and having authority over the Orient.”<sup>263</sup> Leite takes this concept further and applies it specifically to the UPP units in the *favelas*, saying, “This can be called a type of *favelismo*, which seeks to colonize those territories and civilize that population, there producing apparatuses of territorial order and of normalization, specifically to reconfigure the pacified *favelas* as disciplined and integrable margins.”<sup>264</sup>

Transmedia participation with *Cheias* was paradoxical in nature. On the one hand, participants were able to be seen on a large scale by having their videos uploaded to Tom’s blog and possibly shown on the telenovela. However, the visibility came with a cost. The *passinho* contest functioned as a *favelismo* colonization that drew participants into the complicit act of

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261. Johnson, *Media Franchising*, 222.

262. Márcia Pereira Leite, “Entre a ‘Guerra’ E a ‘Paz’: Unidades De Polícia Pacificadora E Gestão Dos Territórios De Favela No Rio De Janeiro,” *Dilemas: Revista de Estudos de Conflito e Controle Social* 7, no. 4 (2014).

263. Edward Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1978), 3.

264. Leite, “Entre a ‘Guerra,’” 637.



consumption. Visitors to Tom’s blog could engage with the videos uploaded to the blog, but they also became products themselves through participation in the contest. Borrowing from Smythe, Stanfill uses the metaphor of free lunch to describe the mentality surrounding these types of fan activities.<sup>265</sup> A free lunch is what entices participants to consume a media product—stay for the commercials and get a free lunch of television programming. Stanfill argues that participants are now encouraged by the industry to “make their own free lunch,” i.e., to make their own additional content.<sup>266</sup> In doing so, “They also make the object of fandom more involving to themselves or to others.”<sup>267</sup> By engaging with the *passinho* contest, participants could enrich their own experience with the telenovela. However, in creating their own dance videos and submitting them to Globo, participants essentially “made their own free lunch.” While they were being enticed to stay and participate, their free lunch was then repurposed and given to others. The embedded nature of the videos on the telenovela presented the winners of the contest as Globo products—they were now “Tom’s Stars,” a cultural expression that was captured and framed for all of Brazil to see.

### 3.5 Participation as Social Merchandising — “Vida de Patroete” video

In addition to being framed as a method of participation, transmedia engagement was also presented as a form of social merchandising. Transmedia participation wasn’t just a mode of consumption; it was also a means for lower-class individuals to protect themselves. Protection came in the form of surveillance as domestic workers were able to record the injustices they faced at the hands of their employers.

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265. Stanfill, *Exploiting Fandom*.

266. Stanfill, 142.

267. Stanfill, 142.

The example that will be analyzed here is the release of a second music video for “Vida de Patroete,” a spoof of the original “Vida de Empreguete.” Chayene, one of the primary antagonists in the telenovela, performs “Vida de Patroete” in response to the viral success of the Empreguetes’ music video. In the song, Chayene accuses the Empreguetes of being ungrateful and abandoning their work responsibilities. The original music video for “Patroete” consisted of Chayene performing the song at a music festival. The footage for the video followed the style and structure of a standard live performance, with wide angle shots that sweep across the stage or sweep up over the performance. The video was featured in an episode on 5 July 2012, and was released that same day on Globo’s website.

A second music video for “Patroete” surfaced just one week later with a completely different visual approach. In chapter 76 (12 July 2012), a chaotic incident occurs involving Chayene and her domestic worker Socorro. The two women concoct a plan for Chayene to bully Socorro in public (which she does frequently, but Socorro tolerates it because of her own fan obsession with Chayene). They intend for the Empreguetes to witness Chayene abusing Socorro, causing the Empreguetes to take Socorro in as their own domestic worker. Socorro will then become a spy for Chayene, giving her the inside scoop on upcoming concerts, talk show appearances, or interviews.

However, the plan is quickly ruined when Chayene takes the “pretend” abuse too far. While in Messias’ Market, Chayene ends up smashing eggs on Socorro’s head and throwing flour in her face. The telenovela emphasizes how the entire ordeal is being recorded through several cutaway shots of the surveillance cameras overlooking the store, a laptop showing all of the different camera angles (and presumably recording all of the footage), and Graçinha recording the incident with her cell phone (Figure 3.3, Figure 3.4, and Figure 3.5). After the fight

ends, the Empreguetes tell Chayene they're taking Socorro to the police station to file a formal complaint of abuse. When Chayene protests, Rodney tells her, "The security cameras in the store and in the condominium recorded you attacking Socorro!" There is another sequence of cutaways to various cameras in the store, showing that every angle of the store was covered by cameras. Graçinha then slides out from behind the crowd with her cell phone still in her hands, exclaiming, "I filmed everything, you hag. I'm going to post everything online today, 'Chayene attacks domestic worker!'"



*Figure 3.3 The laptop in Messias' Market showing all of the different camera angles*

The moment when Graçinha moves from behind the crowd functions as a metaphor: she figuratively and literally moves from the periphery to the center (see Figure 3.6). Instead of remaining powerless in the margins, Graçinha is rendered powerful because of the ability to document and record the abuses occurring around her. The recording of Chayene and the cutaway shots to the cameras in Messias' Market equate Graçinha's cellphone with surveillance. In contrast to the stagnant surveillance cameras that overlook the store, Graçinha and her cellphone move between spaces, roaming between interiors and exteriors, weaving in and out of the crowd. The scene functions as social merchandising, prescribing mobile technology as a tool

to counteract oppression. Mobile technology was equated with mobile surveillance, and these were uniquely situated in the telenovela as being associated with the lower class.



*Figure 3.4: Graçinha recording the incident on her cell phone*



*Figure 3.5: Graçinha lingers in the background, documenting the abuse on her phone*



*Figure 3.6: Graçinha moves from the margins to the center, assuming a position of control*

The use of surveillance is often associated with hierarchical structures of power, as illustrated by Michel Foucault's conceptualization of Bentham's panopticon.<sup>268</sup> However, surveillance is not limited to government functionality alone, nor is it limited to the architectural construct of the panopticon. Just as systems of knowledge and discourse perpetuate systems of power in various fields—medicine, government, etc.—so too do systems of surveillance. In the configuration described by Mattelart and Mattelart, surveillance in Brazil is integrally linked with modernization and the upper-class—it is the elite who live in gated communities, using surveillance to watch for intrusions from the lower class:

This is a Brazil...in which the obsession with security makes the better-off classes barricade themselves within their neighborhoods with electronic surveillance devices, security guards, and private militia; a Brazil in which advertisements for apartments in new residential areas stress the new security environment obtained by the advanced 'safety eyes system': closed-circuit television linked to your television set, ultrasensitive general alarm system directly

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268. Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*.

linked to the nearest police station, telephone in the guardian's apartment, latest generation electronic portal, surrounding iron wall for the whole zone, sentry box with telephone exchange and closed circuit television.<sup>269</sup>

The power dynamic of surveillance was complicated through Graçinha's use of mobile technology. Instead of the upper class monitoring the lower class, it was the lower class that was rendered powerful. However, this is not to say that the lower class became more powerful than the upper class, but that they were brought onto more equal footing.

The decentralization of surveillance has been described in many different terms, such as sousveillance, virtual panopticon, or even what Jamais Cascio calls the "participatory panopticon."<sup>270</sup> As Cascio describes it, a participatory panopticon consists of "millions of cameras and recorders in the hands of millions of Little Brothers and Little Sisters. We will carry with us the tools of our own transparency, and many, perhaps most, will do so willingly, even happily."<sup>271</sup> Notably, within the participatory panopticon, the recorded data will be available "over the net for recollection, analysis, even sharing."<sup>272</sup> The participatory panopticon envisioned by Cheias was egalitarian in nature, providing a way for the lower class to not only monitor, but also to recollect, analyze and even share the injustices they encounter. Viewers were shown another method of enfranchisement, not as co-creators of production, but as empowered citizens who could use tools at their disposal to hold the upper-class accountable.

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269. Mattelart and Mattelart, *The Carnival of Images: Brazilian Television Fiction*, 81.

270. Vania Ceccato, "Eyes and Apps on the Streets: From Surveillance to Sousveillance Using Smartphones," *Criminal Justice Review* 44, no. 1 (2019); Jan Fernback, "Sousveillance: Communities of Resistance to the Surveillance Environment," *Telematics and Informatics* 30 (2013); Jenny Waycott, *et al.*, "A Virtual Panopticon in the Community of Practice: Students' Experiences of Being Visible on Social Media," *The Internet and Higher Education* 35 (2017); Jamais Cascio, "Rise of the Participatory Panopticon." *Open the Future* (2009): accessed February 4, 2019, [http://www.openthefuture.com/2009/03/rise\\_of\\_the\\_participatory\\_pano.html](http://www.openthefuture.com/2009/03/rise_of_the_participatory_pano.html).

271. Cascio, "Rise of the Participatory Panopticon."

272. Cascio

However, such enfranchisement was once again ambivalent in nature. While Graçinha’s recording acts as social merchandising—illustrating how technology could be utilized by members of the lower class—it also functioned as product placement. The footage of Chayene abusing Socorro lay the groundwork for the transmedia extension of the second “Vida de Patroete” video. The video was released on 13 July 2012, when Tom Bastos tells Chayene that her “Vida de Patroete” video is blowing up the internet. The camera cuts to Tom’s tablet, with a website prominently displayed: “Access already! [www.patroetes.com.br](http://www.patroetes.com.br).” (see Figure 3.7)



*Figure 3.7: Chayene sees the “Vida de Patroete” video on the tablet*

A brief snippet of the video plays, with Chayene’s “Patroete” song serving as the soundtrack to her own abusive tactics. Footage from the surveillance cameras in Messias’ Market, together with footage recorded by Graçinha, mockingly shows Chayene and other mistresses from the Casa Grande condominium abusing their domestic workers and struggling to perform everyday tasks. The television audience only saw about ten seconds of footage before the camera cuts away—in order to see the rest, audiences had to visit the website shown on Tom’s tablet. Crucially, the television audience could see Chayene’s shocked reaction to the

video when Tom adds that this is just another step in the destruction of Chayene’s career. By showing Chayene’s reaction to the video, it urged viewers to visit the website in order to be “rewarded” with the object of Chayene’s disgust.<sup>273</sup>

As illustrated by Graçinha’s ability to record and share content, transmedia participation itself was presented as a form of social merchandising. While engaging with the various transmedia extensions clearly served to enhance Globo’s brand, this engagement was also presented as a social skill that would benefit viewers in their everyday lives. This is studied in greater detail in the following section, where I examine how transmedia participation showed viewers how to engage in transmedia activism.

### 3.6 Transmedia Activism

García Canclini argues that the democratization that occurred in the 20<sup>th</sup> century in Latin America stemmed primarily from two sources: “the electronic communications media and by nontraditional organizations—youth, urban, ecological, feminist—that intervene in the contradictions generated by modernization.”<sup>274</sup> While García Canclini looks back at the processes of modernization in Latin America, Jenkins applies similar concepts as he looks forward to an idealistic model of convergence culture. García Canclini describes the rise of nontraditional organizations, or “those constructed by the popular classes themselves: from the political parties and unions to a vast ensemble of ethnic, neighborhood, educational, ecological, feminine and feminist, youth, social work, and ‘alternative’ artistic and political groupings.”<sup>275</sup> For García Canclini, these organizations have the potential to disrupt social hierarchies, but only

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273. see Mittell, *Complex TV*, 303, for a discussion of how transmedia extensions function as rewards for audiences.

274. García Canclini, 265.

275. García Canclini, 194.



if they are able to restructure public space; on their own, these organizations are too fragmented to produce desired results. García Canclini argues:

The efficacy of these movements depends ... on the reorganization of the public space. Their actions have a low impact when they are limited to using traditional forms of communication (oral, of artisanal production, or in written texts that circulate from person to person). Their power grows if they act in mass networks: not only the urban presence of a demonstration of one or two hundred thousand persons, but—even more—their capacity to interfere with the normal functioning of a city and find support, for that very reason, in the electronic information media.<sup>276</sup>

Similarly, Jenkins praises the potential of grassroots organizations to disrupt media hierarchies. Jenkins points out that such disruption can only occur “when people who have access to multiple machines consume—and produce—media together, when they pool their insights and information, mobilize to promote common interests, and function as grassroots intermediaries ensuring that important messages and interesting content circulate more broadly.”<sup>277</sup> In other words, the democratization of society and democratization of media overlap with ground-up approaches that require communal organization and collective intelligence in order to achieve their desired outcome.

Transmedia participation in the telenovela drew on elements of activism and civic engagement. There were two hashtag campaigns in the telenovela that called on viewers to engage with social media, to let their voices be heard and to try and change the outcome of scripted events. The campaigns #EmpreguetesLivres (FreeEmpreguetes) and #EmpreguetesParaSempre (EmpreguetesForever) also blurred the boundary between fiction and reality as participants were encouraged to become not just an active audience, but an *activist*

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276. García Canclini, 210.

277. Jenkins, *Convergence Culture*, 245.

audience. As Ana M. López notes, “*Cheias de Charme*, in particular, circulated new social actors positioned in relationship to a larger cultural network, highlighting the use of the Internet and new technologies as tools for success, both for the characters of the telenovela and for spectators.”<sup>278</sup>

The first transmedia campaign in the telenovela—#EmpreguetesLivres—began in chapter 32 (22 May 2012) and continues over the next several chapters. At this point in the telenovela’s narrative, the three maids have been arrested and placed in a detention center because of accusations leveled against them by Chayene and the Sarmiento family. While the music video “Vida de Empreguete” had gone viral before this, the maids had not yet officially banded together as a musical group. Kleiton and Elano discuss how they can possibly help the maids, when Kleiton explains that the Empreguetes have power—their clip is going viral on the internet, and they just need to use that to their advantage. He then suggests starting a campaign called #EmpreguetesLivres in order to generate public support.

In the next chapter (chapter 33, 23 May 2012), Kleiton’s LAN house becomes the base of operations for #EmpreguetesLivres. The residents of the Borrvalho neighborhood band together, engaging in a form of transmedia activism. Youths in the neighborhood flood the internet, sharing the “Vida de Empreguete” music video and drumming up support for the Empreguetes in various online forums. T-shirts, banners, and signs are passed around, bearing both the image of the Empreguetes and the #EmpreguetesLivres hashtag. Kleiton also pulls some strings with Gentil Soares, convincing the radio announcer to play the “Vida de Empreguete” song on the air.

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278. Ana M. López, “Calling for Intermediality: Latin American Mediascapes,” *Cinema Journal* 54, no. 1 (2014), 141.

The campaign functioned in a circular manner. While the Borrvalho residents work in the central plaza of the neighborhood, Kleiton announces to the crowd how many views the music video has received. The increased visibility online emboldens the crowd even further, leading to increased exposure for the campaign, which in turn feeds back into an increasing number of views for the video. The #EmpreguetesLivres hashtag became a trending topic on Twitter in Brazil that week.<sup>279</sup> Twitter users were even able to add a “Twibbon” to their profile picture in support of the campaign, mirroring the way social media users change their profile pictures to show their support or opposition to various issues or movements.

All of this served a pedagogical function that worked on multiple levels. Viewers were shown how transmedia functioned as a mode of storytelling—they were encouraged to become participants in the activism in the telenovela, sharing the hashtag online and inviting others to do the same. However, this also had real-world applications as telenovela viewers were also shown how to engage with digital activism—by sharing content, visiting forums, and raising awareness surrounding a particular issue. The various forms of participation also achieved different purposes. Individual participation emphasized content creation, such as the *passinho* dance videos. This type of participation was linked with upward mobility: as participants created content, they too could become successful. On the other hand, communal participation—such as the hashtag campaigns described here—was less about content creation and more about content circulation. As such, communal participation was more closely aligned with democratic processes as individual contributions work together to increase visibility of certain issues.

Dean argues that such participation is illusory, leading to passivity and depoliticization through technological fetishism. According to Dean, “The paradox of the technological fetish is

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279. Patrícia Kogut, “Salve O Casamento Das Mídias.” *O Globo*, May 25, 2012. n.p.

that the technology acting in our stead actually enables us to remain politically passive. We don't have to assume political responsibility because again, the technology is doing it for us."<sup>280</sup> It should be remembered that Dean is not arguing against mobilization and participation as a whole. Rather, Dean critiques the use of technology in such mobilization, where the over-reliance on technology creates a fantasy of participation. In other words, people aren't participating in democracy by contributing to content circulation; they're participating in the illusion of democracy.

While Dean's caution about depoliticization is certainly warranted, it risks homogenizing modes of participation. For Dean, individual messages are diluted in communicative capitalism; they become mere contributions to a circulating stream of content.<sup>281</sup> Any communal or collective participation online is frowned upon because it seemingly divests individuals of any political responsibility. However, Dean's emphasis on individual messages overlooks the act of sharing or circulating as a political process. As Nemer illustrates in his study of social media use in Brazil, content creation is a hurdle in favelas, not so much because of technological access or knowledge, but because of threats from drug traffickers that control the area.<sup>282</sup> Posting content could bring retaliation from drug traffickers, causing some favela residents to rely more on circulating content made by others. Participants are not inactive or passive simply because they don't produce content that can be amplified to a vast audience online. They are attempting to navigate the paradoxes of living in a disjunctive democracy.<sup>283</sup>

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280. Dean, "Communicative Capitalism," 111-112.

281. Dean, "Communicative Capitalism," 106-109.

282. Nemer, "Online Favela."

283. Holston, *Insurgent Citizenship*.

Returning to the analysis of *Cheias*, viewers were shown how transmedia could operate as a tool for social justice—they were becoming transmediatized. In the middle of the hashtag campaign, Elano even gave a speech about digital activism. In chapter 34 (24 May 2012), Elano visits Dr. Sarmento’s law offices to try and get Lygia to persuade Sarmento to drop the charges against the Empreguetes. When Sarmento refuses to capitulate, Elano tells him:

You shouldn’t belittle a popular demonstration that’s getting stronger. There are thousands of people calling for [the Empreguetes] to go free. There are thousands of people calling attention to the great injustice that happened with this imprisonment. You should know that demonstrations organized on the internet have torn down dictators. They’ve torn down corrupt governments. It’s pointless to try and suppress them. People now have access to information. People want to be heard. They are engaged in causes that they consider to be just. And that’s exactly what’s happening in front of the detention center. People are fighting for the freedom of the three Empreguetes. There’s already more than half a million hits [on their video]. And if everything continues at the same speed...If my clients pass one more night in jail, you will be massacred by public opinion.

While Elano is giving his speech, there is an aural and visual bridge as the footage cuts to the protestors outside of the detention center. The speech continues, but the noise of the crowd can also be heard, underpinning Elano’s speech. The effect linked viewers—or at least those who participated in the #EmpreguetesLivres campaign—to a movement of resistance. Just as Elano speaks of tackling corruption and injustice through online campaigns, slow-motion footage of the protestors appears, showing them with posters and banners calling for the Empreguetes to go free. The sequence acted as what Jenkins describes as “a shift in the public’s role in the political process, bringing the realm of political discourse closer to the everyday life experiences of citizens.”<sup>284</sup>

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284. Jenkins, *Convergence Culture*, 208.

A second campaign occurred later in the telenovela's run, which serves as a variation of "commodity activism." Commodity activism is described by Sarah Banet-Weiser and Roopali Mukherjee as referring to the increasing amount of "activism" that is grounded in consumption.<sup>285</sup> The authors point to numerous campaigns that call on consumers to make certain purchases in order to contribute to a particular cause, such as buying Project Red items to support the global fight against AIDS or driving a Prius to fight global warming. Commodity activism occurred in a similar manner in the transmedia content surrounding *Cheias de Charme*. However, viewers campaigned not for a social issue, but for the reformation of the Empreguetes musical group in the telenovela. This functioned as a type of reverse commodity activism—instead of purchasing a commodity to engage in activism, participants engaged in a semblance of activism to preserve a commodity.

Later in the telenovela's narrative, the Empreguetes break up as a musical group. Viewers were devastated by this turn of events, with many taking to social media to vent their frustration and speculate on how the telenovela could even continue without the Empreguetes. Kleiton and Elano again concoct another plan using various media outlets to their advantage. They crash a live television interview between the three (former) Empreguetes and Gentil Soares, opening their jackets to reveal a new hashtag: #EmpreguetesParaSempre [#EmpreguetesForever]. They call on viewers—both the unseen diegetic viewers within the telenovela as well as the television viewers at home—to show their support for the Empreguetes. Viewers were then invited to submit their own videos, demonstrating their devotion to the Empreguetes and encouraging the group to get back together. Various celebrities even "joined" the campaign, with videos

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285. Sarah Banet-Weiser and Roopali Mukherjee, "Introduction: Commodity Activism in Neoliberal Times," in *Commodity Activism: Cultural Resistance in Neoliberal Times*, ed. Roopali Mukherjee, and Sarah Banet-Weiser (New York; London: New York University Press, 2012).

appearing on YouTube and Globo's website<sup>286</sup> from Luan Santana, Paula Fernandes, and Sandy all voicing their support of the *Empreguetes*. The "activism" from the novela was firmly grounded in consumerism.

López argues that the use of transmediality in *Cheias* "engages spectators no longer simply as a TV audience but as savvy users of new technologies and digital media and participants in a new dynamic of the social sphere."<sup>287</sup> Baccega et al. add, "By interpolating the spectator—who is also an internet user—the telenovela promotes a certain type of social ideology which extols participation in the digital world as desirable and even indispensable in today's world."<sup>288</sup> This ties in with Fast and Jansson's argument that mediatization can be understood as "the growing indispensability of media."<sup>289</sup> In this way, transmedia participation became a mode of engagement both with the telenovela and society in general. Audiences were simultaneously shown how to further engage with TV Globo products and with broader social issues. As such, Globo portrayed itself as an egalitarian entity, dispensing knowledge for the masses. In order to learn how to become civically engaged, audiences were thus encouraged to return continually to TV Globo to be instructed on how they might become better citizens. They could become "enfranchised" in both senses of the word: empowered by learning how to effectively communicate across multiple media platforms, but also exploited as Globo uses their participation for its own purposes. As Johnson argues, "Franchising, ultimately, might be defined

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286. Globo, "Mais Apoio VIP Para a Campanha!" *Globo.com*. September 14, 2012. Accessed July 7, 2019. <http://gshow.globo.com/novelas/cheias-de-charme/Empreguetes/noticia/2012/09/mais-apoio-vip-para-a-campanha.html>

287. López, "Calling for Intermediality," 141.

288. Maria Aparecida Baccega et al., "Reconfigurações Da Ficção Televisiva: Perspectivas e Estratégias de Transmídiação em Cheias de Charme," in *Estratégias De Transmídiação Na Ficção Televisiva Brasileira*, ed. Maria Immacolata Vassallo de Lopes, et al. (Porto Alegre, Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil: Editora Sulina, 2013), 75.

289. Fast and Jansson, *Transmedia Work*, 5.

as that which industrially structures, organizes, and imagines shared, networked use of culture, not in opposition to but inclusive of produsage and other new creative patterns.”<sup>290</sup>

### 3.7 Conclusion

As illustrated in this chapter, modern citizenship in Brazil was framed as being “digitally included.” Being a part of Brazilian society meant being technologically literate, with technological mobility facilitating social mobility. The cycle of elite mediums of communication being adopted by the masses applies to both the use of television as well as the overall trajectory of LAN houses. In both cases, the transition from elites to the masses stemmed initially from the government. However, these ideas were adopted by Globo, positioning Globo as a virtual gatekeeper for the nation. The ability to traverse social classes was grounded not just in consumption—as discussed in the previous chapter—but also in the ability of individuals to harness technology as a means of social discourse.

While there is an emphasis on the role of digital technology in this chapter in relation to transmedia participation, I want to avoid equating this with technological determinism. Jenkins rightfully points out, “Transmedia does not necessarily imply digital ... [and] is not necessarily interactive or participatory.”<sup>291</sup> When discussing the role of new technology in relation to political and social interaction, Axel Bruns adds:

This should not be understood as a form of technological determinism, of course; the same technologies are also available to the traditional leaders of the democratic system, and *it is therefore the specific social and political uses made of such communication tools which determine change*, not some inherent properties of the technologies themselves.<sup>292</sup>

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290. Johnson, *Media Franchising*, 230.

291. Jenkins, “Transmedia Logics and Locations,” 220.

292. Axel Bruns, *Blogs, Wikipedia, Second Life, and Beyond: From Production to Produsage* (New York: Peter Lang Publishing, 2008), 362-63 (italics added).



What I have attempted to illustrate in this chapter is the ambivalent nature of transmedia participation as it was framed by TV Globo. The “specific social and political uses” that Globo employed frame transmedia engagement as both a product of Globo’s design and a social good that taught audiences how to become citizens in a developing culture of convergence.

Audiences were shown through the telenovela itself how convergence culture could function. Characters used multiple media outlets to organize, collaborate, protest, and even create content, and audiences were invited to participate in those same activities. However, while these moments of transmedia engagement were framed as egalitarian in nature, they were firmly grounded in Globo properties. Additionally, the sites of transmedia participation ran along a spectrum of individual participation—such as individual photo or video submissions—to collective or communal participation, such as hashtag campaigns. Individual participation was centered on creativity, with such creativity serving as a means of social mobility. On the other hand, communal participation emphasized democratic participation, where individual weaknesses were compensated through the power of numbers.<sup>293</sup>

With *Cheias*, transmedia participation was situated as more than just pursuing narrative content to complete or enrich one’s entertainment experience. Participation meant becoming a digital citizen, someone who was capable of utilizing the technological tools around them to engage with their communities and nation. Text and context merged to show audiences how the same technologies used to engage with transmedia content could also be used as platforms for civic engagement, while also creating a transmedia experience that attempted to sell audiences on the concept of transmedia storytelling as a corporate-driven strategy.

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293. Bauman, *Liquid Modernity*, 33.

*Cheias* arrived at a critical moment in Brazil's history, and more specifically in Brazil's ongoing process of convergence. Just the following year in 2013, a series of massive protests erupted in Brazil. The protests have been called a number of different names, including "Manifestações de 20 centavos" ("20 cent demonstrations") and "Jornadas de Junho" ("June Journeys"). The movement initially protested increased taxes on public transportation. It eventually encompassed protests against police brutality and corruption as well as calls for increased funding for education and health initiatives. Notably, the protests gained traction as the invitation "Vem pra rua!" ("Come to the street!") spread through social media. In a pattern similar to the protest depicted in *Cheias*, the call to action was shared online, on posters, and on t-shirts stamped with the slogan.<sup>294</sup> However, the protests themselves were also paradoxical in nature. As Nemer points out, because of social inequalities affecting the flow of information, there was a rift between upper-class protesters and lower-class protesters. As such, "the marginalized came in late to the streets and their voices and requests were not privileged as the ones shouted by the rich."<sup>295</sup>

I am not arguing that the protests gained traction because of the success of *Cheias de Charme* as a transmediated experience. Instead, I see the 2013 demonstrations as emblematic of the cultural era in which *Cheias* emerged. It was an era marked by the rise of nontraditional organizations banding together to overcome the stratification and fragmentation described by García Canclini. It was a developing regime of transmediatization. While the use of transmedia with *Cheias* presented contradictions and ambivalence, there was staggering potential as

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294. James Holston, "'Come to the Street!': Urban Protest, Brazil 2013," *Anthropological Quarterly* 87, no. 3 (2014).

295. Nemer, "Online Favela," 377.

audiences attempted to emerge from hegemonic compliance and cling to the ongoing promise of emancipation.

## 4 LIVING THE DREAM

### 4.1 Introduction

Lygia and Penha stand side by side in the law offices of Otto Werneck. They face Kleiton and his camera, and the camera starts recording. Lygia looks directly into the camera and immediately lists off the benefits of a *carteira assinada*, or signed work card: an end-of-year bonus, paid holidays, maternity leave, and other benefits. “It’s a right of domestic workers protected by juridical law,” Lygia says. Penha chimes in, “There are a lot of people who are ashamed to admit that they’re a domestic worker. They shouldn’t be—domestic work is a profession of great value. Cooks, maids, nannies, butlers, chauffeurs...It’s all honorable work.” Lygia and Penha then encourage employers and employees to protect themselves and get to know their rights.

The scenario described here occurred in *Cheias* on 20 September 2012. Lygia and Penha are recording a commercial as part of a campaign directed at domestic workers. At this point in the telenovela’s narrative, Lygia and Penha worked together in Otto’s law offices, serving domestic workers by helping them to improve relations with their employers and demand the rights guaranteed by law. The commercial was recorded on *Cheias* just a week before the telenovela ended on 28 September 2012, but it became a transmedia extension that extended beyond the initial broadcast of the telenovela. The commercial was made available online and also aired on Globo’s network. As a transmedia extension, the commercial included three graphics that did not appear in the telenovela itself. When the first graphic appears, a narrator reads the on-screen text, “Who’s in charge is the law.” New text appears and the narrator continues, “Work Card: Sign Below.” The final graphic displays the logos of the three organizations sponsoring the campaign for domestic workers: TV Globo, ONU Mulheres (UN

Women), and Organização Internacional de Trabalho (International Labour Organization). The emphasis on signing work documents and obeying the law drew viewers into a discourse of nationalism. In order to be protected, domestic workers had to be legally recognized by the nation. At the same time, Globo was portrayed as a socially conscientious corporation, working alongside international organizations for the improvement of domestic workers' lives.

The emphasis on following the law or playing by the rules also surrounded a transmedia contest called “The Most Charming Maid in Brazil (MCMB).” The MCMB contest called on domestic workers throughout Brazil to submit videos of themselves singing and dancing in their place of employment. Viewers could then judge which video submissions would advance to the next round of the competition, with the winner making an appearance as herself on the telenovela. In this chapter, I focus on how participatory elements of the telenovela functioned to draw viewers into a discourse of nationalism. I illustrate this by examining the industrial discourse surrounding the MCMB contest. Specifically, I analyze how the contest was framed by authors and actors, by the rules of the contest, and by the television hosts. I start by showing how the contest was announced on *Fantástico*, with the authors and actresses highlighting the evolving nature of participatory media. I then examine how the contest was promoted on weekly broadcasts of *Fantástico*, illustrating how the rules of the contest draw participants into the nation. I argue that through the discourse surrounding the contest, the lines between fiction and reality were blurred as participants were encouraged to “live the dream,” imitating the success of the fictional telenovela characters. Domestic workers throughout Brazil were encouraged to turn their labor into a performance to be validated and accepted as “the most charming maid in Brazil.” However, participation in the contest also raised issues of class and citizenship, as contestants were urged to be legally documented as domestic workers. While the contest called

on participants to engage with mobility by “living the dream,” this very mobility was paradoxical. In order to move upwards socially, participants had to be drawn further into the regulatory framework of the nation. Instead of the liberating promise of participatory culture envisioned by Henry Jenkins and Jenkins et al., the MCMB contest acted as a digital enclosure.<sup>296</sup> Using Lee and Andrejevic’s work on digital enclosures and Foucault’s theory of governmentality, this chapter analyzes how the MCMB contest integrated participants into the nation.<sup>297</sup> This resulted in a type of consumer-oriented governmentality, where Globo simultaneously cultivated citizens and audiences.

## 4.2 Living the Dream

The MCMB contest was announced during a video segment that aired on *Fantástico*, May 27, 2012.<sup>298</sup> The four-minute segment includes behind-the-scenes interviews with the authors of *Cheias* (Filipe Miguez and Izabel de Oliveira), the director (Denise Saraceni), and the three main actresses: Taís Araújo, Isabelle Drummond, and Leandra Leal, who play the parts of Penha, Cida, and Rosário, respectively. The narrator, Tadeu Schmidt, explains that since the music video “Vida de Empreguete” launched the week before, it had already been viewed more than seven million times. He then interviews the actresses to discuss how the video became a hit, and their conversation frames both the diegetic and extra-diegetic success of the music video:

Schmidt:      What a success this clip is!  
Leal:            It’s a success, but also an innovation.

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296. Jenkins, *Convergence Culture*; Henry Jenkins, et al., *Confronting the Challenges of Participatory Culture: Media Education for the 21st Century* (Cambridge, MA; London: MIT Press, 2009). See Mark Andrejevic, “Surveillance in the Digital Enclosure,” *The Communication Review* 10, no. 4 (2007) and Lee and Andrejevic, “Second-Screen Theory” for a discussion of digital enclosures.

297. Lee and Andrejevic, “Second-Screen Theory”; Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*; Foucault, “Governmentality.”

298. Globo, “Clipe das Empreguetes de ‘Cheias de Charme’ Faz Sucesso em Todo O Brasil,” *GloboPlay* video, 4:04 (May 27, 2012), <https://globoplay.globo.com/v/1966225/programa/>.

- Araújo: At the end of the chapter on Saturday, [the website address appeared] and people saw—this is what’s cool—people saw the video first on the internet, and from there it began and turned into a viral hit.
- Leal: It went viral in real life, what was happening on television, on the telenovela.

Moments later, Schmidt comments that the music video marks a turning point in the telenovela’s narrative. Leal adds, “It’s the beginning of the realization of a dream.”

The discourse of “living the dream” was used repeatedly to refer to both the maids’ success in the telenovela as well as the broader connection with convergence culture. In the same video segment mentioned above, Filipe Miguez elaborates on this idea, saying, “Let’s talk about this reality that exists today. With minimal resources, you can record a clip, put it online, and eventually become successful ... That urge that you have to be a singer, to show something that you dream, some artistic tendency ... It’s time.” The contest is then announced by the main actresses, inviting viewers to submit videos less than a minute in duration through the main website for *Fantástico*. Miguez connects the ability to produce content with individual aspirations and emphasizes that this is part of contemporary reality. However, Couldry argues that such a vision of convergence culture must be tempered by accounting for the “socio-economic and cultural forces which are stratifying technological access, use and skills in a convergent media environment.”<sup>299</sup> Some of these forces will be discussed later in this chapter, but it is worth pointing out here how the industrial discourse framed the contest as an egalitarian mode of social mobility.

Even the official rules for the contest called for participants to share in the Cinderella myth of the telenovela: “*Empreguetes* who are at home can also live the dream of the characters

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299. Couldry, “More Sociology, More Culture,” 498.

of *Cheias de Charme. Fantástico* is launching the campaign: ‘The most charming maid in Brazil.’ That’s right! You there, maid, this is the chance to show off all your artistic skills!’<sup>300</sup> By framing the telenovela and its related participation as “living the dream,” the boundaries between fiction and reality fell apart. Viewers weren’t just encouraged to participate in the creation of fan-made content; they were invited to imitate the production and viral success of the “Vida de Empreguete” music video. The contest became more than just a process of participation; it was a chance to move upwards socially, to live the middle-class dream.

All of this operated as a different kind of transmedia world-building. Jenkins views transmedia storytelling itself as “the art of world making.”<sup>301</sup> For Jenkins, “A transmedia story unfolds across multiple media platforms, with each new text making a distinctive and valuable contribution to the whole.”<sup>302</sup> Boni refers to this unfolding as the “process of expansion.”<sup>303</sup> The expansion of the story world across multiple platforms encourages consumers to seek out all of the narrative elements.<sup>304</sup> While the MCMB contest did not entail the same level of narrative complexity as the examples used by Jenkins, the contest was notable for how it expanded the diegesis of the telenovela into contemporary Brazilian reality. Characters in the telenovela discussed the MCMB contest, asking each other if they’ve submitted a video. At one point, in a self-referential moment, one character even exclaimed that she would be excited to win the prize and appear on a telenovela. The contest thus existed both in Brazilian reality as well as in the

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300. Globo, “Participe Do Concurso ‘a Empregada Mais Cheia De Charme Do Brasil’,” *Fantástico* (2012), <https://web.archive.org/web/20120601204641/http://fantastico.globo.com/Jornalismo/FANT/0,,MUL1680585-15605,00-PARTICIPE+DO+CONCURSO+A+EMPREGADA+MAIS+CHEIA+DE+CHARME+DO+BRASIL.html>. Archived June 1, 2012. Also see note 1 on page 1 for a definition of the term “empreguete.”

301. Jenkins, *Convergence Culture*, 21.

302. Jenkins, 95-96.

303. Boni, “Worlds, Today,” 10.

304. Jenkins, *Convergence Culture*, 21.



world of *Cheias*. As such, the world-building of *Cheias* became congruous with nation-building as contestants were required to be legally documented as domestic workers. “Living the dream” meant contestants had to bring their lives into harmony with the nation.

While the development of transmedia worlds and the process of nation building may initially seem disconnected from each other, there are several commonalities that emerge upon closer examination. The first common element is that of integration. In regard to transmedia worlds, the diverse story elements were meant to be gathered in or connected together. Fast and Jansson argue, “Transmedia means, first, that texts, users, and their practices—as digital data—move across devices and platforms.”<sup>305</sup> Jenkins also describes transmedia users as “hunters and gatherers” who have to chase down every portion of the story in order to enrich their experience.<sup>306</sup> While the various narrative nodes scattered across platforms *can* be enjoyed separately, to do so is to be deprived of the full experience. Boni adds, “Transmedia world building is comparable to the intertwining of many different threads forming a cloth: the sum of each can never be equivalent to their interrelation. As in the hermeneutic circle, we cannot know the parts if we do not know the whole; at the same time, we cannot know the whole if we do not know the parts.”<sup>307</sup> Integration is also a key component of nation building, as individuals are encouraged to view themselves as citizens of an “imagined political community.”<sup>308</sup> Anderson adds, “[The nation] is imagined as a community, because, regardless of the actual inequality and

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305. Fast and Jansson, *Transmedia Work*, 7.

306. Jenkins

307. Boni, “Worlds, Today,” 16.

308. Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 6.

exploitation that may prevail in each, the nation is always conceived as a deep, horizontal comradeship.”<sup>309</sup>

### 4.3 Industrial Discourse as Counter-Resistance

The call to live the dream connected the contest with the narrative of the telenovela itself. Specifically, the contest mimicked the meteoric rise to success of the protagonists in *Cheias*. In the telenovela, the three main protagonists—Rosário, Cida, and Penha—were domestic workers who suffered injustices at the hands of their various employers (whether past or present). The three maids get together to commiserate in the home of Chayene, who is Penha’s former employer and Rosario’s current one. Chayene is away on a trip for several days, which gives the maids free rein of the house. Later that night, Rosário writes a song called “Vida de Empreguete” about their lives as domestic workers. The maids decide to make a music video of the song there in Chayene’s house, lampooning their own lives as domestic workers. Using Chayene’s clothes, costumes, and even her recording studio, the maids alternate between various personas in the video—at times they appear as domestic workers dancing through their routine labor, while at other times the maids appear as glamorous pop stars.

The result evokes what Michel de Certeau terms “*la perruque*.”<sup>310</sup> For de Certeau, “*la perruque*” is a subversive act whereby a worker “reclaims” the space and time of their employment for their own personal uses. These personal uses are “free, creative, and precisely not directed toward profit.”<sup>311</sup> The performative act of the maids is a case of transgressive resistance, of using the space of their employment—as well as various tools associated with their

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309. Anderson, 7.

310. Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, trans. Stephen Rendall (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1984), 25.

311. de Certeau

work, such as rags, brooms, vacuum cleaners, and serving trays—to subvert their own labor. As de Certeau argues about the singular, masculine worker, “In the very place where the machine he must serve reigns supreme, he cunningly takes pleasure in finding a way to create gratuitous products whose sole purpose is to signify his own capabilities through his *work* and to confirm his solidarity with other workers or his family through *spending* his time in this way.”<sup>312</sup> In the context of *Cheias*, the music video made by the three housemaids signifies not only their own capabilities as laborers, but also their ability to “cunningly take pleasure” in the subversion of the economic system. They transformed their labor into play as they gleefully made fun of their own mundane lives as domestic workers, as well as their employer’s extravagant lifestyle.

A key component of “*la perruque*” is the ability of the worker to use “tricks” to his or her own advantage. De Certeau continues his argument by highlighting how “order is tricked by an art. Into the institution to be served are thus insinuated styles of social exchange, technical invention, and moral resistance.”<sup>313</sup> De Certeau equates these three elements with gifts (social exchange), tricks (technical invention), and tenacity (moral resistance). In other words, the workers’ ability to conceal or mask their profitless tricks is an act of moral resistance. This suggests that if an employer or manager goes along with the trick, the act loses its resistant function—instead of reclaiming the social order, the trick then becomes just another act that remains under the purview of employers.

The videos produced for the MCMB contest initially seemed to carry on the tradition of “*la perruque*” outlined above. One of the rules for the contest required that all submissions be recorded in the contestant’s place of employment, and participants were encouraged to sing and

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312. de Certeau, 25-26 (italics in original).

313. de Certeau, 26.

dance, to “be creative” while “performing” their labor. The videos were freely shared not only through *Fantástico*’s website, but also through YouTube and other online venues. This appears to connect with de Certeau’s emphasis on gifts, or tricks that don’t result in profit. Additionally, the participants clearly enjoyed themselves, “taking pleasure” in the creation of these gratuitous videos.

However, the contest denied the resistant function necessary for “*la perruque*” to truly occur. As mentioned above, in order for moral resistance to be evident in the “trick,” there has to be some degree of subterfuge. The way the contest was structured denied the subversive secrecy described by de Certeau. While the videos needed to be recorded in the participants’ place of employment, they also needed to have permission from their employers to film there. Additionally, employers needed to sign any necessary work documents. At times employers were even involved in the actual recording of the videos. This is a far cry from the “networks of connivances and sleights of hand” called for by de Certeau.<sup>314</sup> The contrast between the two types of videos reveals a negotiation of resistance. On the one hand, the music video produced for the telenovela functioned as a mischievous “trick” in the vein of de Certeau’s argument. On the other hand, the videos produced for the contest diverged from the resistant model used in the telenovela, serving instead to draw viewers/participants back into existing socioeconomic structures. While the videos for the MCMB contest were freely shared through *Fantástico*’s site, this is still at odds with the notion of gifts or social exchange promoted by de Certeau. The underlying reason for making these videos was not simply to use their employer’s time for personal uses, but to try and win the prize of appearing on the telenovela. The contest thus reinscribed participants back into the social order. Instead of resisting or subverting the existing

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314. de Certeau, 28.

economic system through gifts, participants were brought more fully back into the existing structure. Moreover, the contest created the illusion of resistance or subterfuge, but this resistance was firmly entrenched in the storyworld of the telenovela.

#### 4.4 Class Rules

As participants were reinscribed into the social order of the nation, they were brought into a “digital enclosure” as described by Lee and Andrejevic.<sup>315</sup> Lee and Andrejevic examine the proliferation of second-screen apps as a way to keep audiences participating and as a means to drive audiences back to the liveness of television broadcasts.<sup>316</sup> In using these technologies, viewers are given the illusion of control, but ultimately they are brought back into the proverbial fold to be more closely observed. Lee and Andrejevic argue, “[W]e might more accurately describe [these] as technologies designed to fold television viewing into the monitored embrace of a digital enclosure: a ‘commercial surround’ in which one’s activities are recorded, stored, and mined for marketing purposes.”<sup>317</sup> I apply the principle of the digital enclosure in a slightly different context, one that is less about surveillance and more about utilizing the labor produced within the enclosure.

The contest ran for two months, from May 2012 to July 2012. During the first month of the contest, submissions could be sent in through *Fantástico*’s website. Each week, comedic skits aired on *Fantástico* inviting viewers to submit their videos. These skits also reminded viewers of the rules for the contest, while simultaneously calling on domestic workers to legalize their

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315. Hye Jin Lee and Mark Andrejevic. “Second-Screen Theory: From the Democratic Surround to the Digital Enclosure.” In *Connected Viewing: Selling, Streaming, & Sharing Media in the Digital Era*, edited by Jennifer Holt and Kevin Sanson, 40–61. New York: Routledge, 2014; Mark Andrejevic, “Surveillance in the Digital Enclosure.” *The Communication Review* 10, no. 4 (2007): 295–317.

316. Lee and Andrejevic, 47.

317. Lee and Andrejevic, 53.

employment status. On 3 June 2012, the skit that aired during *Fantástico* specifically addressed the question of legal employment.<sup>318</sup> The segment begins with the host, Tadeu Schmidt, asking viewers if they've already sent in their videos: "This is your big chance! Participate! Make the most of it!" He clarifies that all that is needed is for participants to be at least 18 years old, and to have their employment formalized with a *carteira assinada*, or signed work papers. A *carteira assinada* is a contract between employers and employees, indicating the date work began, how long work is contracted for, salary, holidays, and so on.<sup>319</sup> Most domestic workers in Brazil work under the table, with nothing more than a verbal agreement with their employers. The skit addressed this very issue, with Schmidt saying that workers just need to prove that they really are employed as a domestic worker. The Brazilian actress Maria Menezes appears dressed as a housemaid, and she asks Schmidt, "But what if I don't have a *carteira assinada*?" He turns to the camera, addressing viewers at home, saying, "If you don't have a *carteira assinada*, well ... talk to your employer. If they sign your papers, it's all good!" The dialogue between Menezes and Schmidt continues, highlighting how participants should get cleaned up for the video, and that filming needs to happen at their place of employment.

Despite the call to "live the dream," the contest excluded a significant number of potential participants. In 2012, only 39% of domestic workers in Brazil actually worked under contract.<sup>320</sup> While the overall amount of contracted domestic workers increased from 2003 to

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318. Globo, "Fantástico: Veja Como Participar Do Concurso 'a Empregada Mais Cheia De Charme Do Brasil'." *GloboPlay* video, 3:58 (June 3, 2012), <https://globoplay.globo.com/v/1976251/programa/>.

319. "Carteira De Trabalho - Como Tirar a 1a e 2a Via," *GuiaDocumentos* (n.d.).

320. IBGE (Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística), "Notícias: Especial Dia Do Trabalho: 82,4% Dos Empregados Do Setor Privado Possuíam Carteira De Trabalho Assinada Em 2012," *Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística: Censo 2010* (2013): <https://censo2010.ibge.gov.br/noticias-censo.html?busca=1&id=1&idnoticia=2368&t=especial-dia-trabalho-82-4-empregados-setor-privado-possuiam-carteira-assinada-2012&view=noticia>.

2012, the percentage of workers *without* legal work papers went up to 70% by 2016.<sup>321</sup> The significance of this is two-fold. On the one hand, the legitimization of a work contract is a prominent theme of the telenovela. Viewers are constantly reminded that domestic work is “honorable work.” Several of the inciting incidents in the telenovela even revolve around the rights and obligations of domestic workers. For instance, Penha finds herself caught up in a legal battle after Chayene, her employer, throws soup in Penha’s face. Cida’s adoptive parents also decide to formalize Cida’s employment by signing her *carteira*, reducing her from being like a daughter to being a live-in employee. Later in the telenovela’s narrative, a campaign featuring the actresses Taís Araújo and Malu Galli aired as an ad on TV Globo. The actresses appeared in character as Penha and Lygia, respectively, imploring both domestic workers and their employers to have a formalized contract. The narrative of the telenovela and the campaign shared a common function: to validate the labor of domestic workers and encourage the formalization and legitimation of that labor in the form of legal contracts. By requiring participants to have their *carteira assinada*, the contest called on viewers to align themselves with the nation through the legal recognition of their employment. Additionally, the promise of a prize and the need for employers to “sign off”—literally, in the case of the *carteira assinada*, and figuratively, by granting permission to film in the employers’ own domestic space—reinforced the viewers’ participation in the existing capitalistic structure of labor. Moreover, the rise in workers without a *carteira assinada* suggests that social merchandising didn’t have the desired effect in this case. The promotion of *carteiras assinadas* can instead be seen as a consumer product masquerading as a social good.

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321. IBGE, “Notícias: Especial;” Pollyanna Brêtas, “Domésticas: 70% Ainda Não Têm Carteira Assinada.” *Extra Online* (2016): <https://extra.globo.com/noticias/economia/domesticas-70-ainda-nao-tem-carteira-assinada-19762226.html>.

The issue of labor as it relates to class was further developed in the way the video contest was used by TV Globo. By participating in the MCMB video contest, fans performed a type of intertextual labor that carried audiences from one Globo property to another. The competition ultimately determined which participant would make a cameo appearance on the telenovela *Cheias de Charme*. With *Cheias* airing Monday through Saturday, and *Fantástico* airing Sunday evenings, the contest helped draw audiences to TV Globo across the entire week. The top 16 videos were screened in their entirety during *Fantástico*, calling on viewers to vote for their favorites. From June 24 to July 15, four semi-finalists were featured each week. The broadcast of the videos from week to week shows that the fan-produced videos functioned as content for *Fantástico*, as promotional material for *Cheias*, and as a pedagogical tool. The effect is similar to what Milner describes in the context of fannish activities of digital game fans.<sup>322</sup> Milner argues that the work digital game fans produce in modifying or altering worlds, characters, or storylines can all be constituted as labor. He writes, “All of these activities are essentially labor since they are all forms of productivity that build the brand of the media text.”<sup>323</sup> In the case of the MCMB contest, fan labor served to “build the brand” not of a single media text, but of the brand of TV Globo.

In addition to functioning as content for *Fantástico*, the videos produced for the MCMB contest were also used as instructional material, illustrating to viewers what types of videos would cause participants to be eliminated. For instance, on 10 June 2012, a comedic skit aired in which Maria Menezes shows up at Globo’s studios to see how her “submitted video” is doing,

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322. R.M. Milner, “Working for the Text: Fan Labor and the New Organization,” *International Journal of Cultural Studies* 12, no. 5 (2009).

323. Milner, 492.



and to ham it up with Tadeu Schmidt.<sup>324</sup> Menezes assumed the role of a domestic worker for several weeks on *Fantástico*, where she eagerly tries to make a successful video in order to appear on *Cheias de Charme*. As Menezes comically moves around Globo's studios, she stumbles upon a disc with a label crudely attached to it, "*Cheias de Charme* Contest: Eliminated Contestants." She then watches the video, which the television audience also sees, while Menezes explains why those particular contestants were eliminated. Maria Aline, from São Paulo, was eliminated because the video only showed her dancing at a samba school instead of at her place of employment. Iana Santos, from Salvador, was eliminated because her video only showed an extreme close-up of her face and didn't show her working. The contestants were mercilessly roasted by Menezes on the air, who jokingly proclaims that it's good they were eliminated, because it means her chances of winning just went up.

The mocking tone used in critiquing these videos recalls the use of "failures" in competition-based talent shows, such as the *Idol* franchise and *So You Think You Can Dance*. In her work on *American Idol*, Katherine Meizel elaborates on the concept of failures.<sup>325</sup> Specifically, the idea of failures refers to those contestants who display a distinct lack of musical talent, singing off-key as they perform before cringing judges in earlier episodes of a traditional season of *American Idol*. Meizel instructively points out that contestants only appear before the celebrity judges after having already gone through several rounds of auditions. Contestants who sing off-key or otherwise deliver terrible performances are sometimes sent before the celebrity judges just to elicit cringes and to play up their own personalities. While Meizel was writing

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324. Globo, "Maria Mostra Novas Eliminadas Do Concurso 'Empregada Mais Cheia De Charme'." *GloboPlay* video, 3:16 (June 10, 2012), <https://globoplay.globo.com/v/1986355/programa/>.

325. Katherine Meizel, "Making the Dream a Reality (Show): The Celebration of Failure in American Idol," *Popular Music and Society* 32, no. 4 (2009).

about the *Idol* franchise, there are elements of her argument that can be applied to the MCMB contest. Meizel argues that the structure of the *Idol* competition and the discourse of the judges frames the contest as one of individualism, self-made stardom, and the pursuit of “the American Dream.” Meizel writes, “The judges’ expression of approval, ‘You’re going to Hollywood,’ means explicit permission to live that Dream, win or lose.”<sup>326</sup> In the case of the MCMB contest, the Dream resides in Rio de Janeiro and Globo studios instead of Hollywood.

The video also illustrates some potential complications of Brooker’s argument about the negotiation of fan-made products and official products. Brooker argues, “Fans are commonly driven by the impulse to produce the most ‘professional’ work possible—that is, as similar to the admired source text as possible—while the media industry increasingly seeks to engage fan creativity, drawing it into official platforms and harnessing that ground-level energy.”<sup>327</sup> In the example of MCMB, it is clear that the industry sought to “harness that ground-level energy” of the videos to promote both good and bad examples on *Fantástico*’s website. However, it raises the issue of what it means to “produce the most ‘professional’ work possible.” Most of the videos submitted to the contest were crudely shot, poorly lit, and sparsely edited. Despite this, the comments made on *Fantástico*’s broadcasts were generally a critique of the participants’ failure to follow the rules, rather than their lack of polished material.

Both the digital enclosure described by Lee and Andrejevic and the MCMB contest resonate with Will Brooker’s description of fannish activities associated with *Battlestar Galactica (BSG)* (Sci-Fi, 2004-2009). Brooker describes a platform developed for *BSG* that allowed fans to use footage and sound effects from the series to create their own fan videos.

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326. Meizel, 482.

327. Brooker, “Going Pro,” 73.

However, the material largely amounted to B-roll footage, with a noticeable lack of actors or action sequences. The footage gave users the illusion of producing a mini-episode of *BSG*, but it excluded the meatier dramatic material. Brooker argues that this type of practice “channels fan activity from the uncontrolled wilderness of the broader Internet into a walled garden where amateur producers can be tempted by cool toys and tools and a public stage for their work, then kept within strict guidelines in terms of content, approach, and copyright.”<sup>328</sup> Similarly, the MCMB contest provided viewers with a chance for their work to be screened publicly. The top 16 submissions were screened on national television, and viewers could vote on which contestant deserved to move on to the final round. However, as established by Globo, the contest became a digital enclosure or walled garden like those detailed by Lee and Andrejevic or Brooker. The strict rules governing the contest established a model of preferred participation where participants were judged not just on the quality of their submissions, but also on the legality of their respective employment.

Underscoring Lee and Andrejevic’s digital enclosure and Brooker’s walled garden is the use of spatial concepts to refer to the immaterial space of user interaction in their respective analyses. Jenkins also uses the concept of a playground to describe the immaterial space where fans and artists alike can explore and push the boundaries of world-building in relation to transmedia.<sup>329</sup> However, Marta Boni clarifies that the “playground” described by Jenkins is far from being a limitless space of endless creativity. Boni argues that “transmedia labyrinths are, by definition, bridled,” and they function as a “fenced-in playground.”<sup>330</sup> In other words, transmedia

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328. Brooker, “Going Pro,” 74.

329. Jenkins, *Convergence Culture*, 113.

330. Boni, “Worlds, Today,” 16.

spaces present the illusion of creative freedom for the users or producers engaging with the material. However, the sites of interaction are carefully established, monitored, and regulated to maintain some degree of control over the final output.

Television viewers could watch and vote for the semifinalists' videos from the MCMB contest on *Fantástico's* website. Viewers could also see additional footage on the website that didn't make it on-the-air. One segment featured on the website on 20 July 2012 builds on the strategy mentioned above, showing candidates that were eliminated for various reasons.<sup>331</sup> This particular segment emphasizes the need for participants to have their *carteira assinada*. The host of the segment, Rafael Carregal, shows four videos that were all eliminated. The first contestant shown receives a glowing review from Carregal, particularly for her remarkable talent of cooking while balancing a bottle on top of her head. However, Carregal explains that the contestant was eliminated because she exclaims how excited she is to appear on Ana Maria Braga's talk show, instead of the telenovela *Cheias de Charme*—she is eliminated for mixing up which show she is trying to appear on. The other three contestants also submitted videos of decent technical quality, but each one was eliminated for “failure to produce documentation.”

The examples described here complicate Scott's description of the regifting economy and Chin's argument of social hierarchies within fandom. Fans generally operate in a gift economy, where fan-produced content is freely distributed.<sup>332</sup> Chin argues that the impetus behind such fan-made content is to generate social and cultural capital.<sup>333</sup> This capital then contributes to social hierarchies within fandom, as some fans gain prestige or influence based on their

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331. Globo, “Conheça ‘Empreguetes’ Que Não Foram Classificadas Para O Concurso.” *GloboPlay* video, 3:55. July 20, 2012, <https://globoplay.globo.com/v/2051279/>

332. Hellekson, “Fannish Field of Value.”

333. Chin, “It's About Who.”

contributions, while those with “lesser” contributions are situated farther down the hierarchy. Scott illustrates how fan-made contributions are then “repackaged” or “regifted” back to fans, creating a mixed economy “that obscures its commercial imperatives through a calculated adoption of fandom’s gift economy, its sense of community, and the promise of participation.”<sup>334</sup> However, with fan-made content created for *Cheias*, what was regifted wasn’t just content but class itself. As viewers participated with the telenovela and created their own content, that same content then became a representation of an idealized working class. Viewers were encouraged to submit videos of themselves singing and dancing while “performing” their labor. In turn, participants turned their labor into play, conveying an image of a complacent working class that was regifted back to viewers. This also encouraged a social hierarchy among participants based on cultural and economic capital: those who followed the rules continued to compete, while those who failed to do so were eliminated in humiliating fashion.

The emphasis on playing by the rules—and as it applies to the real world, of having the proper documentation—ties back into Lee and Andrejevic’s argument about digital enclosures. While the digital enclosure conjures up ideas of panopticism as theorized by Foucault, in this context the enclosure does more than simply observe and record.<sup>335</sup> Andrejevic argues that digital enclosures can be used for gathering information, and that participants in those enclosures are “largely unaware of what information is being gathered, how, and for what purposes.”<sup>336</sup> Taking the idea of a digital footprint even further, Okan Tanşu argues that people have a “digital

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334. Scott, “Repackaging Fan Culture,” ¶1.5.

335. Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, 195-228.

336. Andrejevic, “Surveillance in the Digital Enclosure,” 301.

soul reporting to the gods Amazon, Visa, Google and Facebook, of the digital world.”<sup>337</sup> I extend the concept of the digital enclosure to encompass more than just data. Digital enclosures may also include those points of interaction that function as sites of “immaterial labor,” “free labor,” or the “walled garden” of fan-produced material described by Brooker.<sup>338</sup> Just as participants in the digital enclosure are unaware of how their data is being used, so too are participants unaware of how their labor may be used as content or marketing. The digital enclosure both monitors those enclosed therein and also profits from the labor produced. The digital enclosure of the MCMB contest resulted in free content for TV Globo, which was used to market not only the television broadcasts of *Fantástico* and *Cheias*, but also their respective ancillary products and websites.

What is striking in the example of the MCMB contest is the contradictory nature of the enclosure: to enter the enclosure and be surveilled, one had to be legally employed, a “legitimate” citizen of Brazil. Conversely, while the enclosure granted certain perks—in this case, celebrity status and a promised appearance on the telenovela—by remaining illegitimate or under-the-radar, participants were also free from the possibility of being humiliated on national television. This ties in with Jenkins’ argument about affective economics:

Here’s the paradox: to be desired by the networks is to have your tastes commodified. On the one hand, to be commodified expands a group’s cultural visibility. Those groups that have no recognized economic value get ignored. That said, commodification is also a form of exploitation. Those groups that are commodified find

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337. Okan Tanşu, “Covid-19 (2020-Present),” in *Transmedia Cultures: A Companion*, ed. Simon Bacon (Oxford: Peter Lang Ltd. International Academic Publishers, 2021), 170.

338. See Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, *Empire* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2000) for a discussion of immaterial labor and biopower. See Tiziana Terranova, “Free Labor: Producing Culture for the digital Economy,” *Social Text* 18, no. 2 (2017) and Clarice Greco, “Noveleiros on-Line: Como Os Fãs Podem Transformar Uma Novela Em Cult,” *Palavra Chave* 20, no. 4 (2017) for an analysis of free labor as it relates to online fan communities. Also see Brooker, “Going Pro,” for an analysis of fan participation in the “walled garden” of *Battlestar Galactica* transmedia extensions.

themselves targeted more aggressively by marketers and often feel they have lost control over their own culture, since it is mass produced and mass marketed. One cannot help but have conflicted feelings because one doesn't want to go unrepresented—but one doesn't want to be exploited, either.<sup>339</sup>

We can also connect the idea of digital enclosures with overarching concepts of modernity. Giddens argues that one of the defining characteristics of modernity is the separation of time and space. The separation of time and space leads to a “lifting out” or disembedding of social relations.<sup>340</sup> While Giddens discusses the compression of time and space in his writings, Appadurai deals with flows of people, technology, money, media, and ideologies. Within modernity, local physical space is penetrated and influenced by distant “absent” spaces. Crucially, this interaction between local and absent space often occurs across previously established boundaries. In the digital age, this concept is taken a step further with the rise of immaterial spaces. As Andrejevic points out, the rise of digital interaction is often viewed as providing limitless possibilities that are unrestricted by physical space, as evidenced by the use of terms such as cyberspace, cloud computing, and the digital sublime.<sup>341</sup> However, digital enclosures do exactly what their name implies: they section off, establish boundaries, and dictate the rules of participation. This results in the possibility of “unprecedented commodification” of those interacting within the enclosure.<sup>342</sup> Whereas the disembedded nature of modernity results in flows that permeate boundaries, digital enclosures reestablish or create new limitations. Digital enclosures can be seen as an act of reclamation as corporations and governments aim to define the boundaries of participation in their respective digital spaces.

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339. Jenkins, *Convergence Culture*, 62-63.

340. Giddens, *Modernity and Self-Identity*, 19.

341. Andrejevic

342. Andrejevic, 297.

On 22 July 2012, the MCMB winner was chosen on *Fantástico*'s live broadcast.<sup>343</sup> Taís Araújo, Leandra Leal, and Isabelle Drummond appeared on the show to cast their vote between the top four finalists. The four videos were shown one at a time, and the actresses made comments as each video was played. While their comments praise the submissions, they also suggest that the success of the individual contestants is only possible because they followed the rules. The first video shown to the actresses is that of Marilene de Jesus. During the video, Marilene smiles and dances while she cleans her employer's house. Tadeu Schmidt chimes in, saying, "She used cleaning implements—this is important for the contest." Moments later in the video, Marilene walks in dressed up, and the actresses jokingly exclaim, "Here comes the boss!" Marilene sits down and flips through a magazine, and at one point she looks at the camera and smiles.

It was the exchange between Marilene and the camera that stood out to Taís Araújo. She remarks, "I liked when she looked into the camera, which suggests a complicity between her and her employer. This is important since her employer opened her home and allowed her to do the clip there." Moments later, Tadeu Schmidt invites Leandra Leal to cast her vote. Before doing so, Leandra addresses the participants as a whole, saying, "Congratulations to everyone, because it's really cool to have the courage ... and to their employers as well, for encouraging them to want to sign their *carteira*—right? Because this is really important ... Various contestants fell out of the competition because they didn't have their *carteiras assinadas*." The discourse here reiterates labor relations and the legal framework necessary for the participants to win. It's important to remember that this occurs *after* the contest is largely over—the only thing left is for

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343. Globo, "Fantástico: Marilene Jesus Vence O Concurso Da Empregada Mais Cheia De Chame Do Brasil," *GloboPlay* video, 10:08 (July 22, 2012), <https://globoplay.globo.com/v/2053147/programa/>.



the actresses to finish casting their votes. This serves as a reminder not just to the participants but to viewers throughout Brazil that having one's employment legalized is more than just a formality—there are tangible, real-world benefits. In this context, TV Globo acts as a gatekeeper, controlling the network and setting the terms of entry into that network.<sup>344</sup> However, because of the nationalistic framework of the contest, Globo also acts as a quasi-gatekeeper for the nation, verifying and legitimizing the domestic labor of the participants.

The collaborative, communal nature of transmedia worlds and nation-building is also underscored by the role of cultural memory and the imagination. Colin Harvey argues that cultural memory is the connective tissue holding transmedia worlds together. Using the example of Darth Vader, Harvey points out how the character can be encountered in a film, controlled in a videogame, or read about in *Star Wars* books. Harvey argues, “Memory is integral to these configurative practices ... In each instance the configurative practice required, whether it be viewing, playing or reading, is interpolated by memory.”<sup>345</sup> In other words, each iteration of the character requires the viewer to remember the character's past, present, and future—the very existence of Darth Vader in each medium demands the act of remembering. The memory of a particular character, or other significant narrative events, must also reside in the communal imagination as being “authentic” to that storyworld. Similarly, Lisbeth Klastrup and Susana Tosca argue, “What characterises a transmedial world is that audience and designers share a mental image of the ‘worldness’ (a number of distinguishing features of its universe).”<sup>346</sup> Klastrup and Tosca point out that a shared worldview is critical, since “a group of interconnected

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344. Andrejevic, 300.

345. Harvey, *Fantastic Transmedia*.

346. Lisbeth Klastrup, and Susana Tosca, “Transmedial Worlds: Rethinking Cyberworld Design,” *International Conference on Cyberworlds* (2004), n.p.

fictions does not become a transmedial world until people begin to perceive it as such.”<sup>347</sup>

Similarly, Anderson looks at the rise of nationalism in the context of print capitalism, “which made it possible for rapidly growing numbers of people to think about themselves, and to relate themselves to others, in profoundly new ways.”<sup>348</sup> Anderson further argues that the nation “is imagined because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion.”<sup>349</sup> The MCMB contest functioned as a construction of the collective imaginary of domestic workers throughout Brazil. However, they were united through the contest not just by their status as domestic workers, but by their legal status as integrated citizens—their communal imagination rendered them “authentic” to the nation.

What resulted from the discourse and various rules surrounding the contest was a conceptualization of the audience as a happy working class. Videos needed to show domestic workers in their work environment, but they also had to be cleaned up and “looking pretty.” Employees also needed to be doing something creative *while* they are working, creating a fairy tale around their work of sweeping floors, scrubbing dishes, or cooking meals.<sup>350</sup> On top of all this, the work had to be legally documented, drawing participants into issues of citizenship and

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347. Lisbeth Klastrup, and Susana Tosca, “The Networked Reception of Transmedial Universes: An Experience-Centered Approach,” *MedieKultur: Journal of Media and Communication Research* 32, no. 60 (2016), 111.

348. Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, 36.

349. Anderson, 6.

350. This same idea of performative labor returns a few months later with the telenovela *Avenida Brasil* (2012, TV Globo). In *Avenida Brasil*, the character Zezé is a domestic worker who serves as the comedic relief in the show. During one particular scene that aired on October 2, 2012, Zezé is shown singing and dancing while she vacuums in the great room. The moment became a viral meme, as Zezé sings the wrong lyrics to great comedic effect. The original lyrics stem from the group Aviões de Ferro. In their correct form, the lyrics should read, “Eu quero ver tu correndo atrás de mim,” which translates as, “I want to see you chasing after me.” Instead, Zezé dances provocatively as she loudly sings, “Eu quero ver tu me chamar de amendoim,” or, “I want to hear you call me peanut.”

nationalism. If participants complied with these rules, the prize was one of upward mobility, being able to “live the dream” of social progress. The formula of the invitation essentially asked participants to turn their reality into a fantasy—i.e., by performing their labor while singing and dancing—in order to have their dreams become reality. The contest functioned as a complex circuit of labor. Female domestic workers were employed to perform “women’s work” in the homes of others, generating income for performing labor that would be unpaid in their own homes. In making these fan-made—or, we could argue, “fan-maid”—videos, domestic work was once again channeled into free labor.

The MCMB contest functioned as a multi-layered enclosure that modeled both what the ideal contestant and the ideal citizen should be. On one level, the rules of the contest functioned as an enclosure on the digital space of interaction. Limitations were placed on which users could participate and where that participation could occur (i.e., in the domestic space of employment). Another level of enclosure occurred in relation to the spaces where the videos were filmed. As mentioned above, the videos had to be recorded in the contestant’s place of employment and the contestants had to receive permission from their employers. This effectively created a “disciplinary space” that put everyone in their place (figuratively and literally).<sup>351</sup> The rationale and logic underlying these disciplinary spaces stem from Foucault’s concept of governmentality, which he describes as “the art of government.”<sup>352</sup> Governmentality is the reasoning through which power is exerted over people and territory, and is associated with Foucault’s broader theoretical framework of bio-power. Over time, sovereignty was replaced with modern forms of government, and the maintenance of control was extended to other institutions such as prisons,

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351. Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, 143.

352. Foucault, “Governmentality”; Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*.

hospitals, military barracks, factories, and schools. Foucault views the distribution of individuals within such spaces as a precursor to discipline, saying, “Discipline sometimes requires *enclosure*.”<sup>353</sup> The process of partitioning individuals into different spaces is what Foucault calls “a tactic of ... anti-concentration”:

Its aim was to establish presences and absences, to know where and how to locate individuals, ... to be able at each moment to supervise the conduct of each individual, to assess it, to judge it, to calculate its qualities or merits. It was a procedure, therefore, aimed at knowing, mastering and using. Discipline organizes an analytical space.<sup>354</sup>

While Foucault refers more specifically to the cellular organization of prisons and monasteries, the same holds true with the various domestic spaces of the MCMB contest. They were individual in nature, and the video submissions were also individualistic—there is no sense of domestic workers collaborating with their peers the way the characters do in *Cheias*. The contest located contestants in their place of employment where their conduct could then be supervised by their employer. By extension, the ideal contestant was not only one who asked for permission, but also one who was on good terms with her employer. The ideal contestant was thus also a model citizen who had her *carteira* in order and was willing to follow the rules of both her employer and the government.

The contest also served as a transmediatization of labor, with some slight variations from Fast and Jansson’s definition. Fast and Jansson describe transmedia work as:

a social condition saturated by (1) online sharing practices that (2) make work and workers visible to other users and (3) enable real-time feedback on circulated content, which in turn facilitates (4)

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353. Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, 141 (italics in original).

354. Foucault

automated processes of surveillance and, ultimately, (5) the commodification of social practices and relations at large.<sup>355</sup>

Domestic workers participating in the contest created videos that are shared and made visible. Here, their labor wasn't just visible to other users but was distributed to the entire Globo audience watching on television or online. Feedback and surveillance stemmed from both the viewing public and from Globo itself. Television viewers cast votes to determine the finalists, while the main actresses from *Cheias de Charme* determined the final winner. Television hosts on Globo also provided verbal feedback about the video submissions, critiquing both the performed labor and the participants' ability to follow the rules. Collectively this functioned as a commodification or re-commodification of the participants' social practices. They were allowed to turn their work into play—like the characters they imitated in the telenovela, they could become not just *empregadas* but *empreguetes*.<sup>356</sup>

#### 4.5 Conclusion

What I have attempted to show in this brief survey of the industrial discourse is how TV Globo constructed the audience of *Cheias de Charme*. While I focused primarily on industrial discourse, a more extensive audience study would be fruitful in revealing how the participants themselves viewed the contest, what tools were used in the creation of the fan-made videos, and what obstacles the participants encountered. While we cannot extrapolate an entire audience's response from one or two isolated instances, I will highlight one brief account that suggests where such a study may lead.

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355. Fast and Jansson, *Transmedia Work*, 6.

356. See footnote 1 on page 1.

Many of the finalists in the contest didn't participate of their own accord or use their own means. Marilene de Jesus was encouraged to participate by her employer, Vitória Régia Costa Sampaio, a film student at Universidade Federal de Bahia.<sup>357</sup> Another finalist, Claudenice Costa, was convinced by her photographer neighbor to submit a video.<sup>358</sup> Vanessa Brito Lopes was encouraged by both of her employers to participate.<sup>359</sup> The implication is that the domestic workers lacked the financial, technological, or educational means to produce this content themselves.

The success of the eventual winner of the contest, Marilene de Jesus, reinforces some of the analysis already presented. Before the contest had even concluded, Marilene echoed some of the industrial discourse surrounding the contest. In a video that appeared on *Fantástico's* website on 29 June 2012, Marilene and Elisimar Zatin—one of the other semifinalists—take to the streets asking for everyone to vote for them.<sup>360</sup> At one point, Marilene exclaims, “It’s a dream! I still can’t believe it.” Similarly, Claudenice jokes in an interview that the fictional character of Chayene was inspired by her. In reference to the color pink,—and the over-use of the color in the fictional singer Chayene’s house—she even adds, “I love pink! Chayene’s house is the house of my dreams.”<sup>361</sup>

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357. Alexandro Mota, “Empregada De Prédio Na Graça É Forte Candidata Em Concurso Do Fantástico.” *Correio* (2012).

358. “Segunda Empregada Baiana Se Classifica Em Concurso Do Fantástico,” *Correio*, July 8, 2012, <https://www.correio24horas.com.br/noticia/nid/segunda-empregada-baiana-se-classifica-em-concurso-do-fantastico/>.

359. Globo, “Fantástico: Confirma a Finalista Para O Concurso Da Empregada Mais Cheia De Chame Do Brasil,” *Globoplay* video, 1:19 (July 22, 2012), <https://globoplay.globo.com/v/2053019/>.

360. Globo, “Fantástico: Empreguetes Fazem Campanha Para Conseguir Voto Em Concurso,” *Globoplay* video, 1:54 (June 29, 2012), <https://globoplay.globo.com/v/2018837/programa/>.

361. Globo, “Fantástico: Empreguetes: Finalistas Desses Domingo Já Se Sentem Celebridade,” *GloboPlay* video, 4:14 (July 6, 2012), <https://globoplay.globo.com/v/2029623/programa/>.

Marilene was crowned the MCMB winner by Taís Araújo, Leandra Leal, and Isabelle Drummond. She appeared in the telenovela on 27 July 2012, but her instant celebrity status resulted in much more. Along with her telenovela appearance, she was interviewed on various local and national news programs. She was even included on a special edition of the talk show *Encontro com Fátima Bernardes* (2012-present, TV Globo) on 28 September 2012. The episode was a retrospective on *Cheias*, which aired the same day the telenovela ended. During *Encontro*, Marilene shared the stage with the main actresses, the director, and the authors of the telenovela.

Even before being crowned the winner of the contest, Marilene received life-changing news. In a video posted to YouTube on 19 July 2012 by her employer, Marilene receives a phone call.<sup>362</sup> A local shop owner and fan had realized who Marilene was after seeing her appear as a contestant on *Fantástico*. The shop owner called to inform Marilene that she had qualified for a credit card. Marilene breaks down crying upon receiving the news. In a comment posted under the same video, Marilene's employer emphasizes the significance of the moment, saying, "In her case this means social reinsertion ... she had to use her neighbor's credit card before." While the contest initially catered to the "affective economics" described by Henry Jenkins, in the case of Marilene de Jesus, this translated to real-world economic change.<sup>363</sup> The promise of upward mobility and social validation that framed the "Most Charming Maid in Brazil" was grounded in the socioeconomic reality of Brazil.

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362. Vitória Régia Costa Sampaio, "Quando Marilene Ganhou Cartão De Crédito," *YouTube* video, 6:28 (July 19, 2012), <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IBegXakHW9I>.

363. Jenkins, *Convergence Culture*.

## 5 CONCLUSION

The history of Brazilian television is inextricably linked with the process of modernity. The arrival of television was heralded as a turning point in information and entertainment, with early television sets being promoted for their modern aesthetic. As outlined in the introduction to this dissertation, television ownership initially was a symbol of upper-class sensibility. Moreover, television functioned as a tool of national integration by carrying a vision of a modern Brazil throughout the nation. However, the relation between modernity and television in Brazil is more complicated in the 21st century. While television remains a dominant source of entertainment and information, the proliferation of the internet and mobile technologies has contributed to a greater democratization of media production and media access. Eli Carter also points to the implementation of the Pay-TV Law in 2011 as a turning point in the Brazilian mediascape.<sup>364</sup> The Pay-TV Law facilitated the rise of independent media production and fueled a surge in the production of weekly television series that challenge the dominance of daily telenovela consumption.<sup>365</sup> Television networks have struggled to adapt to the logics of new media. As Carter argues, “The clash of ‘old’ and ‘new’ media give way to a temporary, hybrid state that is neither fully one nor the other and is constantly experiencing tweaks and developments that push it toward the solidification of an as yet unknown new norm.”<sup>366</sup> In this

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364. Eli Lee Carter. “Shifting the Center: The Impact of the Pay-TV Law on the Brazilian Audiovisual Field.” *Media, Culture & Society* 41, no. 3 (2019): 261–77.

365. The term “series” here refers to the weekly broadcast of programs that have serial storytelling, where plots continue across multiple episodes. The distinction here is that while television series air weekly, telenovelas are broadcast daily. Additionally, telenovelas typically only run for six to nine months, ranging from 120 to 150 episodes. The surge in the production of television series marks a disruption of the previously dominant pattern of daily telenovela consumption.

366. Eli Carter. *The New Brazilian Mediascape: Television Production in the Digital Streaming Age*. Gainesville, FL: University of Florida Press, 2020.



hybrid state where new and old media collide, a culture of convergence began to emerge in Brazil that attempted to integrate the C class into the nation through transmediatization.

This dissertation situated the process of transmediatization in the sociohistorical context of Brazil in the 2010s. In doing so, I attempted to show how the process of transmediatization was structured by Globo as a process that would carry on the project of modernization in Brazil through mobility, participation, and expansion. I analyzed LAN houses and the medium of television as symbols of modernization and digital inclusion. I connected these with physical transportation and the “Lata Velha” (Clunker) segment of *Caldeirão do Huck*, illustrating how mobility was grounded in the process of mediatization. I also looked at the process of enfranchisement and social merchandising with the *passinho* dance contest and hashtag campaigns associated with *Cheias*. Transmedia participation with the telenovela was framed both as a Globo product and as a tool for democratization. As such, engagement with the transmedia extensions of *Cheias* became more than just a leisurely pursuit—it was framed as a democratic process for underprivileged citizens to make their voices heard. Finally, I analyzed the MCMB contest through the lens of digital enclosures, illustrating how participants were drawn into the regulatory framework of the nation. By turning their labor into a performance and adhering to the rules of the contest, participants could become part of the imagined community of “card-carrying” domestic workers. They were simultaneously molded into ideal viewers and ideal citizens.

The focus on mobility, participation, and expansion provides a framework for studying the process of transmediatization in Brazil. This study also emphasized the context in which the process of transmediatization emerged, with the rise of the C class occurring coterminously with a developing culture of convergence. The significance of this should not be overlooked.

Transmediatization does not occur in a sociocultural vacuum—it is a process that is integrally connected with other fields of modernity. Boni describes transmedia world building as being comparable to “the intertwining of many different threads forming a cloth.”<sup>367</sup> The broader process of transmediatization functions similarly, weaving through various aspects of social life. Transmediatization is not only bound together by other threads of modernity, it acts as a binding agent itself. In the Brazilian context, the process of transmediatization can also be characterized as an ebb and flow. The historical period described in this dissertation was the peak of transmedia production. In 2014 an economic downturn struck Brazil, which also resulted in a sharp decline in the purchasing power of the C class.<sup>368</sup> As the C class dwindled in purchasing power, so too did production of transmedia projects by Globo. This also led to a drop-off in scholarly projects that examined transmedia in Brazil.

This brings me to the first takeaway from this study, which is the need to situate more studies of transmedia in Brazil in their sociocultural context. In the introduction to this dissertation, I discussed how studies in Brazil approach transmedia primarily as a business strategy. However, this approach tends to overlook broader processes of mediatization and transmediatization, resulting in studies that are separated from the reality of Brazilian society. This is especially concerning given the long tradition of television studies in Brazil that examine television industries, audiences, and programs in relation to broader movements in society.<sup>369</sup> For

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367. Boni, “Introduction: Worlds, Today,” 16.

368. Pearson, Samantha. “Brazil’s Middle Class Starts to Lose Ground.” *Financial Times* (2015): <https://www.ft.com/content/70f8b4c4-d3e0-11e4-99bd-00144feab7de>.

369. see Thomas Tufte, *Living With the Rubbish Queen: Telenovelas, Culture, and Modernity in Brazil* (Luton, Bedfordshire, UK: University of Luton Press, 2000); Richard Pace and Brian P. Hinote, *Amazon Town TV: An Audience Ethnography in Gurupá, Brazil* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2013); Samantha Nogueira Joyce, *Brazilian Telenovelas and the Myth of Racial Democracy* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2012); Esther Hamburger, *O Brasil Antenado: A Sociedade Da Novela [Antennaed Brazil: Society of the Novela]* (Rio de Janeiro, RJ, Brazil: Jorge Zahar Editor, 2005); Conrad Phillip Kottak, *Prime-Time Society: An Anthropological Analysis of*

instance, Pucci Jr. et al. examine the process of transmediation surrounding the telenovela *Avenida Brasil*, which aired the same year as *Cheias* did on TV Globo. Like *Cheias*, *Avenida* focused on the rising C class and featured key plotlines surrounding domestic workers and their employers. While Pucci Jr. et al. analyze the narrative strategies used in *Avenida*, their study ignores the broader demographic shifts that both influenced the portrayal of middle-class characters and guided the transmedia strategies of Globo.<sup>370</sup> Inara Rosas and Hanna Nolasco's more recent work also discusses the transmedia extensions of *Cheias*, but the broader framework of class is mentioned only in passing.<sup>371</sup> By situating developments in transmedia within broader sociocultural paradigms, we can better understand the ebbs and flows of the Brazilian culture of convergence. The history of Brazilian television is woven together with class mobility and national integration—it is disingenuous to overlook these issues in a new regime of transmediatization.

One exception to this is Baccega et al.'s study of *Cheias de Charme*.<sup>372</sup> Baccega et al. view the telenovela as a pioneering transmedia project in Brazil that relates to a rising demographic of internet-spectators. They argue that the telenovela establishes a new type of

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Television and Culture (Belmont, California: Wadsworth Publishing Company, 1990); Antonio La Pastina, Joseph D. Straubhaar, and Lirian Sifuentes, "Why Do I Feel I Don't Belong to the Brazil on TV?" *Popular Communication* 12, no. 2 (2014): 104–16.

370. Renato Luiz Pucci Jr. et al., "Avenida Brasil: O Lugar Da Transmídiação Entre as Estratégias Narrativas Da Telenovela Brasileira." In *Estratégias De Transmídiação Na Ficção Televisiva Brasileira*, edited by Maria Immacolata Vassallo de Lopes et al. (Porto Alegre, Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil: Editora Sulina, 2013), 95–131.

371. Inara Rosas and Hanna Nolasco. "Transmedia Telenovelas." In *The Routledge Companion to Transmedia Studies*, edited by Matthew Freeman, and Renira Rampazzo Gambarato (New York: Routledge, 2019), 44–51.

372. Maria Aparecida Baccega et al., "Reconfigurações Da Ficção Televisiva: Perspectivas E Estratégias De Transmídiação Em Cheias De Charme." In *Estratégias De Transmídiação Na Ficção Televisiva Brasileira*, edited by Maria Immacolata Vassallo de Lopes et al. (Porto Alegre, Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil: Editora Sulina, 2013), 61–94.

audience member, what they refer to as a “connected interactor.”<sup>373</sup> A connected interactor is one who can manipulate a variety of communication platforms. In doing so, an interactor “[mixes] the tenuous limits between the public and the private, work or schoolwork and leisure, giving rise to a personal and idiosyncratic mixture whose principal components are communication, entertainment and consumption, elements that are at the base of the contemporary experience of the world.”<sup>374</sup> However, Baccega et al. approach social mobility and transmediality as two separate processes. Social mobility is encouraged through the telenovela’s plot, while transmedia extensions “interpellate and engage” viewers as interactors.<sup>375</sup> Instead of viewing these as separate developments, my work expands on Baccega et al.’s by examining social ascension and transmediatization as interconnected processes in Brazilian society. Transmediatization didn’t just emerge out of sociocultural developments; as a process of modernity, it also fed back into and influenced those same developments.

This brings me to another area which I was not able to fully develop in this dissertation. I focused particularly on class mobility given the significant increase in the C class during the 2000s-2010s. While social class provides a useful lens of analysis for *Cheias*, other positions need to be considered, such as mobility in relation to race. More than 50 percent of the population in Brazil identifies as black, brown (*pardo*), or mixed race.<sup>376</sup> However, only 10

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373. Baccega et al., 72.

374. Baccega et al., 72.

375. Baccega et al., 73.

376. IBGE (Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística), “Tabela 1379 - Pessoas De 5 Anos Ou Mais De Idade, Total E as Alfabetizadas, Por Cor Ou Raça, Segundo a Situação Do Domicílio E a Idade.” Censo 2010 (2010): <https://sidra.ibge.gov.br/Tabela/1379>.

percent of the actors on Globo telenovelas from 1995-2014 were from these categories.<sup>377</sup> Simon Bacon argues that transmedia worlds are an integral part of daily life, encompassing virtually all aspects of work and leisure. All aspects of daily life now consist of “games” to increase our engagement, “ultimately governing the way we interact with and experience the world around us. Of equal importance within this framework are those who are not allowed to play, or only allowed to engage/participate in certain ways.”<sup>378</sup> What is the role of race in transmedia participation? How do different races view their own engagement with transmediatization?

My work on transmediatization also extends research on world-building in Brazilian television fiction. The Ibero-American Observatory of Television Fiction (OBITEL) recently released a collection on world-building in Brazil.<sup>379</sup> The collection looks at various telenovelas and sites of fandom, illustrating how the process of world-building expands beyond a self-contained television program. Jacks et al. argue that as the telenovelas *Avenida Brasil* (2012), *Império* (2014), and *Velho Chico* (2016) incorporated characteristics associated with the middle class, they expanded or reflected those qualities back into the real world.<sup>380</sup> Their analysis looks at social media interactions that reference the plot, themes, characters, and scenery of the telenovelas together with terms such as “class,” “poor,” and “slum.” As individuals make social media posts dealing with these various topics, they become participants in expanding the world

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377. Luis Augusto Campos, Marcia Rangel Candido, and João Feres Jr., “Infográfico—a Raça e o Gênero Nas Novelas Dos Últimos 20 Anos.” *Grupo de Estudos Multidisciplinares da Ação Afirmativa* (2014): <http://gema.iesp.uerj.br/publicacoes/infografico/infografico3.html>.

378. Simon Bacon, “Introduction.” In *Transmedia Cultures: A Companion*, edited by Simon Bacon, 1–16. Oxford: Peter Lang Ltd. International Academic Publishers, 2021, 2.

379. Maria Immacolata Vassallo de Lopes, ed. *World Building in Brazilian TV Fiction* São Paulo: Centro de Estudos de Telenovela; Escola de Comunicações e Artes; Universidade de São Paulo, 2019.

380. Nilda Jacks et al., “World Constructions: The Popular From Narrative to Reception.” In *World Building in Brazilian TV Fiction*, edited by Maria Immacolata Vassallo de Lopes (São Paulo: Centro de Estudos de Telenovela; Escola de Comunicações e Artes; Universidade de São Paulo, 2019), 161-81.

of the telenovela. Jacks et al. argue, “Social networks are a privileged space of conversation about the plots, but also of construction, legitimation or questioning of the possible worlds.”<sup>381</sup> The real world is portrayed in the telenovela, and that portrayal is then reflected back into the social consciousness through user participation.

Fechine et al. take a similar methodological approach with their study of LGBTQIA+ representation with the telenovela *Segundo Sol* (2018). Drawing on Jenkins’ work, they argue that the telenovela relies on the tactic of social merchandising to create socio-educational content that can be “extracted.” In this case, the extractions are characters and situations revolving around LGBTQIA+ identity. Globo live tweeted during the telenovela broadcast, “celebrating the achievements and sympathizing with the suffering” of a lesbian couple depicted in the telenovela.<sup>382</sup> These posts were then used to foster constructive discussions on social media.<sup>383</sup> Fechine et al. argue, “When this pervasive and engaging ‘fictional world’ explores strategically themes that mobilize viewers in their ‘real world,’ they are given more favorable conditions to construct their interpretive propositions by drawing elements from one dimension of experience to another.”<sup>384</sup>

In both case studies highlighted above, the storyworld is expanded through audience participation. As Boni argues, “Worlds as artificial constructions are also dependent upon their explorers who, in turn, become world-builders.”<sup>385</sup> Significantly, the storyworld isn’t just

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381. Jacks et al., 177-78.

382. Yvana Fechine et al., “Socio-Educational Actions in Transmedia Telenovela ‘Worlds’: Addressing LGBTQIA+ Issues in Brazilian TV.” In *World Building in Brazilian TV Fiction*, edited by Maria Immacolata Vassallo de Lopes (São Paulo: Centro de Estudos de Telenovela; Escola de Comunicações e Artes; Universidade de São Paulo, 2019), 125.

383. Fechine et al., 118.

384. Fechine et al., 131.

385. Boni, 10.

expanded across narrative nodes; the expansion crosses over into reality as audiences “extract” and discuss story elements that bear some resemblance to the world they inhabit. As Jacks et al. argue, “Even though the viewer is aware of the fictional character of this genre, soap operas are often seen by the public as a portrait of what is actually lived.”<sup>386</sup>

The studies examined here also illustrate how world-building in Brazilian television employs the tactic of blending fiction and reality. My study of transmediatization extends this work by examining how world-building overlapped with nation-building with *Cheias de Charme*. Transmedia narratives are not just connected with Brazilian reality—they envelope participants in an ongoing process of national integration. Using the same framework to analyze other transmedia projects could provide additional insights into the process of world-building and national integration. For instance, the telenovela *Araguaia* (TV Globo, 2010) was another early transmedia experiment from TV Globo. The telenovela is set in the region surrounding the eponymous Araguaia River, located in the interior of Brazil. In connection with the telenovela was a transmedia extension called “Vozes do Araguaia” (Voices of Araguaia). “Vozes do Araguaia” was a website that featured short documentaries about real people living along the banks of the Araguaia. The website used a digital map which highlighted the area where each subject lived. Visitors to the website could “journey” down the river by clicking on the profile of each person and viewing the short documentary. In addition to the interviews with people living along the Araguaia River, the mini-documentaries included interviews with characters from the telenovela—the actors remained in-character, producing unscripted responses that stem from “immersion in the universe of their character.”<sup>387</sup> The process of transmediatization again blurs

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386. Jacks et al., 178.

387. Talk Filmes, “As Vozes Do Araguaia: Videocase,” *Vimeo* video, 6:56 (February 22, 2011), <https://vimeo.com/20263313>.

the line between fiction and reality, simultaneously drawing viewers further into the imagined community of Brazil. Instead of the regulatory framework associated with *carteiras assinadas*, participants were invited to bask in the beauty and splendor of the Araguaia region. Promos for the project described the website as a place “in which all of Brazil can travel to this magical region,” and where people can come to know “the heart of Brazil.”<sup>388</sup>

A final takeaway from this project is the need to establish frameworks for studying other regimes of transmediatization. What is useful for studying the process of transmediatization in Brazil is not meant to be universally applied to other countries or regions—frameworks for studying other regimes of transmediatization need to reflect the diverse modernities from which they emerge. In this aspect, regimes of transmediatization overlap with what Simon Bacon refers to as “transmedia cultures.”<sup>389</sup> According to Bacon, transmedia cultures “are situated within the cultures in which we live...but they also create further groups or subcultures within that broader culture...[T]he transmedia world that is the culture that we live in then informs how we are able to engage with the transmedia world created within a fictional world.”<sup>390</sup> I agree that we need to view transmedia in the context of diverse cultures. However, I carry Bacon’s argument further by seeking to analyze transmediatization as it resonates with other processes of modernity. How does globalization impact local iterations of transmediatization? What role does hybridity play in the process of transmediatization? As old and new media collide, what hybrid forms emerge that are unique to their respective cultures? For instance, telenovelas are themselves a hybrid form of storytelling derived from the *folhetim* or *feuilleton* tradition, *cordel* literature, and

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388. Talk Filmes, “As Vozes do Araguaia.”

389. Bacon, “Introduction.” In *Transmedia Cultures: A Companion*, edited by Simon Bacon, 1–16. Oxford: Peter Lang Ltd. International Academic Publishers, 2021.

390. Bacon, “Introduction,” 2.



*radionovelas*.<sup>391</sup> How is the telenovela form altered by the process of transmediatization? While this question has been explored by scholars like Baccega et al., Borelli et al., and the OBITEL research group, I propose some additional avenues of research.<sup>392</sup>

One area for further research is how telenovelas navigate temporality in an era of transmediatization. Amanda Lotz posits that time-shifting and place-shifting technologies play a key role in an era of convergence by granting users greater control.<sup>393</sup> Despite this, Elizabeth Evans argues that even with a variety of time-shifting technologies, “the temporal qualities of television persist.”<sup>394</sup> Evans points out, “Transmedia distribution extends the ‘liveness’ of content in television and positions filmic experiences as repeatable and tangible, giving content a sense of permanence against the ephemerality of television broadcasting or cinema viewing.”<sup>395</sup> However, what happens when transmedia content *doesn't* persist and isn't repeatable? In the case of *Cheias*, much of the transmedia content was time-sensitive, such as the *passinho* dance contest or the MCMB contest. Unlike television serials that unfold across weekly episodes and develop over multiple seasons, telenovelas typically only run for six to nine months. Transmedia content

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391. Joseph Straubhaar, “Telenovelas in Brazil: From Traveling Scripts to a Genre and Proto-Format Both National and Transnational.” In *Global Television Formats: Understanding Television Across Borders*, edited by Tasha Oren, and Sharon Shahaf (New York: Routledge, 2012), 148-77.

392. Baccega et al., “Reconfigurações Da Ficção Televisiva;” Silvia Helena Simões Borelli et al., “Migrações Narrativas Em Multiplataformas: Telenovelas Ti-Ti-ti E Passione.” In *Ficção Televisiva Transmidiática No Brasil: Plataformas, Convergência, Comunidades Virtuais*, edited by Maria Immacolata Vassallo de Lopes et al., (Porto Alegre, Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil: Editora Sulina, 2011), 61-120; Maria Immacolata Vassallo de Lopes, ed. *Estratégias De Transmídiação Na Ficção Televisiva Brasileira* (Porto Alegre, Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil: Editora Sulina, 2013); Maria Immacolata Vassallo de Lopes, ed. *World Building in Brazilian TV Fiction* (São Paulo: Centro de Estudos de Telenovela; Escola de Comunicações e Artes; Universidade de São Paulo, 2019).

393. Amanda D. Lotz, *The Television Will be Revolutionized* (New York and London: New York University Press, 2014).

394. Elizabeth Evans, “Transmedia Television: Flow, Glance, and the BBC.” In *The Routledge Companion to Transmedia Studies*, edited by Matthew Freeman, and Renira Rampazzo Gambarato (New York: Routledge, 2019), 34-43.

395. Elizabeth Evans, *Understanding Engagement in Transmedia Culture* (London and New York: Routledge, 2020), 154.

is temporally linked with the liveness of the telenovela as it hurtles relentlessly towards its conclusion. *Cheias* was rebroadcast on TV Globo from September 2016 to March 2017 as part of its “Vale a Pena Ver de Novo” (It’s Worth Watching Again) programming. However, the rebroadcast was largely stripped of the transmedia experiences that surrounded the original broadcast: the contests were downplayed, Tom’s blog remained inactive, and engagement through social media was significantly reduced. Some fan-made content persisted, but it was no longer hosted at Globo’s proprietary website. Similarly, the “Vozes of Araguaia” project was eventually removed—it exists only as an archived shell.<sup>396</sup> The ephemeral nature of the transmedia content is at odds with the promise of time-shifted and place-shifted viewing practices. How does the vision of national integration persist if it is no longer “repeatable and tangible?”

This dissertation attempted to show that transmedia was far more than just a corporate strategy for entertainment experiences. During the peak of transmediatization, Globo framed the the process of transmediatization as an act of mobility, allowing individuals a chance to move upwards socially. Transmediatization was also a process of ambivalent participation—while individuals gained more democratic access to information across multiple platforms, they were also increasingly subjected to corporate control. Finally, transmediatization also functioned as an expansion of the nation into immaterial space. Through transmedia participation, individuals could be integrated into the nation. However, increased integration also carried with it the burdens of citizenship as individuals were monitored, regulated, and disciplined into ideal citizens.

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396. “Vozes do Araguaia,” Globo, <<https://web.archive.org/web/20110828112102/http://www.vozesdoaraguaia.com.br/>> Archived 28 August 2011

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