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**Nocturnal cities:  
Past, present and future**

**Guest Editors:** Manuel Garcia-Ruiz, Jordi Nofre  
and Alejandro Mercado Celis

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EDITORIAL

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# NOCTURNAL CITIES: PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE

## CIDADES NOCTURNAS: PASSADO, PRESENTE E FUTURO

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### NOCTURNAL CITIES: A FASCINATING OBJECT OF STUDY

At the time of writing this introductory text to this special issue, *Nocturnal Cities: Past, present, and Future*, the night in many cities from the Global South, East, and North is glowing again after a three-year pandemic period characterised by the application of massive lockdowns, night curfews, social distancing, mandatory home confinements, and a strong punitive criminalization of the institutional-media-civic front against 'the night' and the youth (Nofre et al., 2023). After this brief but intense and dark period of pandemic politics (Dionne & Turkmen, 2020; Lynch et al., 2022; Ryan & Nanda, 2023; Sommer & Rappel-Kroyzer, 2022), the urban night is once again as vibrant as it was in the years prior to the pandemic. Every weekend tens of thousands of people go out to dine, meet friends or dance; thousands more work at night in back-office and logistics centres, supply centres, essential services and health institutions (Dušková & Duijzing, 2022; Lin et al., 2022; Shaw, 2022); many use nighttime public transport, ride-sharing companies, or take their own vehicle to get across the city (Halás & Klapka, 2023; Plyushteva, 2021). Meanwhile, a number of informal workers (domestic workers, street food vendors, street dealers and sex workers) carry out their activities at night, some of them taking advantage of the liminal anonymity of darkness (Koren, 2022; Seal, 2022).

The urban night worldwide presents a truly surprising and exciting range of tangible and intangible dimensions. On the one hand, the economic

dimension of the 'night city' is of undeniable relevance, especially in the largest cities from the Global North, East and South. Among the most noteworthy aspects, one could mention job creation (often precarious), the volume of turnover generated by the nighttime economy, and the consequent revenues for the public treasury at both local and national levels (Chatterton & Hollands, 2003; Roberts & Eldridge, 2012; Zmyslony & Pawlusiński, 2020). Simultaneously, the nocturnal city also presents a dense network of informal economies which have a reciprocal relationship of existence and dependence on formal economies as well as on the formal regulatory environment of the nocturnal city (Charman & Govender, 2020; Shaw, 2015; Yeo & Heng, 2014).

Referring to all the nighttime activities mentioned above also leads us to speak of the urban night as a space-time of mobilities and mobile subjects – commuters at night; night goers; carriers; transportation users; bus, taxi, and ride-sharing drivers; tourists, and visitors (Smith & Hall, 2013; Straw, 2018; Yun, 2022). In parallel, such agglomeration of nighttime activities demands a broad governance apparatus to manage the range of challenges and conflicts emerging from antagonistic needs and practices such as the collision between the subjective right to party versus the right to rest, which, in some countries, is a fundamental right at constitutional level (Iannace et al., 2021; Kruczek et al., 2022; Toubes & Vargas-Sánchez, 2021). At the same time, the urban night is much more than what is purely tangible. Because the urban night is composed of "an affective atmosphere, emerging from the arranging of practices, bodies and materials"

(Shaw, 2014, p. 87), 'the symbolic', 'the emotional' and 'the affective' impregnate the range of social, cultural, and economic activities (formal and informal; institutional and non-institutional) taking place in the nocturnal city. Thus, talking about the urban night means recognizing 'the night' as a source of both individual and collective memories consisting of an uncountable number of personal life stories (Arts, 2022; Brandellero et al., 2022).

As it could not be otherwise, we should mention that talking about the night also means looking at the past. This willingness to gain a deeper understanding of our collective social and cultural life in the past leads us to take 'the night' as both analytical lens and case study (Straw, 2015) to assert the fundamental relevance of the 'Whos' and 'Hows' when writing our collective historical memory – which is a memory also written at night. As a first step in this historiographical exercise, it appears fair and necessary to give recognition to some journalists, writers, and travellers who have depicted the urban nightscape of the most culturally vibrant cities of the Western world in the age of the industrial city such as, among many others, Paris, London, New York and Barcelona (e.g., Bembo, 1912; Coroleu, 1887; Darzens & Willette, 1889; de Wissant, 1928; Delvau, 1862, 1867; Nevill, 1926; Ritchie, 1869; Sala, 1862; Shaw, 1931). Yet in the 1930s, and especially in later decades, a few historians and sociologists – mainly from the United States and United Kingdom – began to pay attention to the role of nightlife (and its multiple dark sides) in the reproduction of modern urban societies, thus recognizing the urban night, and especially nightlife, as a subject for scholarly analysis (e.g., Cressey, 2008; Erenberg 1974, 1984, 1986; Marrus, 1974; Morris, 1980; Ostrander, 1972; Travis, 1983). In this sense, both the descriptive texts of the urban nightscapes of the culturally vibrant port cities of the early 20th century and the later works cited in the previous paragraph can be considered foundational elements of what is currently designated as Night Studies.

A comprehensive understanding of our nocturnal cities both in the past and the present allows us to better design the set of strategies, actions and policymaking tools towards safer, more inclusive, more egalitarian and more environmentally sustainable nocturnal cities. However, the volume of scholarly works about "daytime cities" outweighs the study of the "nocturnal city" (Shaw, 2018). In this sense, this thematic issue aims to reduce this knowledge gap between the daytime city and the nighttime city. In fact, little discussion exists between the multiple connections (some more visible than others) between both faces of the city. However, such unanimity is not reflected in the succession of project evaluation committees and research grants, which systematically (with a few exceptions) tend

to undervalue the importance of investigating the enormous complexity of social, economic and cultural phenomena that are unique to the nocturnal city, and whose empirical knowledge is deemed necessary for achieving appropriate urban governance – in its most holistic conception.

This special issue offers a selection of the most recent work in the field of urban night studies at a global scale. The first article of this special issue is co-authored by Martin Magidi and Tawanda Jimu. In their article "Urban livelihoods beyond industrial ruins: The birth of an informal nighttime economy in Norton, Zimbabwe", they explore the emergence of an informal nighttime economy in Norton, Zimbabwe as a creative response to daytime work scarcity, regulations, and competition. It reveals how residents, facing the decline of traditional industries and increased urban poverty, innovatively turn to nocturnal activities to supplement their incomes. Using Long's Actor-oriented theory, the study portrays these individuals as proactive agents who utilise the night as a vital space-time resource, circumventing daytime limitations. Through ethnographic methods, it showcases diverse ventures like night vending, informal fishing, and leisure activities, underscoring the community's resilience and adaptability in an economically challenging environment. This shift to nocturnal activities is both a survival tactic and a demonstration of entrepreneurial spirit, marking a significant adaptation in the face of Norton's economic hardships. This article enriches nighttime studies by providing a nuanced understanding of the nocturnal economy in a developing country, highlighting the informal sector's role, and underscoring the agency of individuals in adapting to and shaping their economic environments.

Julio César Becerra Pozos in his paper: "Towards a characterization of semi-private spaces of nocturnality (*noctem*): diversity and differentiated access in Mexican bars" proposes a flexible stance to characterising private and semi-private spaces of the nighttime economy, challenging youth-centric views of the night and typologies centred on cultural consumption. Instead, it focuses on modes of production and service construction, which trigger various performances, interactions, and business models in the diverse offerings of Mexican nightlife. The concept of "noctem" is linked to differentiated accesses related to gender, transition, class, and other sociocultural elements. The text argues that nightlife goes beyond leisure, addressing systemic violence and inequalities in access to the night. Exclusion in nightlife is emphasised, conditioned by multiple factors, and a flexible characterisation of nocturnal spaces is proposed to destigmatize practices and shed light on experiences in contexts of inequality. Criticism is directed at the lack of attention on public policies and the nighttime

economy. Ultimately, the text approaches nightlife from a multidimensional perspective encompassing the social, cultural, and economic aspects, highlighting the complexities and challenges inherent in the systematisation and classification of fieldwork in nighttime economic spaces.

Begoña Aramoyona in her paper "The invisibilisation of informality in the nocturnal city: the displacement of sex workers and domestic employees to private spaces" analyses how disparities in the public treatment of two forms of feminized, migrant, and racialized work in Spain are addressed: domestic work and sex work. It highlights how in/visibility and informalisation reproduce moral geographies in Spanish post-industrial cities. Despite local regulations and Law 4/2015 penalising street-based sex workers, there is a lack of institutional progress in understanding the real conditions of workers in nightclubs and private apartments. Media attention to raids in sex work venues is contrasted with the lack of surveillance over abusive conditions faced by domestic workers, especially live-ins. The analysis underscores how neoliberal cities prioritise cleaning public spaces, overlooking abusive situations in private settings. It argues that public strategy has contributed to the clandestinisation and vulnerability of these workers, displacing informality into private spaces. Furthermore, a connection is established between sex and domestic work in the global migratory context of women. Despite obstacles, the use of night and darkness by these workers is highlighted as a strategy of resistance to neoliberalism, patriarchy, and racism. She advocates for a central focus on the survival practices of nocturnal subalternity to support future struggles for the "right to the nocturnal city" in the new agenda of urban and nocturnal studies.

Rosa Fina's work "In search of nocturnal characters in eighteenth-century Lisbon", meticulously explores the intricate dynamics of nocturnal life in Lisbon during the eighteenth century. Focusing on the pivotal transition from the old to the modern world, Fina investigates the evolving meaning of the night through a multifaceted lens encompassing security ordinances, legislative changes, and the diminishing influence of traditional authorities such as the Church and the Inquisition. Her paper unfolds against the backdrop of a shifting socio-cultural landscape, where reason and technology gradually replace ancient myths and superstitions. Fina's examination extends to the dissolution of the Inquisition in 1821 and the subsequent rise of anticlerical sentiments, providing a comprehensive understanding of the transformation in perceptions regarding nocturnal threats. With a keen sociological perspective, Fina emphasises the changing narrative from supernatural perils to human-driven violence, ultimately situating the night as a crucial arena for

testing and implementing societal measures. This research by Rosa Fina contributes significantly to our nuanced comprehension of the nocturnal realm in eighteenth-century Lisbon.

The article "Nocturnal urban imaginaries: the rise and fall of Turin as a 24-hour party city" by Giacomo Bottà and Enrico Petrilli, through qualitative analysis of interviews, investigates the changing perceptions and experiences of the night in Turin's post-industrial urban landscape. It introduces the concept of 'nocturnal urban imaginaries' – specifically 'confetti', '24-hour party', and 'Notti Bianche' – and assesses their impact on local governance, policing, and the nature of nightlife. The paper argues that increased regulation and control of nightlife diminish its potential as a space for enjoyment and escapism. Linking these imaginaries to Turin's transformation from an industrial to a post-industrial city, the study highlights their role in shaping the city's nocturnal character. It emphasises the need for balanced nightlife management, considering not only safety but also its social and emotional value. The article underlines the significance of urban nightlife's spatial and temporal aspects and calls for future research to explore the performative impact of nocturnal imaginaries on urban life, broadening the understanding of urban nightlife and its role in urban studies.

Yolanda Macia's article "The things one does for friends': sensitive links of living in the night of the central city and the suburban night in Mexico City" significantly enriches urban night studies by illuminating the interconnectedness of central and suburban night experiences in the Mexico City Metropolitan Zone, challenging the traditional notion of their separateness. It delves into the social dynamics of nightlife, particularly emphasising how nighttime leisure activities shape and are shaped by friendships, a less explored aspect in this field. The study highlights the crucial impact of socioeconomic and gender factors on access to and participation in urban nightlife, bringing attention to social inequality and inclusivity issues. Through the concept of 'sensibilities' the article provides a novel perspective on how subjective experiences and emotions inform individuals' nighttime experiences, thereby enriching the understanding of the emotional dimensions of urban nightlife. The research underscores how these night experiences reflect and reproduce urban segregation and exclusion processes, contributing to the broader discourse on urban sociology and geography. Furthermore, by focusing on Mexico City, a major urban centre in the global south, the study offers valuable insights into the unique dynamics and challenges of nightlife in cities outside the traditionally studied contexts, thus broadening the geographical scope of urban night studies.

Finally, Jordi Nofre, Manuel Garcia-Ruiz, and Alejandro Mercado have written an epilogue, whose

first section presents a series of research topics that are already in discussion in the interdisciplinary area of Night Studies. The authors remark that this list is not exhaustive and it aims to draw attention to the plurality of research objects that make up the “nocturnal urban past, present and futures”. The second half of the epilogue denounces the absence of ‘the night’ in the design of the so-called “15-minute city”, which is the main paradigm of ongoing urban development in many worldwide cities (especially from the Global North). This epilogue thus sheds light on the urgent community, institutional, industry and academic need for debating and discussing the role that the ‘nocturnal city’ should have in the construction of climate-neutral cities in the long-term future. Finally, the last lines are to thank the journal’s editorial committee and its management assistants, reviewers, copyeditors and readers. It is precisely to the latter that we ask to make the article as widely known as possible.

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## ARTICLES

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# URBAN LIVELIHOODS BEYOND INDUSTRIAL RUINS: THE BIRTH OF AN INFORMAL NIGHT-TIME ECONOMY IN NORTON, ZIMBABWE

## MEIOS DE SUBSISTÊNCIA URBANOS PARA ALÉM DAS RUÍNAS INDUSTRIAIS: O NASCIMENTO DE UMA ECONOMIA NOCTURNA INFORMAL EM NORTON, ZIMBABUÉ

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### Abstract

This paper focuses on Norton town, Zimbabwe, which was left in ruins after its industry succumbed to deindustrialisation as key industries closed. With rising unemployment and urban poverty, residents innovated and devised alternative livelihood strategies. This study explores several informal and innovative night-time economic activities: night vending, home-based industries, informal fishing, sand and quarry mining, transport, and the night-time leisure economy, among others that residents in Norton adopted. It unpacks the organisation of these activities and the logics behind going nocturnal. For their courage and ability to re-invent their livelihoods, we present the residents using the lens of Long's Actor-oriented theory by framing them as social actors and agents of change working hard to find solutions to their challenges. Data was collected using ethnographic methods of interviews, night-time observations, and informal conversations. Our results show that Norton became a nocturnal hub of informal entrepreneurial innovation and creativity. This was a result of governance factors, due to daytime load-shedding (energy cuts), night-time leisure activities and as a way of working hard to survive in a difficult economic environment.

**Keywords:** nocturnal economy, informal economy, informal livelihoods, deindustrialisation

### Resumo

Este artigo centra-se na cidade de Norton, no Zimbabué, que ficou em ruínas depois de a sua indústria ter sucumbido à desindustrialização, com o encerramento de indústrias-chave. Com o aumento do desemprego e da pobreza urbana, os residentes inovaram e conceberam estratégias alternativas de subsistência. Este estudo explora várias actividades económicas nocturnas informais e inovadoras: venda nocturna, indústrias caseiras, pesca informal, extração de areia e pedreiras, transportes e economia de lazer nocturna, entre outras, que os residentes de Norton adoptaram. O estudo analisa a organização destas actividades e as lógicas subjacentes à sua adoção nocturna. Pela sua coragem e capacidade de reinventar os seus meios de subsistência, apresentamos os residentes usando as lentes da teoria orientada para os actores de Long, enquadrando-os como actores sociais e agentes de mudança que trabalham arduamente para encontrar soluções para os seus desafios. Os dados foram recolhidos através de métodos etnográficos de entrevistas, observações nocturnas e conversas informais. Os nossos resultados mostram que Norton se tornou um centro de actividades económicas informais nocturnas como inovação e criatividade empresarial, por factores de governação, devido a cortes de energia durante o dia, actividades de lazer nocturnas e como modo de trabalhar arduamente para sobreviver num ambiente económico difícil.

**Palavras-chaves:** economia noturna, economia informal, meios de subsistência informais, desindustrialização

## INTRODUCTION

This paper explores the growth of the informal night-time economy in Norton, a secondary Zimbabwean town located near the country's capital, Harare. Once a thriving industrial centre, the town's industry was left in ruins after over two decades of deindustrialisation, economic collapse, and the consequent job losses which led to a livelihood crisis among most households. To survive in such an economically precarious environment, residents had to innovate and devise alternative livelihood strategies, and this led to the rise and growth of informal economic activities as the sector took over as the main economy (Magidi, 2019). However, the informal sector has its share of challenges, including competition from within, compounded by a lack of support, strict regulations, and the crackdown by the government/local authorities that favour formal sector growth (Chirau, 2014). This further left informal businesses vulnerable, making the sector a highly competitive and contested space. Informal entrepreneurs thus must be vigilant, creative, and innovative to survive. As this paper portrays, one such strategy was the birth of the informal night-time economy that has turned Norton into a nocturnal town. The study deployed Norman Long's Actor-oriented theory and Robert Merton's deviation thesis to theorise the growth of the informal nocturnal economy in Norton. It identified the different actors (agents) participating in the night-time economy and the motivations behind going nocturnal. Data was collected using ethnographic methods of interviews, informal conversations, and night-time observations.

## THE RISE AND FALL OF ZIMBABWE'S ECONOMY

Zimbabwe was one of Africa's biggest economies before the 1990s (Murisa, 2010). It had a thriving manufacturing sector which contributed up to 25 % of its GDP (Chirau, 2014) after achieving a long period of continuous growth in manufacturing, mining, agriculture, and food and services sectors between 1938 and 1991 (Sachikonye, 2002). With a well-maintained infrastructure, Zimbabwe attracted investment which promoted rapid urbanisation, and its cities and towns became employment hubs that created many jobs. Most households thus relied on formal jobs for their livelihoods (Magidi, 2019). However, it was not long before the country's economic fortunes reversed as its manufacturing sector started experiencing premature industrial decline in the late 1980s. A combination of factors has been linked to this decline. These include the Matabeleland and Midlands massacres (Gukurahundi) (Teuten, 2015), the adoption of Economic Structural Adjustment Programmes (ESAP) in 1990

(Chirau, 2014; Sachikonye, 2002), the violent land reform program which disregarded property rights (Matandare, 2017; Moyo, 2014), and taking part in the unbudgeted Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) war (Chigora, 2008). Other factors include public sector corruption (Moyo, 2014), severe recurrent droughts (Tawodzera, 2011), economic sanctions by the US and European Union (Chingono, 2010), and the indigenisation policy which forced foreign-owned firms to cede 51 % of their stake to black Zimbabweans (Chigora, 2008).

Deindustrialisation compromised the livelihoods of most urban households as many lost jobs which were their only source of livelihood (Sachikonye, 2002). This prompted urban residents to explore other ways of surviving, and the informal sector is one such alternative. While the informal economy has been widely studied in Zimbabwe and the developing world, this paper notes that the informal night-time economy has not received much attention as the following sections demonstrate and is thus the rationale for this study.

## LOCATING NORTON TOWN

Norton is a secondary town located 40 km west of Harare. The town started as a farming compound which grew into an industrial town taking care of the rising demand for agricultural inputs and equipment by its growing farming community (Magidi, 2019). It later gained town status and was set aside for decentralisation by the government to cater for an industrial overflow from Harare (Norton Town Council, 2014). At its peak, Norton hosted some big engineering, farming, agro-processing, and mining firms like Hunyani, the Grain Marketing Board, Rio Tinto, Dandy, Karina Textiles, and others. These created jobs and attracted more people, and the town's population rose from 12,000 in 1982 to 88,000 in 2022 (ZimStats, 2022). Before the 1990s, Norton produced surplus jobs which lured labour from Harare, Chegutu, and Kadoma (Magidi, 2022). Thus, unemployment was not a huge problem then as jobs were available in the industrial, agricultural, and emerging commercial sectors. However, decades of industrial and economic collapse left Norton's industry and economy in ruins, resulting in severe job losses. This compromised the livelihoods of most households which used to rely on formal jobs (Magidi, 2019). The need to survive in such an economic environment pushed most households to resort to informal economic activities as the town's informal sector grew rapidly over the years. Some of the challenges in the informal sector have led to some opting to work at night, which is the basis for this study. The following section gives an overview of the informal economy in Zimbabwe and Norton.

## THE INFORMAL ECONOMY IN ZIMBABWE

As Zimbabwe's formal economy continued to decline following severe deindustrialisation, the informal economy took advantage and expanded to become the major source of urban livelihoods (Chirau, 2014). The sector has been growing over the years, from constituting 10 % of the total national labour force in 1980 to 20 % in 1987, 27 % in 1991 and at least 50 % by 2000 (Ndiweni & Verhoeven, 2013). As a result, Tamukamoyo (2009) argued that the sector is more than a secondary economy but the unofficial backbone of the national economy, contributing over 60 % of the GDP (Chekenya, 2016). With designated vending sites becoming overcrowded, some vendors occupied the streets and recreational and car parks in the CBDs in a bid to get closer to their customers (Mahiya & Magidi, 2022). Zimbabwe's informal economy hosts a range of activities: manufacturing, retailing, construction, repair and maintenance, services, recycling, farming and cross-border trade among others (Magidi, 2019). However, the informal sector in Zimbabwe has its fair share of challenges. These include a lack of recognition by both central and local governments resulting in frequent raids, lack of funding and infrastructure, high competition, and accusations of illegality, littering, and driving unsustainable urbanisation (Chirau, 2014).

While a lot of research has been done on the informal economy in Zimbabwe, it seems not much has been done to research the informal night-time economy, and attempts to locate such literature did not yield many results. The few available studies include Dube and Chirisa (2012), Chirau and Chamuka (2013), and Gunhidzirai (2023) who, without digging deeper, noted an increase in night vending in Harare CBD and Mbare market as a way of evading police raids. In Masvingo (Zimbabwe), Shoko and Dziva (2019) found that some vendors were going nocturnal as a solution to the shortage of vending space in the city. Dzawanda and Matsa (2023) studied Zimbabwean informal cross-border traders, but their only link with the night is the observation that cross-border traders travel at night to and from neighbouring countries where they get their products. Bolt (2012) noted that Zimbabwean vendors in Musina (South Africa) traded until late at night using candles and battery-powered lamps for lighting and then slept in the open next to their stock when trading ended.

Scoones and Murimbarimba (2021) noted that small mining towns (Mvurwi, Chatsworth and Maphisa) are alive at night due to the influx of artisanal miners. Related findings were also noted in Ghana, where informal miners work at night to evade state security since artisanal mining is banned in the country (Bansah, 2019). In Nairobi, Kenya, Thieme

(2021) realised that youth in informal waste work started collecting waste at 3 am. Shand, van Blerk and Hunter (2016) highlighted how street boys in Zimbabwe, Ghana, and DRC engaged in predatory activities like theft, while girls carried out sex work during the night to earn some income. In South Africa, the night-time economy is mostly linked to the formal economy and is dominated by entertainment, food and beverage, tourism, Airbnb sectors and Uber taxis which provide mobility to night-goers (Henama & Sifolo, 2017; Visser, Erasmus & Miller, 2017). While these examples offer good insights into the nocturnal economy in selected contexts, Norton's case is novel because it is a highly informalised town with little formal economic activity. Moreover, the informal night-time economy has been driven by a severe industrial collapse that led to job losses and high urban poverty, ultimately pushing residents into devising alternative survival strategies which include informal nocturnal economic activities.

## THEORETICAL FRAMING

The paper deployed the Actor-oriented theory (Long, 2003) supported by the Deviation thesis (Merton, 1972) to understand the informal night-time economy in Norton. The Actor-oriented theory was of particular interest because of its emphasis on the concepts of 'social actors' and 'agency' which lie at the core of this paper. It seeks to identify the different actors' practices, their rationales and strategies, the conditions under which they operate, and to understand their struggle to access and control the available limited resources (Long, 2003). This resonates well with the objective of this paper, which is to understand the different actors (agents) participating in the informal night economy as a strategy to circumvent the challenges that restrict their work. For their innovative and creative abilities, the paper therefore frames informal entrepreneurs as agents of change who exercise agency to confront situations that threaten them (Long, 2003). Faced with the threat of poverty because of unemployment, residents simply invented their economy and jobs. Complementing the Actor-oriented theory is the Deviation thesis (Merton, 1972), which gives an interpretation of how people respond when faced with uncertainties. It argues that when faced with social structures that systematically block their path to success, social actors opt instead for deviant alternatives. The ability of social actors in Norton to bypass the systematic barriers that block their participation in the informal economy relates to the deviation thesis. The Actor-oriented theory and deviation thesis have been used in researching several areas including civil society, political, and social movements (de Nardis & Antonazzo, 2017; Rucht, 2023), the informal economy in general

(Magidi, 2019), development research (Bosman, 2004) and human rights (Nyamu-Musembi, 2005). We however failed to find studies that have used the two theories to understand the informal night economy. The ability of this paper to test the two theories in a new context is a strength that makes the study unique.

## METHODS

The paper combines findings from two different qualitative studies done in Norton over different periods (2017-18 and 2020-21). Both studies employed ethnographic methods of observations, interviews, and informal chats. A total of 25 informal business owners involved in activities like welding, carpentry, vending, food hawking and others were interviewed, and up to 30 informal chats were conducted. Participants were selected using purposive and convenience sampling and were drawn from a pool of informal entrepreneurs engaged in different activities and organisations interested in the informal economy (Norton Town Council, Ministry of SMEs, and Ministry of Fisheries). Data was collected at Katanga and Ngoni shops and in low-income townships such as Katanga, Ngoni, Johannesburg, Maridale, and Marshlands where informal night activities are high. Night-time observations were conducted in these areas and data from all sources were reconciled and triangulated. Results from both studies were compared after thematic analyses and notable similarities in the results, leading to this paper.

## RESULTS

### Prolonged daytime load-shedding

Long hours of load-shedding emerged as one of the major reasons why some informal sector workers were working at night. Respondents noted that Norton has been experiencing excessive load-shedding for a long time. They highlighted that they experience over 14 hours of power cuts every day. Because load-shedding is largely implemented during the day, this affects the operations of informal sector workers whose work relies on electricity. For context about Zimbabwe's energy crisis, it is crucial to highlight that as the country's economy deteriorated, its power production capacity dropped significantly. Power generation was affected by obsolete infrastructure, brain drain and lack of maintenance, which led to the national electricity generation falling to 984MW against a daily minimum demand of at least 2,000MW (Mawonde, 2015; ZimLive, 2022).

The study found that power is switched off as early as 5 am and restored later after 10 pm. The work of informal sector workers engaged in electricity-based trades like metal fabrication, carpentry,

baking, printing, photocopying, videography and garment making is severely affected. To compensate for time lost during power cuts, some of them resort to working at night when power is restored. This entails resting/sleeping during the day and starting work at night when the power comes back on. They then work all night until the power is cut again the following morning. Others noted that during the day they focus on those bits of their work that do not require electricity and then shift to those that require power at night when power is restored. Night-time observations in low-income suburbs like Katanga, Johannesburg and Maridale observed that there is a lot of night-time manufacturing activity mainly by home-based manufacturers. This is also supported by the different noises generated by different activities which can be heard throughout the night. The following are some of the responses that we obtained through interviews:

Since the long power cuts started, I have been working overnight when the electricity is back. This way I can cover for lost production time due to power cuts during the day. Many others in my trade are also doing the same (welder, Johannesburg).

We experience most of our power cuts during the day, so I do manual tasks during the daytime. At night when electricity is back, I shift to tasks that require electricity. I have been doing that for a long time. Many carpenters are working at night (carpenter, Katanga).

I do videography, printing and photocopying. Since the electricity is off during the day, we collect orders from clients during the day and work on them at night when the power is back. I have been doing this for over ten years, and others offering similar services are also working this way (videographer, Katanga).

### Informal sector governance factors

The study found that there are various attempts by the Zimbabwean government and local governments across the country to regulate informal economic activities. In Norton, the local authority (Norton Town Council) requires informal businesses, regardless of size, to be registered, licensed and pay a levy, operating fee, or subscription to use public services/infrastructure. Informal entrepreneurs were also supposed to be allocated operating space at designated points. Respondents however noted that there is a lot of bottlenecking in the registration and licensing process. Some complained that the fees charged were too high for them to afford because some ran petty businesses and survived

from hand to mouth. Some pointed out that there was no reason to pay any fees to the town council because the services that were purportedly meant to be paid for were not available for informal sector businesses in the town.

Consequently, some entrepreneurs resort to evading these regulations. Their defiance attracted some crackdowns that led to punitive measures which included arrests, confiscation of products and evictions. To evade these restrictions, some informal entrepreneurs indicated that they were opting to go nocturnal. By operating at night, they take advantage of the poorly resourced local authority. We learned that the municipal police department is understaffed and can not afford to monitor the town for 24 hours a day. Most of their staff work during the day and skeletal personnel take care of critical municipal properties at night. It is thus difficult for them to oversee all night activities and hence some entrepreneurs take advantage and ply their trade with few or no restrictions.

Among some of the informal entrepreneurs who have taken this deviant path are informal fishermen, sand and quarry miners, and food vendors who operate near/at nightclubs. The study discovered that getting a fishing licence is difficult and expensive. There are at least three licences from different departments required for one to legally operate a small fishery. These included the licence (issued by the Zimbabwe Parks and Wildlife Authority [ZimParks]), a cooperative or business licence (from the Ministry of SMEs) and an operating licence (issued by Norton Town Council). Fishermen highlighted that the cost of acquiring these licences was beyond their reach. They raised concerns that the application processes were time-consuming, which motivated some of them to bypass the bureaucracy and work without any licences. To achieve this, they have resorted to fishing at night and transport their catch into the town before dawn. Fishing in Norton is done at Chivero and Darwendale lakes which are located on the edges of the town. Informal fish markets are normally full of fishers and fish buyers by 3 am.

The study also discovered how informal sand and quarry miners are also resorting to nocturnal operations. Norton is a fast-growing town where a lot of house construction is taking place, meaning sand and quarry is in high demand. As in the case of fishing, extraction of these resources has been criminalised, since it has the potential to compromise environmental sustainability if left unchecked. To extract them, one must be registered and licensed with the relevant authorities and must also observe environmental regulations as required by national and local governments. Since registration and licensing cost time and money, some miners defy these regulations and choose to access the resources through 'other means' and one such means involves

working at night. The study encountered several of these miners as they transported and delivered sand and quarry in the town's residential areas at night during observations. The following are some of the responses that we got from interacting with informal fishers and sand miners:

Zimparks licences are expensive, that's why we choose fish poaching under the cover of the night when they cannot fight us (fisherman, Ngoni Market)

Zimparks and Norton Town Council are too under-resourced to operate 24/7, so we work at night when our chances of being caught are minimal (fisherman, Maridale)

Norton Town Council requires us to register with them and the EMA (Environmental Management Agency) but most of us can't afford their fees. Instead, we work at night because council police are stretched at night and cannot monitor all of us (sand miner, Marshlands)

The local authority (Norton Town Council) also confirmed that its policing department is understaffed and under-resourced and can not fully execute its duties, especially at night, further confirming that many people are taking advantage of this to work without complying with regulations.

### Entrepreneurial innovation and competition

The study discovered that engaging in the informal nocturnal economy is a strategy used by some entrepreneurs to maximise business returns and overcome competition. With rising unemployment in Norton, the informal sector is increasingly becoming a livelihood option for more residents. Consequently, competition for clients is high, which demands innovation and creativity to gain a competitive edge and earn more income. One such method that stood out was the 'informalisation of time' which entails working beyond normal working hours into the night. A kiosk owner revealed:

I operate until 11 pm or even beyond. I cater for late shoppers. If you go around the townships at night, you will see many other tuck shops open late at night (Tuckshop Owner, Johannesburg)

Another factor that has seen increased informal night activity at shopping centres like Katanga and Ngoni is the high uptake in sports betting by young men, not just as a hobby but also as a way to earn some income. Popular football competitions like the English Premier League (EPL), Spanish La Liga, UEFA

Champions League (UCL), and the World Cup, which attract most of the fans and betters, are played at night. As such, many young men frequent betting shops and nightclubs at night to place and closely follow their bets. With the high cost of internet data, many of them rely on manual betting which requires them to place their bets in person and to collect their money should their bets win. While nightclubs have always promoted nightlife, observations showed that football and sports betting multiplied the number of people who participate in night activities in Norton. Football betting has created a very vibrant 'informal night-time leisure economy' as young male football lovers regard watching football as more than just a hobby but also a chance to earn some income through betting. The following are some of the responses from interviews with betting shop workers, bar keepers and football betters:

There is a growing number of people getting into football betting, and because competitive matches extend into the night, our shop is always fully packed until late at night (bet shop worker, Katanga)

Many football betters prefer watching football here (Katanga) close to the betting shop so that they can collect their money if they win. That's why most pubs are full even late at night (barkeeper, Katanga)

Sometimes there is load shedding and some of us don't have backup power at home, so we end up crowded in betting shops and pubs even late at night (soccer fan, Katanga)

Most UCL, Euro, and World Cup matches are played at night, so football betters and fans like me frequent pubs and betting shops, sometimes until after midnight. For example, in Brazil's (2014) World Cup, matches ran from 9 pm to 5 am the following day...this kept us in pubs many nights (Soccer Better, Katanga shops)

The study further noted that hawkers also take advantage of the increased volumes of people at major shopping centres at night to maximise their profits. We encountered several hawkers selling such foodstuffs as snacks, roasted maize, groundnuts, cooked/braaiied chicken/meat, popcorn, soft drinks, and fruits near/at night clubs during our night observations. One of them confirmed:

Business is good at night, most young men found in nightclubs and betting shops late in the night are not married and don't have time to cook. They get something to eat here

and that's where we come in (food hawker, Katanga shops)

We observed other hawkers trading items like cell phone chargers, earphones, power banks, shoes, clothes, belts, and other items, doing business at or near nightclubs in Katanga and at shops in Ngoni. A vegetable vendor told us that late-night clients used to knock at her house, seeking to buy vegetables until she decided to work late into the night to serve such customers. Night observations at some vegetable markets in the town's high-density residential areas also noted that some vendors work until as late as 10 pm to cater for late-night buyers. This way they boost their sales and income. We also learnt that following the collapse of farming/horticultural estates located on the town's outskirts after the land reform, vegetable traders now travel to Mbare market in Harare for stocks. They leave Norton early in the morning to travel to and from Mbare on time. Observations confirmed that commuter operators in Norton start touting for passengers going to Mbare at around 2 am. An interview with vegetable traders confirmed the following:

We now get most of our orders from Mbare, so we wake up very early in the morning. We leave Norton around 2 am and by 7-8 am we should be back (vegetable trader, Maridale)

It also emerged that the informal night economy is not only made up of unemployed people. The study learned that some actors in this sector are formally employed and run some 'side hustles' to supplement their income. With the worsening economy and decreasing consumer purchasing power, most salaries in Zimbabwe are below the poverty line, hence the need to supplement their income. Since they spend their day at work, the only available time to push their hustles is during the evenings and weekends. A high school teacher, for example, noted how he spends the day at school and then goes on to conduct private tuition sessions from 6 – 9 pm. He underlined that he knows of fellow teachers who also had similar arrangements. Other examples include a shopkeeper who sells airtime and forex at Katanga after work and a policeman who uses his car as a taxi at night after a day at work. Many other employed people are also resorting to informal night-time economic side hustles to cushion their depreciating salaries.

As suggested above, another sector that is benefitting from the increasing night activity in Norton is the informal transport sector, which has turned out to be an enabling factor that encompasses most informal night activities. People who do business at night require mobility and logistics, and commuter operators and private taxi drivers are mostly avail-

lable to offer these services at night. Fishers and fish traders require transport to carry them and their stocks/orders to and from the market early in the morning. Similarly, food hawkers and football fans/punters also need transport to travel home after late kick-off matches which sometimes end after midnight. Transporters have thus joined the growing number of informal night-time entrepreneurs as they seek to boost their businesses, survive the competition and maximise their income. Below are some of the responses we received from interviews and informal chats with transport operators and other informal sector night workers:

My first trip of the day is normally around 2-3 am when I ferry vegetable traders to Mbare (commuter driver, Katanga)

Business is good during weekends/midweek when there are late-night matches. Pubs are full until midnight and people from Marshlands, Darwendale, and Maridale need transport (taxi driver, Katanga)

Some matches end around midnight and to get home quickly, we sometimes use commuter buses or small taxis (better, Katanga)

However, for some, starting their workday early in the morning and ending deep into the night is nothing more than a way of working hard. Their logic here is that to survive during periods of severe economic shocks, one must make maximum use of all their energy and resources to work towards their survival. One taxi driver operating from Katanga, during an informal conversation, intimated that: "If you enjoy sleeping, your family will starve and die of hunger."

Hard work thus also featured prominently as one of the motivations behind the rise of the informal night-time economy in Norton.

## DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The prolonged economic crisis that Zimbabwe's urban populace has been enduring has led some of Norton's residents to devise alternative livelihood strategies to sustain their lives (Magidi, 2019). The paper notes that in the face of high unemployment and increasing urban poverty, informal enterprises have become a livelihood and employment option for many. Residents are undertaking various initiatives as they try to build resilience to recover from challenging situations. The study discovered how, through their agency and urgency, informal-sector actors transformed Norton into a hive of informal nocturnal economic activities. Residents involved in informal work are resorting to working during

the night because of prolonged power cuts during the day, governance restrictions imposed on the informal sector, and above all, as an innovative and creative strategy to increase income and diversify livelihoods. Daytime power cuts affect entrepreneurs whose work is powered by electricity. Our results demonstrated how actors (agents) in metalworks, carpentry, garment, videography and other trades that require electric power are effectively barred from working during the day. To recover the lost time, some opted for what we refer to as the '*informalisation of time*' by working at night when power is restored. By doing this, informal sector workers are confirmed as active social actors or agents who can devise new ways of addressing their problems on their own, as the Actor-oriented Approach (Long, 2003) suggests. Faced with severe daytime power cuts, they responded by working at night when power was restored.

Informal entrepreneurs in Norton have also gone nocturnal to evade the restrictions imposed by responsible authorities on their sector. As noted, exploiting natural resources like fish, sand and quarry, for example, is beset by many regulations that restrict and limit access to them. To avoid paying huge licences, penalties, or bribing authorities, and to dodge punitive laws that can lead to their imprisonment, actors in Norton have resorted to stretching the municipal police by operating at night. Theoretically, this is consistent with Merton's deviation thesis which argues that when the legitimate path to success appears to be structurally or systematically blocked through restrictive laws, social actors take the deviant alternative (Merton, 1972). Some informal sector workers in Norton have thus chosen to survive 'through other means' (Magidi, 2019) by resorting to the nocturnal route to evade the many hurdles that they cannot escape during the daytime. This finding also resonates with other studies that found that informal workers in sectors like artisanal mining and street vending work at night to evade security officers (Bansah, 2019; Bolt, 2012; Chirau & Chamuka, 2013; Scoones & Murimbarimba, 2021).

The study also highlighted the growing informal night-time recreation sector as one of the major drivers of the night economy in Norton. This included the high uptake of football watching and betting as a hobby and an opportunity to earn some income. Agents dominating this sector are young men whose love for football has seen the increasing popularity of international football competitions such as the domestic European Leagues, the Champions League, the World Cup and the Europa League, among others. Football watching and betting have kept betting shops and nightclubs packed most nights and have attracted other actors from other sectors such as food vendors and transporters who have

taken full advantage of this chance to benefit their businesses. The role of transport providers in aiding the night economy was also emphasised in South Africa where Henama and Sifolo (2017) highlighted how the Uber sector was promoting night food, beverage and entertainment activities.

Also driving the informal night economy is the desire to earn more income. Cases of kiosk owners and vegetable traders opening until as late as 11 p.m. and teachers engaging in evening classes for a fee are testimony to the 'informalisation of time' as a survival strategy by informal sector workers in Norton. We therefore frame the idea of a night-time informal economy through the lens of the popular sentiment '*hard work pays off*'. By stretching their working schedule deep into the night, or by starting work very early in the morning, the understanding is that the longer you work, the more likely you are to make it. While a study like this should ideally produce some policy suggestions, we felt that there is a need for additional data and further consultations with different stakeholders to come up with comprehensive, informed and high-quality recommendations. We therefore thought it was premature to make any recommendations at this point and set this aside as an area for future research. We conclude by restating that the night-time economy is growing in Norton town as an innovative and creative strategy by residents who are using their agency in their quest to build and strengthen resilience in the face of severe economic hardships that are threatening their survival.

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### Contribution of authors

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# HACIA UNA CARACTERIZACION DE ESPACIOS SEMIPRIVADOS DE NOCTURNIDAD (*NOCTEM*): DIVERSIDAD Y ACCESOS DIFERENCIADOS EN BARES DE MEXICO

*PARA UMA CARACTERIZAÇÃO DE ESPAÇOS SEMIPRIVADOS DE DIVERSÃO NOCTURNA (NOCTEM): DIVERSIDADE E ACESSO DIFERENCIADO EM BARES MEXICANOS*

*TOWARDS A CHARACTERIZATION OF SEMIPRIVATE SPACES OF NOCTURNALITY (NOCTEM): DIVERSITY AND DIFFERENTIATED ACCESS IN MEXICAN BARS*

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## Resumen

Desde la práctica etnográfica multisituada, el presente trabajo esboza una propuesta de flexible caracterización de espacios de economía del tiempo nocturno mediante la teoría social del espacio concebido para dar cuenta de su carácter dinámico, liminal e interconstruido; aunado al análisis de configuración sociotécnica desde los estudios laborales para de ahí, reflexionar en torno a la manera en que los procesos de precarización y violencia sistémica impactan en las expectativas, experiencias y accesos de quienes la buscan, construyen y experimentan, creando así otras formas de nocturnidad (*noctem*) que se encuentran fuera de los cánones de la economía del tiempo nocturno establecida (NTE). Como resultado, se enlistan seis aperturados modelos de configuración de espacios semiprivados de economía del tiempo nocturno que pudieran ser englobados bajo una noción amplia de bares. Posteriormente se presentan algunas breves y emergentes consideraciones sobre espacios de liminalidades paralegales y divergentes en condiciones de precarización y violencia sistémica, 'residuales' para las políticas estatales sobre la noche y la economía del tiempo nocturno. Finalmente, se reflexiona en torno a los alcances y limitantes de esta propuesta.

**Palabras-claves:** nocturnidad, metodología, espacio, desigualdad

## Resumo

A partir da prática etnográfica multisituada, este artigo esboça uma proposta para uma caracterização flexível dos espaços da economia do tempo nocturno através da teoria social do espaço, concebida para dar conta do seu carácter dinâmico, liminar e interconstruído. Esta é combinada com a análise da configuração sociotécnica dos estudos do trabalho para refletir sobre o modo como os processos de precarização e violência sistémica têm impacto nas expectativas, experiências e acessos daqueles que os procuram, constroem e vivenciam, criando assim outras formas de nocturnidade (*noctem*) que estão fora dos cânones da economia do tempo nocturno (NTE) estabelecida. Como resultado, são enumerados seis modelos abertos de configuração de espaços semiprivados da economia nocturna que poderiam ser englobados numa noção ampla de bares. Posteriormente, apresentam-se algumas considerações breves e emergentes sobre espaços de liminaridades paralegais e divergentes em condições de precariedade e violência sistémica, 'residuais' para as políticas estatais sobre a noite e a economia nocturna. Por fim, reflecte-se sobre o alcance e os limites desta proposta.

**Palavras-chaves:** nocturnidade, metodologia, espaço, desigualdade

### Abstract

From the multi-situated ethnographic practice, this paper outlines a proposal for a flexible characterisation of night-time economy spaces through the social theory of space, conceived to account for its dynamic, liminal and interconstructed character. This is combined with an analysis of socio-technical configuration from labour studies to reflect on the way in which processes of precariousness and systemic violence impact on the expectations, experiences, and access of those who seek, construct and experience it, thus creating other forms of nocturnality (*noctem*) that are outside the canons of the established night-time economy (NTE). As a result, six open models of a configuration of semi-private night-time economy spaces that could be encompassed under a broad notion of bars are listed. Subsequently, some brief and emerging considerations are presented on spaces of paralegal and divergent liminalities in conditions of precariousness and systemic violence, 'residual' for State policies on the night and the night-time economy. Finally, it reflects on the scope and limitations of this proposal.

**Keywords:** nocturnality, methodology, social space, inequality

### INTRODUCCIÓN

A partir de un trabajo de inmersión de corte etnográfico llevado a cabo en la Ciudad de México y en la de Tijuana, Baja California sobre las prácticas y horizontes de posibilidades mediante accesos diferenciados a la noche social; a lo largo de este artículo se esboza una propuesta de caracterización amplia y flexible de espacios de nocturnidad medianamente compartidos en el imaginario colectivo de "la noche tijuanaense" y la vida nocturna de Ciudad de México, para ello se parte de una postura desde la teoría social del espacio concebido (Lindón, 2007a, 2007b, 2013; Thrift, 2008) para dar cuenta del carácter dinámico, liminal e interconstruido de los espacios de nocturnidad existentes en las fantasmagorías (Pile, 2005) e imaginarios de la noche social que se da en los difusos límites de los circuitos y distritos de nocturnidad de la ciudad (Mercado y Hernández, 2020).

Como una alternativa a la subjetividad del enfoque de identidad y consumos culturales, dicha postura se acompaña de un análisis de configuración productiva desde los estudios laborales (de la Garza, 2020) que permite identificar vetas y rizomas de las principales características observables de estos espacios como construcciones privilegiadas para la práctica etnográfica y la economía del tiempo nocturno para poner énfasis en la manera en que los procesos de precarización y violencia sistémica impactan en las expectativas, experiencias y accesos de quienes construyen y experimentan la nocturnidad, dando cuenta de los accesos y movibilidades diferenciadas (y desiguales) que configuran a la *noctem*, la cual puede ser entendida como:

Una compleja configuración de índole cultural, social, espacial y económica que puede ser única e irrepetible para cada uno

de los que participan en ella (Thrift, 2008; Pile, 2009, Pred, 1981); que si bien ocurre durante el tiempo nocturno natural (la cual llamaremos simplemente, noche), una construcción llena de contradicciones pues es disruptivo a la par que normativo (Miguez, 2010; Mendes, 2010, Margulis, 1995) de una demanda lúdica específica asociada a una economía de tiempo nocturno (Nofre y Mateo, 2009; Su Jang, 2014; Bennet, 1997) que también es arena de procesos de exclusión y racismo que regulan la noche (Talbot, 2007) con un carácter evidentemente urbano y cuya espacialidad no se extiende a toda la ciudad sino a específicos circuitos que poseen liminalidades difusas (Chatterton, 2002) en el que convergen diversas clases, (media, baja, alta) y nacionalidades - quizá con un predominio de la clase media y popular - en la que satisfacen sus demandas de interacción social y cultural además del divertimento nocturno (Becerra Pozos, 2020, p. 133).

Siendo así, se enlistan seis aperturados modelos de configuración de espacios de nocturnidad: Micro-bar, Bar donde el trabajo se encubre, Bar donde el trabajo se exhibe, Bar de franquicia, Antro y Antro con oferta abiertamente erótica y sexualizada. En adenda, se mencionan algunas breves consideraciones sobre espacios de liminalidades paralegales y divergentes que pudiesen ser considerados como "residuales" para las políticas estatales sobre la noche y la economía del tiempo nocturno.

Dicho de otra manera, la propuesta central de este trabajo consiste en proponer una categorización flexible de espacios de economía del tiempo nocturna, semiprivados y asociados a la venta y consumo de (al menos) alcohol, mismos que en un sentido amplio podrían ser llamados bares. Con-

siderando a la construcción nocturna no como un mero contexto temporal en oposición al día, sino como una configuración simbólica, dinámica y de relevancia específica en la cotidianeidad de quienes la viven y significan.

### JUSTIFICACIÓN Y RELEVANCIA DE ESTUDIO

Se considera que el principal aporte de este trabajo radica en la utilidad de priorizar, mediante la caracterización de espacios de economía del tiempo nocturno como categorías de análisis a la construcción espacial y sociotécnica sobre la oferta cultural, permite propiciar un estudio focalizado y analítico de la complejidad simbólica, cultural e identitaria de los mismos, a la par de propiciar un intercambio más profundo entre investigaciones de la noche entre la sociología y los estudios del trabajo, la antropología, comunicación y los estudios culturales. Si bien, la mención a la categorización o esquematización de algo tan diverso como lo es la oferta de espacios de nocturnidad de ciudades de alta densidad poblacional pudiera parecer una camisa de fuerza metodológica, la intención, por el contrario, es mantener una apertura de dicha oferta a partir de tomar como base algunos elementos desde la configuración de modelos productivos de la sociología del trabajo (de la Garza, 2020) y la teoría del espacio social concebido para así dar cuenta de que no es un constructo duro de tipografía de espacios de nocturnidad, sino una mera propuesta flexible sobre la manera en que se pueden estudiar estos *lugares*.

Para ello, se propone que ante la tremenda diversidad de espacios de economía nocturna en cuanto a músicas, estilos, proyecciones de ofertas identitarias, estilos, atmósferas, públicos objetivo y otros elementos de consumo cultural; la vía de análisis para la práctica etnográfica parte desde una caracterización de los modelos de negocio o configuraciones laborales, mediante algunas categorías de análisis que nos permitan evitar caer en la tentadora opción de pensarlos desde la oferta identitaria que manejan, misma que al ser siempre dinámica, interconstruida y de apreciación subjetiva, pudiera dificultar el intercambio reflexivo entre otras investigaciones del mismo carácter.

Pasando a la relevancia que adquieren las ciudades de Tijuana y Ciudad de México, radica en la desigualdad en los accesos a la noche lúdica que pone de relieve la existencia de otras prácticas de nocturnidad fuera de los distritos y circuitos de nocturnidad (Mercado y Hernández, 2020), algunas, en márgenes de la paralegalidad, condiciones de precariedad y al olvido de la atención de políticas públicas estatales; otra razón parte del imaginario generado por la llamada Leyenda Negra de Tijuana derivado de la cercanía con Estados Unidos y la apli-

cación de la ley Volstead, mismo que, ensalzado por una nutrida producción de las industrias culturales filmográficas, televisivas, musicales y literarias ha propiciado una percepción negativa como ciudad de transgresión y vicio, perfilada hacia satisfacer las necesidades de divertimento nocturno de los habitantes del país vecino del norte.

### ENFOQUE METODOLÓGICO Y CONSIDERACIONES SOBRE LA DENOMINACIÓN DE BARES

Ya que esta investigación no se trata de un estudio de mercado, ni tampoco se persigue un tinte de investigación periodística, se evita la mención de claves y nombres que pudieran evidenciar sitios concretos de la ciudad, no obstante, vale la pena mencionar que los elementos que dieron pauta a esta caracterización provienen en parte de una investigación previa sobre el trabajo en bares de la Ciudad de México (Becerra Pozos, 2018, 2020) y un proyecto postdoctoral sobre las prácticas de nocturnidad y violencias sistémicas en jóvenes residentes de Tijuana, de tal forma que, entre febrero del 2016 y julio del 2017, se realizaron 30 entrevistas formales a hombres y mujeres trabajadores y propietarios de bares de diversos estratos socioeconómicos y con edades entre los 18 a las 50 en las CDMX, posteriormente, durante octubre del 2021 y marzo del 2023, se llevaron cabo 12 entrevistas más (realizadas en Tijuana y a diferencia de las anteriores, exclusivamente a personas jóvenes) además de observación densa *in situ* desde la perspectiva *outsider/insider* (Simoni y McCabes, 2008), sondeos, historia oral (Altamirano, 1994) y entrevistas en profundidad centradas en la experiencia de los actores (Díaz Cruz, 1997) y la práctica de dos grupos focales.

El elemento de partida consiste en una previa definición sobre qué es aquello que entendemos por bares, antros, cantinas y algunos otros nominativos, técnicos y coloquiales, con los que se suele referir a dichos lugares, siendo así, ante su nutrida diversidad y considerando elementos como capacidad, proceso productivo, producción del servicio, modelo de negocio y construcción espacial se considera a los *bares* (en cursiva) como un compuesto abstracto y conceptual para referirse:

A los espacios de nocturnidad semiprivados, de venta y consumo (de al menos) alcohol y en los que la generación del servicio está mediada por la interacción cara a cara entre trabajadores, clientes y representante(s) del capital (C-T-K) (...) el cual los distingue de otros productores de servicios de interacción directa como lo son cafés y restaurantes cuyos modelos de producción no tienen una

diferenciación tajante en su operación diurna o nocturna (Becerra Pozos, 2020, p. 134).

A esa definición se le suma la consideración de que estos espacios no existen en el vacío, puesto que se encuentran insertos en liminales circuitos y distritos de nocturnidad (Chatterton y Hollands, 2002; Mercado y Hernández, 2020), anclados en los mapas mentales, nodos (Lynch, 2014) y fantasmagorías (Pile, 2005) de quienes habitan y significan la ciudad y que a su vez tienen una estrecha relación con la economía del tiempo nocturno (Bennet y Robinson, 2000; Nofre i Mateo y Martín i Díaz, 2009).

Por tal, se trata de lugares que para existir – en su función social y simbólica – requieren de la coproducción de quienes participan de ellos; personas clientes, trabajadoras y la misma construcción de la atmósfera (música, equipo de sonido, iluminación, mobiliario) que, aunado a una ingesta de catalizadores de estados alterados de consciencia, generan estados anímicos colectivos (como pudiera ser durante la transmisión de un partido de fútbol o la selección en rockola de una *oldie de las imperdibles*) pero también se conjugan de manera independiente diferentes emociones antagónicas: tristeza-felicidad, amor-desamor, entretenimiento-aburrimiento (en un mismo bar, en una misma noche, en diferentes mesas); de tal forma que estos espacios tienen la potencialidad para la creación de sentidos de comunidad y bienestar socioemocional (Nofre, 2021) que se construye mediante el *performance* laboral de quienes laboran en ellos, el cual, partiendo de la propuesta de Nieto Calleja (2016) lo consideramos como un despliegue de habilidades estéticas, simbólicas y emocionales que procura proyectar unicidad y pone en práctica capitales etarios, estéticos y fenotípicos y de cuidados, que para el caso de los bares, procura un servicio que denote unicidad y personalización (aunque también puede darse de manera mecánica y con mínima interacción), a raíz del entendimiento de las tendencias que genera la interrelación del espacio y atmósfera en sí (*bar*), la clientela, y trabajador(es) con todas las combinaciones que ello implica. Siendo así, el concepto *bares*, simultáneamente queda conformado por configuraciones de modelo de negocio que implican modalidades laborales y estéticas diferentes.

Segunda consideración general sobre este tipo de espacios de nocturnidad, las interrelaciones generadas – con énfasis en la clientela – se encuentran catalizadas por un diverso grado de ingesta de alcohol (u otras sustancias), una atmósfera generada por la producción del espacio y por el *performance* laboral (Nieto Calleja, 2016) de quienes contribuyen a producir la experiencia. De esta forma, criterio de distinción para que un espacio sea considerado bar es que tenga el consenso para la presencia, venta y consumo de alcohol. Característica esclarecedora

para la diferenciación con otros espacios, asimismo, la permisividad a la ebriedad es lo que terminaría por distinguirlo de otros lugares de economía del tiempo nocturno con que pudiera emparentarse como lo son casinos, clubes o restaurantes de cenadería.

La tercera consideración general implica aquella noción referente a que la noche es un espacio de dominio de las juventudes. En ese sentido, nos permitimos hacer la mención a que esta asociación no necesariamente se cumple, sino que se trata de una condición relativa: si bien el espacio nocturno puede ser una arena predilecta para las experiencias de transición y sociabilidad juveniles, la noche también es un punto de encuentro inter e intrageneracional con una diversificación de oferta que no necesariamente excluye a constructos etarios mayores, sino que se adapta y transforma constantemente hacia colectividades divergentes, juveniles, adultas, de la diversidad sexo genérica y de un amplio espectro de poder adquisitivo, intereses y posición socioeconómica (Blázquez, 2011; Iturriaga Acevedo, 2015; Grazian, 2008), no obstante, simultáneamente la segregación en la experiencia y riesgos condición de género sigue estando presente en varios de los formatos de bares, la cual afecta tanto a quienes producen el servicio, como a quienes buscan participar de la experiencia de nocturnidad (Sandiford, 2010; Sandiford y Seymour, 2012; Warhurst y Nickson, 2009).

Como cuarta consideración, resulta oportuno hablar de la presentación de los insumos ya que tienen una estrecha relación tanto con la producción deseable o práctica de la atmósfera del *bar*, tanto con el proceso de trabajo y *saber hacer* de quienes producen el servicio; para algunos estratos siempre ha sido importante mientras que para otros impera una lógica de costo beneficio orientada a la practicidad económica. Ello puede relacionarse con la relativa democratización de tecnologías como la fotografía digital incorporada a dispositivos móviles y la masificación popular del uso de aplicaciones como *Instagram*, por lo que cada vez cobra mayor relevancia retratar el consumo lúdico a expensas de la extimidad (Miller, 2010) a través de las redes sociales, por ende, se busca que las bebidas se vean interesantes, elaboradas y apetecibles: fotogénicas.

Quinta consideración, hacer hincapié en que las siguientes categorías no implican una definición dura o inamovible, sino que permiten hacer ver las particularidades de cada circuito de nocturnidad y “vida nocturna” de las ciudades a la par que algún punto en común para un intercambio etnográfico. En contraparte, ya que esta propuesta se refiere concretamente a los espacios emblemáticos que hemos denominado *microbar*, *bar donde el trabajo se encubre*, *bar donde el trabajo se exhibe*, *bar de franquicia*, *antro*, *antro con oferta abiertamente erótica y sexualizada*; simultáneamente estaría

abriendo la puerta metodológica hacia el estudio de los vacíos de *noctem* que se encuentran fuera de las espacialidades más reconocidas: espacios en condiciones de precarización y violencias sistémicas, olvidados para las políticas estatales sobre la noche y la economía del tiempo nocturno, llegando incluso a contextos de vórtices de precarización (del Monte Madrigal, 2021).

Cabe señalar que los modelos flexibles que a continuación se definen como ramificaciones que exploran las principales características de estos espacios, pero dentro de una lógica de análisis centrada en lo laboral a configuraciones afines en cuanto a modos de organización, control y mercado de trabajo, el análisis de la construcción del ingreso en cuanto a la significación instrumental y simbólica de la propina y la producción del servicio. Es decir, la relación entre la nocturnidad espacial (*noctem*), el trabajo y la performativa de la producción del servicio.

#### **CATEGORIZACIÓN AMPLIA Y FLEXIBLE DE ESPACIOS DE ECONOMÍA NOCTURNA (BARES) DESDE EL ESTUDIO DE CASO EN TIJUANA**

*Microbar.* Referidos al mínimo operacional para ser considerado *bar* tanto en capacidad, requerimientos operacionales, producción del servicio y atmósfera, carta y personal requerido para su funcionamiento. Pequeños establecimientos (que pueden extenderse hacia el espacio público adyacente de banqueta o corredor) que operan desde uno o dos trabajadores, con una polivalencia básicamente total en cuanto a actividades de limpieza, administración y servicio al cliente.

La decoración puede reducirse hasta el mínimo, aunque esto no constituye una norma, se pueden encontrar desde aquellos en que la producción no pasa de algunos carteles sin enmarcar o pintas en la pared, con un simple sistema de audio de estéreo casero o bocina amplificada comercial (que suele estar a un volumen excesivo para el tamaño del lugar) a otros en que el reducido espacio se explota al máximo en producción donde la medida capacidad de oferta y aforo del establecimiento se ven compensados por una cuidada producción de imagen. Suelen ser lugares para la previa o el precopeo, la elección de clientes también deriva de una relación costo/beneficio pues se ubican en la periferia de los distritos de nocturnidad y también emergen como puntos aislados a lo largo de la ciudad, con mayor énfasis en zonas con condiciones de desigualdad. La exigencia de propina, aunque de expectativa monetaria baja, sí constituye una etiqueta de costumbre y norma no explícita.

*Bar donde el trabajo se encubre.* Primer elemento distintivo de este modelo, los nominativos

con que se autodeterminan, no siendo común la denominación de bar, cantina o botanero, sino que mediante el uso de neologismos que no necesariamente son coincidentes con el modelo de negocio (algunos se asumen como *pub*, *Irish pub* o *English pub*, pero es de común conocimiento que no ofrecen alimentos acorde a la gastronomía europea, ni operan durante el día), no necesariamente se refieren a una mera especialización del formato de establecimiento. Empero, el carácter de tendencia musical suele tener una línea más definida, cuidada, perfilada y central para la producción de la atmósfera y enfocada hacia colectividades de consumo evidentemente juvenil.

La plantilla laboral, al igual que las dimensiones de este tipo de establecimientos va de reducida a mediana (aunque existen algunos de dimensiones mucho mayores, pero más cercanos a un modelo de restaurante), es de observar que la construcción de atmósfera procura proyectar unicidad y la interacción con la clientela tiene un elevado nivel de *performance* laboral (Nieto Calleja, 2016). Se constituyen como espacios propios de lo juvenil y lo socialmente pactado como "alternativo", pues en las narrativas de clientes y trabajadores, asociaban estos espacios como contrastantes al mundo empresarial y lo normativo, aunque los insumos y costos fuesen semejantes, e incluso más elevados, que en *bares* tradicionales o de franquicia.

Las personas trabajadoras suelen utilizar elementos que ligeramente denotan que laboran en el lugar, ropa negra, un identificador como el uso de mandil o destapador en listón al cuello o algún sutil bordado o impresión en la camisa de una marca *sponsor* o el nombre del bar, pues lo que en términos generales estos espacios ofrecen simbólicamente es que funcionan como cohesionadores de identidad de tendencias perfiladas y masificadas, marcadores de estatus y nodos de sociabilidad. En cuanto a la etiqueta de la propina, su expectativa es mucho mayor y netamente requerida.

*Bar donde el trabajo se exhibe.* Partiendo de las semejanzas con el antes descrito, también tiene una plantilla laboral de reducida a mediana y procura proyectar unicidad, pero las principales diferenciaciones radican en la proyección deseada de atmósfera (suele ser mucho más iluminada que en donde el trabajo se encubre), el modo de ejercer un *performance* laboral es de una asimetría en que se busca evidenciar la existencia de una producción del servicio (lo cual no implica que no puedan existir relaciones horizontales o fraternas entre clientes y trabajadores) y a diferencia del otro, en esta categoría la condición etaria juvenil suele tener un mayor encuentro intergeneracional, pues de alguna manera, la experiencia deseable de estos bares alude más a los modelos clásicos anclados en el imaginario popular colectivo latinoamericano: la cantina y el bar.

Ambos cuentan con una gran densidad simbólica y subjetiva en la práctica laboral.

En este tipo de espacios la división sexual del trabajo tiene un mayor peso, así, aunque sin constituir una norma, actitud de subordinación y docilidad en relación con la producción del servicio (Guadarrama y Torres Franco, 2007) forman parte del saber hacer de las trabajadoras de tal manera que en mujeres se priorizan elementos de docilidad, estética y cuidados, mientras que para los hombres existe una mayor expectativa de un ágil y solícito *saber hacer* aprendido en la experiencia, lo cual es coincidente en que en estos lugares el uniforme es mucho más evidente (lo que podría ser desde una mera camisa blanca y pantalón negro a ropa de etiqueta) demarcando inmediatamente a la clientela de quienes producen el servicio.

*Bares de franquicia.* Como el nombre lo indica, se trata de negocios de cadenas comerciales, usualmente supranacionales, aunque con un marcado incremento de nacionales. Ofrecen fundamentalmente, certeza, seguridad y una expectativa de mediana estandarización; aunque se han asociado a una cultura laboral de oficina, esto no constituye la totalidad de quienes los frecuentan, su ubicación suele estar en espacios de alta densidad urbana y comercial. Asimismo, tampoco tienen una pertenencia etaria definida hacia algún polo. La carta de bebidas suele ser igualmente nutrida que la de comida y la permisividad es menor que en otros bares.

En ellos el proceso de trabajo y los modos de interacción se encuentran rigurosamente pautados y estandarizados por la empresa. Aunque no se niega que también exista un *performance* laboral, en este el trabajador tiene menor grado de agencia en cuanto a la manera de llevarlo a cabo, es una forma de interacción más estandarizada y artificial. Para el caso en particular, se percibe una creciente tendencia en este rubro de producción de atmósfera que busca acercarse a un estilo más sincrético, *Kitsch* o folklórico-urbano, mediante el uso de símbolos de consumo cultural otrora propios de las clases populares, de esta manera es que dentro de este grupo también entran nombres o *apellidos* como "cervecería de barrio" o "cafentina", con decoraciones alusivas a la lucha libre, el cine mexicano y la imaginaria generada durante los periodos del ciclo de oro o el cine de ficheras; en ellos se utilizan mesas restauradas de viejas cantinas, el uso consciente de errores ortográficos o frases de "sabiduría popular" y refranes sobre el consumo de alcohol que se muestran pintados en paredes y en los marcos de puertas y ventanas.

*Antro.* Pudieran estar emparentados con los foros de salones de baile y salas de concierto, pero se diferencian de estos en la medida de que los primeros únicamente operan cuando existe algún espectáculo en particular, quedando el lugar condi-

cionado a la existencia del evento, empero, en los *antros*, aunque también se pueden llevar a cabo shows de diversa índole (desde conciertos de rock, música banda, reggaetón, shows de drags, stand up, baile, cabaret y muchos más), operan y generan aforo aunque la oferta de entretenimiento se limite a los sistemas sonoros del lugar y música pregrabada o mezclada por un Dj relativamente anónimo.

Ofrecen una permisividad que no es posible en otros espacios como el trabajo, la escuela, el hogar o la vía pública; en ellos, se busca la potencialidad, aunque ello no signifique propiamente acción: posibilidad de encuentros románticos o de una noche; potencialidad de diversión, de pertenencia; de aparentar ser joven en una atmósfera en la que "*todos los gatos son pardos*", o de aparentar ser ése otro que se quisiera ser. Asimismo, procuran un sentido de distinción y pertenencia asociado a lo juvenil y que queda atravesado por criterios de exclusión discriminación y racismo de tal modo que no solo es generado desde las élites hacia abajo, sino en una multiplicidad de direcciones.

De las personas asistentes, lo que fundamentalmente se busca como objetivo es la mera experiencia del *estar ahí*, por lo que tiene una estrecha relación con que sea precisamente en esta clase de negocios en los que la inversión económica para la producción del lugar y la cantidad de empleados sea considerablemente más elevada que otros tipos de *bares*.

Asimismo, la intención de generar una experiencia adecuada a la expectativa y deseos de la clientela conlleva a la presencia de elementos de trabajo estético y sexualizado (Sandiford, 2010; Sandiford y Seymour, 2012; Warhurst y Nickson, 2009) en cuanto a talla, fenotipo, condición etaria y un *performance* laboral que puede estar cargado de tintes eróticos y sexualizados (no necesariamente sexuales) que permitan la ilusión de potencialidad de encuentros entre la misma clientela, pero también extendida a los y las trabajadoras.

*Antro con oferta abiertamente erótica y sexualizada.* Probablemente sea esta configuración la que ha sido más asociada a Tijuana y por tal, también sea en esta ciudad donde la existencia de este tipo de lugares sobrepasa abruptamente los que se encuentran otras ciudades de mayor densidad poblacional. Las dos principales diferencias con el modelo general de antro son que la oferta de entretenimiento está intrínsecamente ligada con el espectáculo y consumo erótico-sexual-sexualizado (lo que también implica una notoria propensión hacia el ejercicio sistémico de la prostitución y a la presencia de actividades de paralegalidad que sobrepasan la venta y consumo de drogas, sino que pueden implicar trata de personas e incluso prostitución infantil).

La segunda diferencia radica en el fuerte perfilamiento por género en que, siendo la gran mayoría espacios para el mercado masculino heteronor-

mado, la plantilla laboral de entretenimiento sea de mujeres y la producción del servicio de atención a clientes (mesero) y la clientela predominantemente masculina.

## CONCLUSIONES Y CONSIDERACIONES FINALES

Como se mencionó al inicio, esta postura flexible puede servir como una alternativa para la difusa caracterización de espacios de nocturnidad; además, contribuye al alejamiento de la visión juvenocentral de la noche. No obstante, es pertinente hacer mención que no se desarrolló un mayor énfasis en el papel de la construcción de género en la configuración de nocturnidad ni tampoco se reflexiona en torno a espacios privados del orden cotidiano que pueden transformarse en *noctem* como lo son las fiestas privadas en casas y departamentos, ya que ello necesitaría de una particular atención que escapa al alcance de este artículo.

Al respecto de la diversidad y accesos diferenciados, cabe retomar que al inicio del trabajo se habló del desafío que implica hablar de espacios de nocturnidad a partir de su vasta diversidad en cuanto a oferta, estratos, identidad, localización y capacidad, por tan sólo mencionar algunos, y es donde justamente esa diversidad pone de relieve el carácter excluyente, discriminatorio y clasista de la *noctem*; es decir, los accesos diferenciados pueden encontrarse en la tríada de género, transición y clase (Becerra Pozos y Chen Rodríguez, 2020), pero también en la construcción identitaria, la sociabilidad y la relación socioespacial implicada en la localización de los lugares en el estratificado espacio urbano. Por tal, centrar esta propuesta desde la configuración laboral y espacial, más allá de delimitar o asociar un modelo con algún estrato social, colectividad o grado de precarización, brinda herramientas para visibilizar la presencia de diversos accesos diferenciados en todos los modelos aquí presentados. Es decir, en un mismo *bar donde el trabajo se desdibuja* o cualquier otro modelo, el acceso diferenciado (por ejemplo, género) dependerá tanto por su contexto espacial, modelo productivo y proyección de mercado, pero también, de características fenotípicas, estéticas y etarias de quien lo visite, asimismo, si esta persona asiste sola, acompañada o en pareja, dicho de otra manera, el acceso diferenciado se compone por estructura, experiencia, espacio y cuerpo.

Así, se considera que el énfasis de la nocturnidad está dado por las prácticas relacionadas al ocio, a lo lúdico, lo transgresor, así como lo normativo a la par que permisivo que constituye lo nocturno; por ello habrá que considerar una definición no explicitada en que, mientras que la noche es y representa para la gran mayoría de las personas descanso, reposo y dominio de lo

privado y la intimidad, la nocturnidad (*noctem*), por su parte, es mucho más que solo ocio, juego y diversión ya que en ella también se hacen presentes las violencias sistémicas propias de un acceso desigual a la noche que “queda condicionada por elementos de clase, género, fenotipo, consumos, identidades, localización/contexto de vivienda en la ciudad, agencia y estatus de movilidad en frontera, así como dominio del idioma inglés” (Becerra Pozos, 2023, p. 12) cuyos procesos de exclusión o autoexclusión se hacen mucho más presentes en las personas jóvenes que pudieran ser consideradas como sitiadas (Nateras Domínguez, 2016, 2019).

Finalmente, una caracterización flexible de espacios de economía del tiempo nocturno permite rastrear características rizomatosas sobre los espacios de la nocturnidad ampliada (*noctem*) para ahondar en un desarrollo de la etnografía y metodologías nocturnas y de nocturnidad que permita ir contribuyendo a la des-estigmatización de sus prácticas y ampliar la atención hacia aquella noche vivida en contextos de desigualdad, la cual suele ser es ignorada o ajena a las políticas públicas y de economía de tiempo nocturno, negando así las posibilidades de transición que puede implicar la noche e incluso volviéndose una extensión más de la muerte por goteo o juvenicidio (Valenzuela, 2012, 2015).

## Notas

- <sup>1</sup> Ley Volstead es el nombre con el que también se conoce el Acta de Prohibición o Ley seca promulgada en 1919 en los Estados Unidos de América.
- <sup>2</sup> Cabe señalar que aunque la extensión de este trabajo no permite ahondar sobre el tema, la noción de la nostalgia y el papel de las músicas “oldies but goodies” constituye una interesante temática característica de Tijuana que ha sido abordada en trabajos de Park (2011), Ruiz (2009-2010) y Valenzuela (1988) entre otros.
- <sup>3</sup> Se da uso al término *performance*, en masculino y en inglés, para diferenciarse de su acepción en cuanto a expresión artística y asociarse como continuación de la propuesta que desde la sociología del trabajo y la antropología desarrolló Raúl Nieto (2016), así como la incorporación de elementos de trabajo estético y sexualizado (Sandiford, 2010 ; Sandiford y Seymour, 2012 ; Warhurst y Nickson, 2009).
- <sup>4</sup> Aunque durante el trabajo de campo se pudo constatar que en algunos de estos establecimientos existe un relativo grado de permisividad para que algunos de los trabajadores consuman cantidades mesuradas de alcohol como un incentivo para mantener productividad y generar sentido de comunidad, aunque también llega a darse sin el consentimiento de la empresa ni representantes del capital, asimismo, también fue observable que en ocasiones es la gerencia quien incentiva el consumo de sustancias catalizadoras de estados alterados de conciencia, ello, con una marcada tendencia por género (hacia mujeres), lo cual resultó coincidente con lo observado en bares de la Ciudad de México (Becerra Pozos, 2018).

- <sup>5</sup> Ambas tienen una función de distinción del bar por poseer un horario de operación extendido al día y la última por ofrecer alimentos con cada petición ética.
- <sup>6</sup> No es fortuito que varias generaciones de jóvenes que asisten a lugares para bailar, escuchar música y, desde luego, ingerir alcohol en Tijuana hayan adoptado el nombre de antro para tales espacios. Desde luego la mayor parte de ellos ignora que tal vocablo en su añeja y original acepción se refería a la caverna, a la cueva, a la gruta; y que, en su segunda acepción, aún aceptada por la Real Academia Española (RAE), se refiere a un "Local, establecimiento, vivienda, etc., de mal aspecto o mala reputación" (RAE, 2017).
- <sup>7</sup> Aunque se reconoce la existencia de espacios de Chi-ppendales (similar a los table dances, pero en que los performers son masculinos) y para la comunidad LGBTTI, los primeros son escasos y los segundos se adecuan más al formato de antro.

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### Conflicto de intereses

Este producto de investigación no presenta conflicto de intereses.

### Contribución de los autores

Quien suscribe, el autor de este trabajo, fue el responsable de construir la información obtenida en campo por primera mano, así como las reflexiones teóricas, conceptuales y metodológicas que se presentan como resultado en este artículo, asimismo, es el único responsable de su redacción. Asimismo, se agradece la propositiva y cuidada lectura de las personas dictaminadoras que ayudaron a la mejora del mismo.

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# LA INVISIBILIZACIÓN DE LA INFORMALIDAD EN LA CIUDAD NOCTURNA: EL DESPLAZAMIENTO DE TRABAJADORAS SEXUALES Y DOMÉSTICAS HACIA ESPACIOS PRIVADOS

*A INVISIBILIZAÇÃO DA INFORMALIDADE NA CIDADE NOCTURNA: A DESLOCAÇÃO DAS TRABALHADORAS DO SEXO E DAS DOMÉSTICAS PARA ESPAÇOS PRIVADOS*

*THE INVISIBILISATION OF INFORMALITY IN THE NOCTURNAL CITY: THE DISPLACEMENT OF SEX WORKERS AND DOMESTIC EMPLOYEES TO PRIVATE SPACES*

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## Resumen

En este trabajo, propongo explorar el concepto de "oscuridad" (darkness) y su relación con la creciente criminalización, clandestinidad e invisibilidad de la fuerza de trabajo informalizada en el Sur de Europa. Tomando por caso el contexto español, y centrando la atención en dos tipos de trabajo de facto informalizados, altamente feminizados, migrantes y racializados (trabajadoras sexuales y empleadas del hogar) propongo explorar cómo las estrategias públicas de gobierno (discurso y políticas públicas) de las últimas tres décadas utilizan una retórica basada en la oscuridad para criminalizar, re-estigmatizar y "poner en la sombra" a este cuerpo de trabajo informalizado nocturno. Aspirando a acercar el vínculo entre oscuridad, informalidad, migración y estudios feministas, concluyo que las geografías morales de las ciudades españolas procuran desplazar las actividades informales nocturnas hacia espacios crecientemente invisibles y clandestinos, moralizando sobre las mismas en el espacio público, pero permitiendo, tolerando o incluso favoreciendo su reproducción en espacios privados.

**Palabras-claves:** noche, informalidad urbana, trabajo doméstico, internas, trabajo sexual, Sur de Europa

## Resumo

Neste documento, proponho-me explorar o conceito de "escuridão" e a sua relação com as estratégias de crescente criminalização, clandestinização e invisibilização do trabalho informal na Europa do Sul. Tomando o contexto espanhol como um caso, e centrando-me em dois tipos de trabalho de facto informal, altamente feminizado, migrante e racializado (trabalhadoras do sexo e trabalhadoras domésticas), proponho-me explorar como as estratégias públicas do governança (discurso e políticas públicas) das últimas três décadas utilizam uma retórica baseada na obscuridade para criminalizar, reestigmatizar e "pôr na sombra" este corpo de trabalho noturno informalizado. Com o objectivo de aproximar a ligação entre a escuridão, a migração, a informalidade e os estudos feministas, concluo que as geografias morais das cidades espanholas procuram deslocar as actividades nocturnas informais para espaços cada vez mais invisíveis e clandestinos, moralizando-as no espaço público, mas permitindo, tolerando ou mesmo favorecendo a sua reprodução em espaços privados.

**Palavras-chaves:** vida nocturna, informalidade urbana, trabalho doméstico, internas, trabalho sexual, Sul da Europa

### Abstract

In this paper, I propose to explore the concept of darkness and its relation to the increased criminalisation, clandestinisation and invisibility of informalised workers in Southern Europe. Taking the Spanish context as a case, and focusing on two types of de facto informalised, highly feminised, migrant and racialised labour (sex workers and domestic employees), I propose to explore how public governance (discourse and public policy) of the last three decades use a rhetoric based on darkness aimed to criminalise, re-stigmatise and "put in the shadows" these informalised night workers. Aiming to construct closer engagements between debates around darkness, informality, migration and feminist studies, I conclude that the moral geographies of Spanish cities seek to displace informal nocturnal activities towards increasingly invisible and clandestine spaces, moralising about them in public space, but permitting, tolerating or even favouring their reproduction in private spaces.

**Keywords:** nightlife, urban informality, domestic employment, live-in, sex work, Southern Europe

### INTRODUCCIÓN

Desde hace más de tres décadas, la cuestión migratoria ha despertado las tensiones morales de una Europa en profunda crisis: entendidos como "invasores" y "cuerpos oscuros", a la par que "salvadores" de una Europa envejecida, el colectivo migrante llegado del Sur global durante la década de 1990 ha experimentado, desde entonces, un creciente y progresivo agravamiento de sus condiciones materiales de vida. Paradójicamente, a pesar de que buena parte de este cuerpo de trabajo migrado llegó para ocupar los puestos de trabajo más precarios (precisamente aquéllos que la población nacional/ autóctona no quería ejercer), así como para cubrir los huecos de los históricamente frágiles estados del bienestar que caracterizan el Sur de Europa, su situación desde entonces no ha hecho más que empeorar. Desde la década de los 2000, la arquitectura legal de la "Europa Fortaleza" ha favorecido la creciente informalización de la población migrante, forzando su habitar en los márgenes y desplazándolos a los resquicios de la liminalidad laboral, social y urbana. Dicha arquitectura no sólo informaliza activamente a este cuerpo de trabajo migrante, sino que criminaliza su presencia, generando un verdadero terror cotidiano para las personas que no disponen de permisos legales de residencia, acosando a través de identificaciones "espontáneas" en calles, plazas y estaciones de transporte a personas racializadas, imposibilitando su incorporación al mercado laboral formal y obstaculizando su acceso al ejercicio de la ciudadanía y el derecho a la ciudad (Amnistía Internacional, 2023; Ferrocarril Clandestino, Médicos del mundo Madrid y SOS Racismo Madrid, 2016). De manera crucial, para muchas de estas personas, la noche supone un espacio-tiempo donde la tensión entre el anonimato, la visibilidad, la persecución (ser visto, perseguido o tolerado), supone una oportunidad de supervivencia en este escenario de creciente informalización y persecución de la alteridad migrante.

En las ciudades del Sur de Europa, buena parte del trabajo migrante, precarizado y, también, altamente feminizado, se ha dedicado fundamentalmente a dos sectores de creciente demanda por parte de la población autóctona: el servicio doméstico y la venta de servicios sexuales. Ambos colectivos, compuestos mayoritariamente por mujeres, a menudo migrantes racializadas del Sur Global, encuentran en la venta de sus servicios (sexuales, de limpieza o cuidados) una oportunidad para escapar de contextos de precariedad, subsistir, mantenerse a ellas mismas o a sus familias e, incluso, en ocasiones, ahorrar y sostener nuevos proyectos vitales (Agustín, 2009). A menudo indocumentadas (sin permisos legales de residencia y trabajo) estas mujeres migrantes encuentran en la liminalidad de la 'noche informal', en los espacios apartados y menos visibles de las ciudades, un salvoconducto para poder vivir, escapar, esconderse o subsistir. Así, según las bases de datos estadísticas nacionales (Instituto Nacional de Estadística [INE], 2020a), de las 600.000 empleadas del hogar trabajando en España, 40.000 de ellas trabajan como *internas* en casa de sus empleadores: a menudo sin descansos y con extenuantes jornadas de trabajo, estas mujeres (el 90 % de ellas mujeres migrantes y sin papeles) limpian, cocinan y cuidan día y noche los hogares de las clases medias altas de los barrios más privilegiados de ciudades españolas. La particularidad de la experiencia nocturna para estas mujeres es atravesada por un complejo de experiencias, que transcurren desde esconderse de las autoridades de migración en casa de sus empleadores, sortear el habitual abuso de sus clientes y cuidar en jornadas extenuantes, día y noche. En paralelo, aunque la estimación de las cifras es siempre problemática<sup>1</sup>, miles de trabajadoras sexuales encuentran en los espacios "oscuros" y apartados de calles, parques, y especialmente clubs nocturnos y pisos de alterne, su espacio-tiempo laboral en numerosas ciudades españolas. No obstante, a pesar de que la noche

es un espacio-tiempo central para este cuerpo de trabajo informalizado, feminizado y altamente migrante y racializado, la relativa opacidad que atraviesa tanto los hogares privados en el caso de las trabajadoras domésticas, como los establecimientos de clubs nocturnos y pisos de alterne en el caso de las trabajadoras sexuales, dificulta poder abordar la exploración de este fenómeno. Parece necesario abordar con mayor atención la realidad de la "noche in/formal" (Aramayona y Guarneros-Meza, 2023), y particularmente la experiencia de los cuerpos subalternos en la noche – también en los espacios privados, menos visibles. Por ello, generar mayores vínculos entre los estudios nocturnos y la interseccionalidad de los debates feministas contemporáneos (Federici, 2013; Marchetti et al., 2021) permite atender a estas *otras noches*, aquéllas que se dan en espacios invisibilizados, clandestinos y precarizados por los procesos de gobernanza urbana de las ciudades postindustriales.

A lo largo del presente trabajo, propongo explorar el concepto de "oscuridad" (*darkness*) y su relación con la creciente criminalización, clandestinidad e invisibilización de la fuerza de trabajo informalizada en el Sur de Europa. Tomando por caso el contexto urbano español, y centrando la atención en dos tipos de trabajo *de facto* informalizados altamente feminizados, migrantes y racializados (empleadas domésticas y trabajadoras sexuales) propongo explorar cómo la *oscuridad*, en tanto espacio-tiempo (la noche) pero también espacio simbólico (lo oscuro), permite generar prácticas de criminalización/re-estigmatización de la informalidad urbana por parte del discurso y política pública.

La primera sección ofrece una descripción detallada del enfoque metodológico utilizado para este trabajo. La segunda sección se centrará en la situación actual de dos tipos de actividades laborales *de facto* informalizadas en España, a la par que con un perfil socio-demográfico de composición femenina, migrante y habitualmente racializado: el trabajo sexual y el empleo doméstico, todas ellas llevadas a cabo en una gran mayoría de casos por migrantes transnacionales (a menudo mujeres racializadas e indocumentadas) procedentes de países del Sur Global. Para ello, con la aspiración de superar enfoques dicotómicos sobre qué es "formal" o "informal", tomamos los debates recientes sobre informalización como proceso legal, económico y espacial, y lugar para el "análisis crítico" de diversas problemáticas urbanas (Banks et al., 2019; Boudreau y Davis, 2016; Roy, 2009). A través del análisis de las estrategias públicas de gobierno (políticas públicas, narrativas dominantes) de este cuerpo de trabajo informalizado durante las últimas tres décadas – incluyendo el periodo crítico de la pandemia de Covid-19 –, arrojaré luz sobre cómo la intervención pública utiliza una retórica basada

en la *oscuridad* para criminalizar, hacer clandestino y "poner en la sombra" a este cuerpo de trabajo informalizado nocturno. En particular, describiré cómo el discurso público dominante (institucional/medios de comunicación) utiliza una retórica que (tanto por sus activas presencias como por sus ausencias y "silencios") activa un imaginario sobre la naturaleza "oscura" de las actividades de este cuerpo de trabajo informalizado. En la cuarta sección, desarrollo con mayor profundidad el vínculo entre la reproducción de las nuevas geografías morales, informalización y la gobernanza neoliberal de las ciudades españolas. En particular, explico cómo la gobernanza pública española sobre la cuestión del empleo doméstico y el trabajo sexual ha derivado en la mayor clandestinidad de estas trabajadoras informalizadas – llevándolas "a la sombra" del espacio social urbano – criminalizando las actividades consideradas moralmente reprobables en el espacio público/visible, al tiempo que permitiendo, tolerando e incluso incentivando las mismas en el espacio privado/invisibilizado.

## OBJETIVOS Y METODOLOGÍA

En este trabajo, propongo explorar el concepto de "oscuridad" y su relación con la criminalización y estrategias de supervivencia, oportunidad y resistencia de las trabajadoras informales (habitualmente migrantes y racializadas) en el Sur de Europa. Por "oscuridad" (*darkness*), entiendo no sólo el espacio-tiempo simbólico que habilita ("la noche" o "*afterdark hours*") paradigmático de los estudios nocturnos (Nofre y Eldridge, 2018), sino un lugar simbólico-discursivo sobre el que operan legados de largo alcance sobre moral, raza y género (Edensor, 2013, 2015).

A través de un análisis exhaustivo de fuentes secundarias (i.e. bases de datos, informes, literatura especializada de carácter interdisciplinar sobre "*nightlife/darkness*", migración, estudios de género, trabajo sexual y trabajo doméstico) se expone una situación actualizada sobre las condiciones en que viven los colectivos de trabajadoras *de facto* informalizadas (empleadas domésticas y trabajadoras sexuales) en el contexto español. A su vez, este análisis es combinado con un examen exhaustivo de la legislación y normativas públicas vigentes que afectan a estas trabajadoras a diferentes escalas: a nivel local (regulaciones municipales sobre orden público; e.g., Ordenanza de medidas para fomentar y garantizar la convivencia ciudadana en el espacio público de Barcelona [12/2005]), nacional (Ley sobre Migración [LO 4/2000] y sus sucesivas modificaciones, Ley de Seguridad y Convivencia [LO 4/2015], Sistema especial para empleados del hogar [RD 1620/2011 y RD 16/2022]) e internacional (normativa europea; e.g., Convenio 189 de la Organización

Internacional del Trabajo [OIT]). Estos resultados se integran con un análisis del discurso público sobre ambos colectivos, identificado a través de debates parlamentarios y los medios de comunicación digital durante el periodo 1990-2021 (incluyendo el crítico periodo de la pandemia Covid-19) siguiendo las escuelas de análisis crítico del discurso (Antaki et al., 2003; Íñiguez y Antaki, 1994; Lees, 2004). A través de la triangulación multi-fuente y multi-método, la integración de esta información pretende brindar luz sobre los *claroscuros* (contradicciones e impactos) entre el discurso público y la política pública sobre las condiciones de estos dos colectivos de trabajadoras.

## RESULTADOS Y DISCUSIÓN

### Invisibilizando a las trabajadoras sexuales de calle: moralidad y desplazamiento de la prostitución hacia el *indoor* a través de políticas públicas en España

En los últimos años, la prensa y los medios de opinión pública se han hecho eco de un crecimiento exponencial del trabajo sexual en España. Aunque no hay datos oficiales, diversas organizaciones estiman que miles de trabajadoras sexuales<sup>2</sup> operan diariamente en ciudades como Madrid, Barcelona o Valencia, así como en zonas rurales fronterizas con Portugal y Francia (Oliveira, 2020; TAMPEP, 2010). De hecho, las políticas de austeridad y la pérdida generalizada de puestos de trabajo en el mercado formal desde la crisis de 2008 – agravada por la crisis de Covid-19 –, el trabajo sexual ha aumentado como modo de sobrevivir a la precariedad cotidiana (Asociación In Genero, 2021). La gran mayoría de las personas que venden servicios sexuales son mujeres, en particular mujeres migrantes procedentes de los países más pobres del Sur Global, de las cuales el 80 % no dispone de permisos de trabajo y residencia (Asociación In Genero, 2021; TAMPEP, 2010). De ahí que muchas de ellas sufran, no sólo la aplicación de un complejo conjunto de legislaciones ambiguas y criminalizadoras relativas a la prostitución, sino de leyes nacionales crecientemente securitizantes de la población migrante (Osborne, 2004).

Desde finales de los años ochenta y principios de los noventa, intensos y polémicos debates han surgido en España sobre la naturaleza del trabajo sexual: la vulnerabilidad de las personas que venden servicios sexuales – en su mayoría mujeres – es utilizada como argumento por los discursos abolicionistas y prohibicionistas para cuestionar el consentimiento y la libre elección de la venta de servicios sexuales<sup>3</sup>. Desde finales de 1990, la movilidad de discursos a escala global en relación a la prostitución y “tráfico sexual” supuso la importación de un debate polarizado desde el contexto anglosajón a otros territorios, incluido el Sur de Europa

(Garofalo Geymonat y Selmi, 2019), que incorporó entonces una retórica que equiparaba prácticamente cualquier trabajadora sexual con una víctima de tráfico, y a toda persona que facilitara de alguna forma esta actividad como miembro de la “industria proxeneta”. Las metáforas lumínicas no tardaron en aparecer: la “trata de blancas” necesitaba ser perseguida, como ejercicio de exorcización de un objeto oscuro (las *mafias*), salvadoras y en rescate de unas mujeres desprotegidas y carentes de agencia. Sin embargo, las organizaciones lideradas por trabajadoras sexuales y las posturas pro-derechos denuncian que son los marcos legales estigmatizadores y criminalizadores vigentes en España los que, *de facto*, aumentan su vulnerabilidad física, psicológica y económica tanto en el tránsito desde el país de origen como en la vida cotidiana en el país de llegada (Oliveira, 2020; OTRAS, 2020; Pheterson, 2023; Sánchez-Perera, 2023). Desde las redadas policiales, a las sanciones económicas, al miedo a la deportación de las inmigrantes indocumentadas, a la más reciente escasez económica debida a las restricciones de su actividad en el manejo de la Covid-19 (Asociación In Genero, 2021; Platt et al., 2020), las trabajadoras del sexo se encuentran hoy en día en una situación de extrema vulnerabilidad.

España no es una excepción de la “cruzada moral” general (Weitzer, 2006) contra la prostitución que tiene lugar en Europa desde la década de 1950 (Foret y Rubio Grundell, 2020). El marco español se instala en un abordaje abolicionista – como la mayoría de estados europeos – que, a pesar de que su foco está puesto en “castigar” al cliente y a terceros a través de jurisdicciones penales para desincentivar la demanda, en la práctica termina por sancionar y criminalizar a la prostituta (Oliveira, 2020). Así, mientras se desincentiva o banaliza cualquier intento de auto-organización y representación colectiva por parte de las trabajadoras del sexo<sup>4</sup>, la industria de empresarios del sexo goza de una relajada situación normativa y jurídica. Como bien describe Paula Sánchez-Perera (2023) España dispone, en la práctica, de un Código Penal abolicionista, un prohibicionismo callejero y un reglamentarismo invisible (especialmente para la prostitución *indoor* en clubs nocturnos y apartamentos), que deja a las trabajadoras sexuales en una situación de inmensa vulnerabilidad.

Las pioneras regulaciones locales contra el trabajo sexual callejero en España nacieron en la región de Cataluña: en 2005, instalados en una profunda retórica moral sobre el “civismo”, el Ayuntamiento de Barcelona estableció la *Ordenanza de medidas para fomentar y garantizar la convivencia ciudadana en el espacio público de Barcelona* (12/2005) que permite sancionar tanto a clientes como a trabajadoras sexuales por ofrecer, aceptar o realizar actos sexuales en espacios públicos, con sanciones

agravadas cuando se realizan en zonas sensibles (por ejemplo, cerca de escuelas). Durante los años siguientes, ciudades como Valencia, Sevilla o Bilbao elaboraron normativas similares. Sin embargo, en aquellas ciudades que carecen de normativa urbana específica sobre la regulación de la prostitución callejera (como Madrid, Zaragoza o San Sebastián), la policía nacional aplica leyes nacionales de seguridad (como la Ley Orgánica [LO] 4/2015 Ley de Seguridad y Convivencia, también conocida como "Ley Mordaza") para desplazar a las trabajadoras del sexo de "zonas sensibles" (art. 36) y sancionar las "exhibiciones obscenas" (art. 37.5) con multas que oscilan entre los 600 y los 30.000 euros. Según datos del Ministerio del Interior, en el periodo 2015-2017, la LO 4/2015 fue utilizada 591 veces para sancionar trabajadoras sexuales, por un importe total de 100.420 euros (Barcons Campmajó, 2018). En definitiva, desde mediados de los 2000, las ciudades españolas disponen de marcos normativos (locales o nacionales) de carácter prohibicionista que de manera activa sancionan, persiguen y aterrorizan a las trabajadoras sexuales en espacios públicos.

Tal y como han denunciado varias organizaciones lideradas por trabajadoras sexuales y miembros de la academia pro-derechos, los enfoques institucionales en España en las últimas tres décadas no han puesto fin a la prostitución, sino que han hecho a las trabajadoras sexuales más invisibles, "en la sombra" y más vulnerables a abusos y actos de violencia por parte de actores estatales/públicos (policía y burócratas) y privados (clientes y proxenetas) (Asociación In Genero, 2021; Cruz-Márquez y Maldonado-Guzmán, 2021; Motterle, 2020; OTRAS, 2020). De hecho, uno de los grandes efectos de este entramado legal (administrativo y penal) de gobernanza de la prostitución ha sido precisamente el aumento de la clandestinidad de las trabajadoras sexuales, a través de su desplazamiento del espacio público (la calle) a entornos cerrados (Clubs Nocturnos y apartamentos privados) (Barcons Campmajó, 2018; Villacampa y Torres, 2013). El desplazamiento del trabajo sexual callejero a escenarios *indoor* produce una pérdida de autonomía personal y económica – ya que muchas viven en los clubes donde trabajan –, son más propensas a aceptar condiciones de trabajo y situaciones de explotación por parte de terceros, y tienen más riesgo de sufrir abusos físicos y sexuales por parte de los clientes (Arce, 2022; Barcons Campmajó, 2018). La invisibilización en el espacio privado (tanto en clubes como en pisos privados) en un escenario de alta criminalización y estigma, dificulta además el acceso a una vivienda digna, produce un mayor riesgo ante clientes abusivos (al conocer donde viven las trabajadoras) y a no denunciar abusos por miedo a ser identificadas como trabajadoras sexuales (Arce, 2022; Smith y Mac, 2018). De manera crucial, en el caso de las

trabajadoras sexuales indocumentadas, también corren más riesgo de ser deportadas debido a las repentinas e inesperadas redadas masivas de la policía en los clubes de alterne. Para las trabajadoras sexuales que, a pesar de toda la persecución, permanecen "haciendo la calle", este escenario incierto y criminalizado empeora las condiciones de su ejercicio al forzar, entre otras cosas, la rapidez en las negociaciones con los clientes en relación a los precios y prácticas sexuales, así como a esconderse en lugares menos visibles, "más oscuros" (Smith y Mac, 2018) y más peligrosos (Barcons Campmajó, 2018). En suma, la normativa pública española aplicada desde la década de 2000 ha desplazado el trabajo sexual *outdoor* (al aire libre) hacia escenarios *indoor* (en locales cerrados), caracterizados por ser entornos más opacos y clandestinos, y empeorando las condiciones de vida y trabajo de las personas que venden sexo.

En la actualidad, la coyuntura desde 2018 de un gobierno nacional de corte progresista entre un partido de izquierdas *Unidas Podemos* (auto-representado como heredero del movimiento 15M *Indignados* y de la más longeva *Izquierda unida*) en coalición con el histórico partido social-demócrata, *PSOE*, no ha sido preventorio de una postura no abolicionista respecto de la prostitución. De hecho, la gestión pública relativa a la pandemia de Covid-19 ha afectado gravemente a la situación de este colectivo: no sólo las medidas tomadas (o sus ausencias) han olvidado o reforzado un clima de persecución, abandono y falta de escucha al colectivo organizado en tanto agencia de interlocución, sino que durante este crítico periodo se reforzó en el nivel del discurso el vínculo entre "prostitución" y el *oscuro* estigma que lo asocia a violencia y enfermedad – en tanto práctica *underground* inherentemente violenta para la dignidad de las mujeres, que debe ser controlada o eliminada sin contar con el diagnóstico de sus protagonistas (las trabajadoras sexuales). En agosto de 2020, en plena quinta ola de pandemia, el Ministerio de Sanidad solicitó a las comunidades autónomas el cierre del ocio nocturno como estrategia de "combate" de la pandemia Covid-19. Poco más tarde, el Ministerio de Igualdad recomendó a los gobiernos autonómicos el cierre de prostíbulos y clubes de alterne, entendiendo la "persecución a la prostitución" como una cuestión de salud pública para manejar, a la par, la contención del virus Covid-19 y la dignidad de las mujeres prostituidas. Instaladas en un discurso abolicionista, que habitualmente no distingue entre trabajo sexual voluntario y tráfico sexual, esta iniciativa pública reforzó en el nivel de discurso la asociación, históricamente construida, entre prostitución y transmisión de enfermedades (venéreas) (Smith y Mac, 2018) – a pesar de que la evidencia empírica niega este habitual estereotipo (Asociación In Genero, 2021). Sin embargo, siguiendo

esta recomendación del gobierno nacional, la región de Castilla La Mancha (que concentra los mayores índices de clubes y prostíbulos sexuales del país) implementó una normativa específica para prohibir y perseguir el trabajo sexual en los clubes<sup>5</sup>, acción que fue seguida por otros gobiernos regionales como Cataluña, Andalucía y Extremadura mediante el uso de restricciones generales a los lugares de ocio y entretenimiento nocturno.

Junto con las anteriores restricciones a la movilidad y horarios nocturnos, y en una ausencia práctica de ayudas públicas dirigidas a las trabajadoras sexuales, esta estrategia pública supuso un empeoramiento extremo de las condiciones sanitarias y económicas de las trabajadoras sexuales. Como ha denunciado recientemente el informe de la ONG Asociación In Género (2021), debido al cierre repentino de los clubes, muchas trabajadoras sexuales perdieron su residencia, forzando el traslado de su actividad a pisos privados regentados por los jefes de su anterior club o sus clientes – y en menor medida, alquilados con otras compañeras trabajadoras sexuales –, haciéndolas más vulnerables a las extorsiones laborales y físicas, perdiendo poder de negociación con los clientes y haciéndolas aún más invisibles y estigmatizadas. Paralelamente, este clima pandémico de re-estigmatización y persecución de la actividad de venta del sexo, permitió un incremento del maltrato policial contra las trabajadoras sexuales que mantuvieron su actividad durante este periodo crítico: una vigilancia extra de los clubes nocturnos (aún abiertos) por parte de patrullas policiales, e incluso inmersiones extralegales a pisos privados donde se ejercía el trabajo sexual (Asociación In Género, 2021). Recientemente, desde 2021, diversos anuncios sobre distintas propuestas de medidas legislativas orientadas a “abolir la prostitución”<sup>6</sup> apuntalan esta tendencia de gobernanza criminalizante sobre las trabajadoras sexuales, y abre un interrogante sobre las posibles consecuencias para las personas que venden servicios sexuales en España.

### **Internas y trabajadoras domésticas 'en la sombra': limpiando y cuidando los hogares de clase media en condiciones precarias**

Curiosamente, el empleo doméstico tiene una presencia significativamente mayor en el Sur de Europa – incluyendo el contexto español – en comparación con otros países europeos. En base al Instituto Nacional de Estadística (2020), actualmente hay 600.000 trabajadoras domésticas en España (150.000 en Madrid, la capital), posicionando a España como el segundo país europeo con las tasas más altas de empleo doméstico – solo por detrás de Italia – (Eurostat, 2019). Como en el caso del trabajo sexual, el trabajo doméstico en España

es también una actividad altamente feminizada y racializada: el 88 % de las personas que realizan servicios domésticos son mujeres, de las cuales el 65 % son migrantes (INE, 2020a) – y una de cada cuatro carece de permiso de residencia y trabajo (Gálvez-Iniesta, 2020). Sin embargo, a diferencia del trabajo sexual, el empleo doméstico es una actividad laboral legal en España, que cuenta con una normativa laboral específica y que permite, en cierta medida, cierta protección legal a las empleadas domésticas. Sin embargo, la realidad es que muchos de estos trabajos precarios, habitualmente denominados “no cualificados”, se realizan en condiciones muy precarias o con una altísima tasa de irregularidades: en España, 1/3 de las empleadas domésticas trabaja en condiciones informales (OXFAM, 2021) e incluso teniendo permisos de trabajo y contratos formalizados, una de cada tres es pobre (INE, 2020b, en base a la Encuesta Española de Condiciones de Vida, 2019).

Aunque en la última década se han producido algunas mejoras, las organizaciones civiles denuncian la falta de un marco normativo que asegure una protección laboral de las empleadas domésticas en igualdad de condiciones respecto de otros empleos. En la actualidad, el trabajo doméstico en la legislación española se enmarca en un régimen especial de la Seguridad Social que, entre otras cosas, no permite a las trabajadoras beneficiarse de la protección por desempleo, garantiza sólo el salario mínimo – a pesar de ser una actividad esencial –, carece de protocolos de prevención de riesgos laborales y de protección legal frente a despidos “improcedentes”<sup>7</sup>, y dispone de indemnizaciones por despido inferiores a las de otros trabajos. De hecho, incluso el Tribunal de Justicia de la Unión Europea ha denunciado recientemente la situación discriminatoria que sufren las empleadas de hogar en la actual legislación española (Tribunal de Justicia de la Unión Europea, Comunicado de Prensa 37/22, 2022). A pesar de que las inspecciones de trabajo en los domicilios privados son una demanda de los colectivos organizados, la “inviolabilidad del espacio privado” (el hogar) suele ser una de las excusas para no realizar este monitoreo público sobre las condiciones de las trabajadoras domésticas.

La falta de reconocimiento del valor del trabajo del hogar por parte de la opinión pública, la vulnerabilidad administrativa (muchas trabajadoras no disponen de permisos de residencia/trabajo), junto con una agenda legislativa desfasada y la invisibilidad de los espacios de trabajo privados (los hogares), hacen que las empleadas del hogar en España sea un colectivo altamente vulnerable a sufrir diversas formas de abuso laboral y violencia simbólica, física y sexual. Según un cuestionario, realizado a 80 mujeres del servicio doméstico, el 41 % denunció insinuaciones y “comentarios

vulgares” de carácter sexista, el 28 % ha sufrido acercamientos excesivos o tocamientos indeseables, el 10 % fue solicitada explícitamente para mantener relaciones sexuales con sus empleadores y el 10 % sufrió abusos sexuales (Bofill y Véliz, 2019). La humillación y el chantaje también es una situación común denunciada por estas trabajadoras (Barrial, 2023). Críticamente, de nuevo la pandemia de Covid-19 ha empeorado las condiciones de vida y de trabajo de las empleadas domésticas: muchas fueron despedidas repentinamente sin previo aviso – a veces a las puertas de la casa de su empleador –, no cobraron la totalidad de las horas trabajadas o no recibieron indemnizaciones al ser despedidas. Todas estas situaciones de abuso, ya preexistentes a la pandemia, han crecido enormemente durante este periodo crítico (OXFAM, 2021). Sin embargo, conscientes de su vulnerabilidad legal, muchas mujeres inmigrantes indocumentadas evitan denunciar ante la policía o cualquier otro recurso institucional para evitar posibles identificaciones y deportaciones.

Del grueso de las empleadas domésticas, el caso de las trabajadoras internas es especialmente grave. De las 40.000 mujeres que viven y trabajan, día y noche, en los hogares más privilegiados de las ciudades españolas, el 90 % son migrantes (INE, 2020a), en su mayoría sin papeles. Esta situación puede durar de meses a años, y es un puente habitual de numerosas migrantes indocumentadas que, debido a su incertidumbre legal y económica, prefieren vivir en la casa de sus empleadores para evitar el pago de los altos alquileres de las ciudades, así como evitar exponerse a identificaciones policiales y controles migratorios en espacios públicos. Obviamente, la mayor invisibilidad y vulnerabilidad legal de las internas permite una mayor impunidad sobre la violencia física, psicológica, laboral y sexual ejercida por sus clientes (Bofill y Véliz, 2019): desde horarios de trabajo extenuantes, a no disponer de horas personales de descanso o carecer de intimidad y espacios privados para el descanso, o ser chantajeadas por sus empleadores para aceptar condiciones abusivas debido a su situación legal de vulnerabilidad. Estas condiciones de semi-esclavitud son aceptadas por estas mujeres debido a su inmensa precariedad al llegar en condiciones irregulares a Europa: prefieren quedarse en el espacio privado de sus empleadores, incluso aceptando condiciones extremadamente abusivas y careciendo de su propio tiempo y espacio personales, con tal de ahorrar exponerse a identificaciones policiales y posibles deportaciones. Una vez más, la pandemia de Covid-19 afectó sobremanera al colectivo de internas: basándose en argumentos sanitarios, muchas internas perdieron su trabajo – y, en consecuencia, su lugar de residencia – o se les pidió que se quedaran indefinidamente en casa de sus empleadores para evitar el contagio, renunciando

así a su derecho a horas de descanso y espacios privados (OXFAM, 2021).

Sin embargo, en contraste con la representación hiperbólicamente mediatizada de las trabajadoras del sexo, durante las tres últimas décadas ha habido un debate público casi ausente sobre las condiciones del empleo doméstico en España. Frente al insistente interés de gobiernos españoles y numerosas organizaciones del tercer sector en “dar luz” al “oscuro” mundo de la industria del sexo, el interés por las condiciones de las empleadas domésticas, y particularmente las internas, ha sido habitualmente menor. Salvo la puntual cobertura mediática de las incansables protestas de organizaciones de empleadas de hogar<sup>8</sup> junto con las denuncias de algunos sindicatos tradicionales<sup>9</sup>, la situación del empleo del hogar en España no ha estado en la agenda de los debates mediáticos ni parlamentarios. Solo recientemente, en abril de 2022, se ha producido una cierta visibilidad pública en relación con la ratificación de la normativa internacional (Convenio 189 de la OIT de 2013), una histórica reivindicación de las organizaciones de empleadas de hogar (Marchetti et al., 2021). No obstante, el habitual “silencio” en el discurso público sobre el empleo doméstico contrasta con el desgarrado grito por las condiciones de las “mujeres prostituidas”, generando una ausencia de discurso público, también oscura, que nos permite brindar luz a los procesos de reproducción de las geografías morales de las ciudades nocturnas españolas.

### **CONCLUSIÓN. GEOGRAFÍAS MORALES DE LA INFORMALIDAD NOCTURNA: EL DESPLAZAMIENTO DE TRABAJADORAS RACIALIZADAS HACIA LA OSCURIDAD DE LOS ESPACIOS PRIVADOS**

Las comparaciones entre el (des)igual tratamiento público de estos dos tipos de trabajo feminizado, migrante y racializado (doméstico y sexual) son esclarecedores sobre cómo los procesos de invisibilidad e informalización reproducen las geografías morales de las actuales ciudades postindustriales españolas. Mientras las trabajadoras sexuales callejeras reciben el constante acoso y las sanciones económicas derivadas de las regulaciones locales higienistas y la LO 4/2015, apenas se han dado avances institucionales por conocer las verdaderas condiciones de trabajadoras en clubes nocturnos y pisos. Al mismo tiempo, las puntuales e hipermediatizadas redadas policiales en clubes nocturnos y pisos donde se venden servicios sexuales, contrasta con la persistente falta de vigilancia pública e interés mediático sobre las condiciones abusivas que sufren las empleadas domésticas en espacios privados, especialmente las internas. Los esfuerzos que las ciudades neoliberales aplican a limpiar los espacios

públicos de presencias “peligrosas”, “sucias” o “incívicas” – y su sesgada (des)atención a las situaciones de abuso en los espacios privados o semiprivados – revelan las contradicciones y tensiones de las actuales geografías morales españolas.

En este trabajo, describo el papel que el discurso público dominante (institucional y mediático), en combinación con una arquitectura legal y normativa a escala local, regional, nacional y internacional, tiene sobre la situación de dos trabajos *de facto* informalizados, feminizados y racializados en España: el empleo del hogar y el trabajo sexual. Así, sostengo que la estrategia pública (por pasiva o activa) en el contexto español, ha favorecido una mayor clandestinidad de estas trabajadoras informales en las tres últimas décadas: la tendencia hacia el desplazamiento de la informalidad (y su consiguiente vulnerabilidad psicológica, social, laboral, sexual y económica) “a la sombra” de los espacios privados o semiprivados (hogares, clubs nocturnos o apartamentos), así como el desplazamiento de las condiciones más abusivas que sufren las trabajadoras informalizadas hacia espacios más invisibles. Tal y como describe Laura Agustín (2009) de manera colateral en su célebre libro enfocado en trabajo sexual (“Sex on the Margins”), existe una relación directa entre trabajo sexual y doméstico con el fenómeno migratorio a escala global y ambos trabajos son, en buena medida, parte del proyecto migratorio de numerosas mujeres. Los colectivos de trabajadoras organizadas tienen claro que existe una relación directa entre trabajo sexual y otros trabajos precarios, como el de limpieza, el del hogar, el de hostelería, y tantos otros: las “ruedas de la pobreza” hacen que, en numerosas ocasiones, el trabajo sexual suponga una alternativa viable para poder salir de la precariedad para numerosas mujeres, a veces sustituyendo otros trabajos precarios, o complementándolos<sup>10</sup>. Sin embargo, probablemente por el “estigma puta” que subyace al ejercicio del trabajo sexual (Sánchez-Perera, 2023), así como por los impedimentos para que la voz de las trabajadoras sexuales organizadas sea escuchada, tanto los estudios científicos como el relato público que aborda la complementariedad de ambas esferas de trabajo siguen siendo minoritarios.

Más allá de todos los obstáculos, la *noche* (en tanto espacio-tiempo) y la *oscuridad* (en tanto espacio simbólico y discursivo) son utilizadas por esta fuerza de trabajo subalterna para habitar los resquicios de oportunidad que habilitan los regímenes neoliberales, patriarcales y racistas, así como las grietas de la ciudad que se escapan al control (bio-)político en la “liminalidad” de la noche (Nofre et al., 2019). Bien de manera individual, pero “encroached” (Bayat, 2000), bien colectivizada en forma de sindicatos populares, estas trabajadoras, habitualmente migrantes sin papeles, ejercen diferentes formas

de resistencia al neoliberalismo urbano a través de sus prácticas de supervivencia diaria. Abordar con mayor centralidad cómo se producen estas prácticas y estrategias de supervivencia de la subalternidad nocturna (Aramayona y Guarneros-Meza, 2023) para apoyar futuros procesos de organización y lucha por el “derecho a la ciudad nocturna” (Koslofsky, 2011) es un deber de la nueva agenda de estudios urbanos y nocturnos.

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## Notas

- 1 Dada la inexistencia de datos oficiales sobre el número de personas ejerciendo prostitución en España, la datación aproximada de las cifras varía mucho dependiendo de la fuente, la metodología empleada y, sobre todo, la caracterización de la naturaleza de la propia actividad (Oliveira, 2020). A modo de ejemplo sobre la altísima variación en las cifras: mientras las organizaciones abolicionistas suelen hablar de un total de 400.000 prostitutas en España – cifra que es repetida habitualmente en numerosos artículos de prensa (e.g., El Español, 2021), el Gobierno español (basándose en el Informe del Centro de Inteligencia contra el Crimen Organizado de 2012) reporta un total de 45.000 personas. Por otra parte, algunos colectivos organizados de trabajadoras sexuales (OTRAS) y de la industria del sexo (Plataforma STOP Abolición) suelen hablar de 150.000 familias dependiendo del trabajo sexual en España. La estimación más prudente, aunque probablemente desactualizada, de en torno a 110.000 personas trabajando en servicios sexuales, parece ser la más fiable en base a informes con mayor rigurosidad científica (Instituto de la Mujer, 2004; Malgenesi, 2006).
- 2 En este trabajo utilizamos la nomenclatura “trabajador/a sexual” propuesta por la activista y trabajadora Carol Leigh en 1978, con el objetivo de alinearnos con un marco pro-derechos (“pro-rights”), dando espacio a la distinción entre tráfico sexual y trabajo sexual voluntario/consentido y a la agencia de sus trabajadoras.
- 3 Para explorar en mayor profundidad los debates públicos sobre sexualidad y prostitución en el contexto español, recomendamos la siguiente literatura: Garaizabal (2021), Venceslao y Trallero (2021). Desde una perspectiva internacional: Smith y Mac (2018). Para explorar la tensión entre el concepto de “consentimiento”, políticas de género y sexualidad: Angel (2021).
- 4 Ver los numerosos comunicados del Sindicato de Trabajadoras Sexuales OTRAS (<https://www.sindicatootras.org>), que sólo consiguieron reconocimiento de sus estatutos

como sindicato en 2018 llevando su caso ante el Tribunal Supremo.

- <sup>5</sup> Decreto 49/2020, de 21 de agosto, por el que se modifica el Decreto 24/2020, de 19 de junio, sobre medidas de prevención necesarias para hacer frente a la crisis sanitaria ocasionada por el COVID-19 una vez superada la fase III del Plan para la transición hacia una nueva normalidad.
- <sup>6</sup> En 2021, la propuesta de *Ley de Garantía Integral de la Libertad Sexual* (2022) (conocida como "Ley del Sí es Sí") introducía originalmente un artículo sobre la necesidad de introducir la penalización de la "tercería locativa", orientada a perseguir y penar a quien obtiene lucro en la provisión de un lugar para el ejercicio de la prostitución. Se trata de una medida altamente polémica dado el demostrado efecto indirecto de persecución, castigo e indefensión que genera para las personas que venden servicios sexuales (Smith y Mac, 2018). Tras divisiones internas en el seno del partido Unidas Podemos, la medida fue eliminada del proyecto de ley final (Ley Orgánica [LO] 10/2022, de 6 de septiembre). No obstante, permanecen otras igualmente problemáticas, como las relativas a la consideración ilícita de los anuncios orientados a "la promoción de la prostitución" (Artículo 11), que precisamente perjudica de manera más acuciante a las trabajadoras que ejercen de manera autónoma. En junio de 2022, el Congreso aprobó la toma en consideración del proyecto de abolición de la prostitución, ahora retomado por el Partido Socialista, que incluye la propuesta de modificación del Artículo 187 del CP, con el fin de aumentar las penas para quien se lucre de la prostitución ajena, así como eliminar el requisito de existencia de "explotación" para la imposición pena.
- <sup>7</sup> La figura legal del "desestemiento" permite aludir sin pruebas "falta de confianza" como motivo para el despido procedente.
- <sup>8</sup> Como Territorio Doméstico, Sedoac, Sintrahocu, entre otras.
- <sup>9</sup> CCOO, UGT.
- <sup>10</sup> Ver el II Seminario sobre "Sindicalismo Feminista" organizado por La Laboratoria en 2022 para obtener una rica panorámica de reflexión en esta línea: <http://laboratoria.red/actividad/organizarse-es-empezar-a-vencer-ii-jornadas-por-un-feminismo-sindicalista/>

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# IN SEARCH OF NOCTURNAL CHARACTERS IN EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY LISBON

## EM BUSCA DE PERSONAGENS DA NOITE NA LISBOA DO SÉCULO XVIII

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### Abstract

The history of Lisbon in the second half of the 18th century is marked by an unprecedented event: the 1755 earthquake that destroyed most of the city. After this catastrophe, the city began its reconstruction under Pombaline plans and – in the process – the city, during the day but mainly at night, was thrown back into a dark and dangerous age of criminality and mythical beliefs. This article aims to identify and describe the characters that (in fact or theory) inhabited the city by night, in a mixture of popular tales, superstition and real danger. Our research takes into account security at night, religious rituals and mythical beliefs in werewolves and witches. The historiographical frame is set by the work on the history of the night by Roger Ekirch (2005), Alain Cabantous (2009), Craig Koslofsky (2011), Brian D. Palmer (2000). Analysing and comparing the sources, it is possible to see how the night was a space of freedom and fear but was also becoming a social space.

**Keywords:** holy inquisition, lighting, supernatural, security

### Resumo

A história de Lisboa na segunda metade do século XVIII é marcada por um acontecimento incontornável: o terramoto de 1755 que destruiu a maior parte da cidade. Depois desta catástrofe a cidade começou a ser reconstruída sob a figura e a liderança de Marquês de Pombal. Entretanto, antes e durante o processo de reconstrução da cidade, principalmente durante a noite, regrediu a um estado de insegurança e de superstições antigas. Este artigo tem o objetivo de identificar e descrever as personagens que povoavam as noites lisboetas de setecentos, entrecruzando mitos populares, superstições e perigos reais. A linha historiográfica seguida é a mesma de Roger Ekirch (2005), Alain Cabantous (2009), Craig Koslofsky (2011), Brian D. Palmer (2000). Metodologicamente, analisando e comparando as fontes, é possível verificar como a noite que era tradicionalmente um espaço de liberdade e de medo, começa nesta altura lentamente a tornar-se um espaço de sociabilidade.

**Palavras-chave:** santa inquisição, iluminação pública, sobrenatural, segurança

Amid the thousand rancid smells of the city, the evening breeze brought to her nostrils that of charred flesh. Crowds were milling around the Church of St. Dominic amid the torches, black smoke, and bonfires. Blimunda pushed her way through until she reached the front

row, Who are they, she asked a woman holding a baby in her arms, I only know three of them, that man there and the woman beside him are father and daughter who have been found guilty of Judaism and are to burn, and the one at the end is a fellow who wrote comedies for

puppet shows named António José da Silva, but I know nothing about the others.

Eleven people have been sentenced. The stake is already ablaze and the faces of the victims are barely distinguishable. The last man to be burned has his left hand missing. Perhaps because of his blackened beard, a miraculous transformation caused by the soot, he looks much younger. And there is a dark cloud in the centre of his body. Then Blimunda said, Come. The will of Baltasar Sete-Sóis broke free from his body, but did not ascend to the stars, for it belonged to the earth and to Blimunda. (Saramago, 1998, p. 343)

This is how José Saramago, the Portuguese Nobel laureate in Literature, chose to end *Baltasar & Blimunda*, one of his best-known novels. It is a historical novel, inspired by historical events and real people who lived in eighteenth-century Lisbon, during the reign of D. João V (1706–1750). Nevertheless, the two main characters, Baltasar and Blimunda, are fictional. He is a soldier who lost a hand in the war and later became a blacksmith. She is a mysterious girl with the power to see and collect any person's will and whose mother was burned to death on the charge of being a witch. The chosen excerpt is rather long, but it serves as a thorough illustration of one side of the Portuguese capital in the eighteenth century: the strong hand of the Inquisition persecuting alleged witches, Jews, and audacious writers. One of the most common sentences for these crimes was death by burning in the grim scenario of an *auto-de-fé*. Thus, from our perspective, it is a different and yet very well-informed way to present the city of Lisbon in the 1700s. Historians have proved how thorough Saramago's research on the eighteenth century must have been in order to write this novel. He created a fictional plot entangled with historical events. The third protagonist is a historical figure, Bartolomeu Lourenço de Gusmão (1685–1724), a Jesuit priest who invented an alleged flying machine, and was aided in this quest by another historical figure, Domenico Scarlatti (1685–1757), a Neapolitan musician and composer living in Lisbon at the time. As a result, it is an interesting and unexpected literary nightscape as a departure point to discover the city of Lisbon in the eighteenth century.

## INTRODUCTION

This article aims to depict how two vastly different imaginaries that contributed to the city's nightscapes coexisted in eighteenth-century Lisbon. First, the ancient one was magical, evil, and fueled by superstition, with the Inquisition instilling fear and discipline into the people, as depicted in Saramago's novel. However, from the mid-century onward, the

Enlightenment cast its first lights over Lisbon, literally and metaphorically, slowly changing first the institutions and then people's minds. Drawing the city nightscapes from these two imaginaries will show how the cultural transformation that occurred in the eighteenth century was also enabled by the night and how the city's inhabitants dealt with both its real and metaphoric threats. Analysing the different aspects of the night in the city, the conviviality, the fears, the characters, the public lighting and the security, will enable a far deeper grasp of the time and the place.

The article's historiographical frame is set by and draws on the work on the history of the night by Roger Ekirch (2005), Alain Cabantous (2009), Craig Koslofsky (2011), Brian D. Palmer (2000) and Rosa Fina (2016), the latter for the specific Portuguese case, regarding the most important references. Thus, the research and consequent arguments in this article were supported by these previous works.

On the other hand, the sources consulted were of two distinct types: 18th-century contemporary documents (newspapers, journals, memoirs) and oral tradition compilations from the 19th and early 20th centuries. These varied documents allowed for quite a broad perspective of the time, as well as a clearer comprehension of nocturnal life.

The purpose of this article is to depict the Lisbon nightscape at the time, from a historical point of view as a fictional/superstitious place. By comparing these apparently opposite viewpoints it is possible to obtain a more thorough depiction of the 18th century Lisbon night.

In order to pursue our research into night characters, we aim (Fina, 2021, 2022) to study in depth the nineteenth century in Lisbon, namely the marginal characters that inhabited the city at night, with the aim of drawing as truthful a picture as possible of what the city was like at this time.

## A GEOHISTORICAL OVERVIEW OF THE LISBON NIGHT IN THE 1700S

The reconstruction following the November 1755 earthquake, following plans by King José I and his minister, Sebastião de Carvalho e Melo, Marquis of Pombal, led to radical change in both the city and the country. Among the many political and economic endeavours they proposed and enacted, their anti-Jesuit policies weakened the Holy Inquisition and imposed an internal reorganisation, in which Pombal played a key role (Franco, 2006).

Pombal's direct intervention in the Inquisition and King José I's policy, in general, called into question both the power of the Holy Court, which was led chiefly by Jesuits and the fact that it derived from the fear of the unknown and divine punishment. Eighteenth-century Lisbon reflected these contras-

ting and conflicting ideologies, which resulted in a slower development of the Portuguese capital city in contrast with its European counterparts, particularly at the cultural level. Despite the destruction caused by the 1755 earthquake and the ensuing tsunami and fires, as well as the thousands of deaths in the city of Lisbon, Pombal and D. José I viewed the catastrophe as an opportunity not to rebuild the old city but to erect a new one that would reflect the ideals of the Enlightenment and be on par with other European capitals. Thus, there is the Lisbon before the earthquake, in the first half of the eighteenth century, and the Lisbon after the earthquake, slowly rising from the destruction and transforming into a new city. Although these two imaginaries coexisted – likely until the end of the nineteenth century –, the more modern of the two inevitably gained ground over the older one. Night, much more so than day, would be the most affected by these changes.

Walking the streets of Lisbon in the first half of the eighteenth century was still a challenge. Whatever little security existed was thanks to the so-called “Quadrilheiros”, a group of civilians who did rounds at night. These “officers” were given “a staff painted green with the Royal Arms” as a weapon and the duty to appoint “twenty neighbours” of the same “quadrilha” (neighbourhood) to assist them without fail whenever needed. In addition to intervening whenever an incident occurred, this security force was charged with the duty of prevention (“Regimento dos quadrilheyros”, 1689). The description contained in the *Rules* was quite clear about this aspect: the “Quadrilheiros” had to be on the lookout for any irregularities that existed in their neighbourhood and report them if they deemed them pertinent. Since these groups, known as “quadrilhas”, did their watches mainly at night, they were also known as “nocturnos” (nocturnal), “sisudos” (serious), or “morcegos” (bats) (Oliveira, 2000, p. 458). These popular names pertained mainly to the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Only during the eighteenth century did security become more established, with the first police corps organised by Queen Mary I in 1801 (1777–1816).

The eighteenth-century city at night was for some a dangerous place, although there must have been some nocturnal activities for the inhabitants of Lisbon. In palaces and courts in general, we know that literary salons started to appear. These were courtly social gatherings where people discussed the arts, literature, and music. These literary salons flourished during the second half of the 18th century, mainly led and organised by women such as Marquise de Alorna and Viscountess Catarina de Lencastre. These gatherings were one of the most important cultural advances, inspired by the French “esprit forts”, where among other things, women gained social protagonism (Fina, 2016, p. 105).

However, most of the inhabitants of Lisbon were underprivileged, not nobles. How, then, did they spend their evenings? According to *Folheto de Ambas as Lisboas*, a satirical pamphlet published periodically in Lisbon about twenty-five years before the earthquake (1730–1731), the residents of the Alfama, Bairro Alto, and Graça neighbourhoods engaged in summertime nocturnal amusements, mainly on the street (Távora, 1730–1731). These activities ranged from watching fireworks organised by the underprivileged – “In this place, there was a remarkable fire tonight: many were those who went to see it” – to open-air theatre shows performed by the neighbourhood companies. The pamphlet also records the acoustic environment of these celebrations: “the loud sound of Carnival instruments [though the news report is from August] and trumpets in the air.” Even during the winter, the nocturnal activities continued: “At night there was Music from a six-string bass fiddle (*rabecão*) played in the dark”, and groups of underprivileged people “in good spirits and engaged in their daily conference of games, conversation, and music...will spend many a good night with their amusements.” (Távora, 1730–1731, fls. 3, 5 and 8) The *Folheto* is full of mentions of how practically all the nocturnal leisure activities took place on the street, in more or less spontaneous gatherings where people played music, danced, acted, played games, and even fought. The same *Folheto* also tells of the rivalries between neighbourhoods and several mass brawls or duels to avenge some dispute.

The public space belonged to everyone, and the boundaries between home and the street were frequently ignored by the lower classes, whose lack of social space within their houses inevitably prompted them to extend their conviviality to family and friends out into the streets (Lousada, 2004). In response to this social reality, the new ideas of the Enlightenment that started to appear aimed to organise the urban space in the form of new street ordinances or public lighting. There was a crucial need to make the street more pleasant and welcoming to everyone, not just those who made it an extension of their homes. The General Intendancy of the Police was the body in charge of dictating the new rules through public notices forbidding certain types of street peddling, establishing a schedule for the “beware of the water” ritual, and banning the killing and cooking of animals on the public street, among other measures. All these activities were common throughout the city as they were old habits, hard to restrict or change. The new urban plans, however, were to be followed, and those who did not obey the new rules and schedules were fined by the General Intendancy of the Police. There were stipulated schedules and restricted areas for all activities in the public space (“beware of the water”, killing

animals, trading of all kinds), in order to make the city's public space more organised. Not surprisingly, the night became a more tempting escape for these activities, as it was harder to be caught. As a result, the night became increasingly more supervised, not only by "quadrilheiros", or other Intendency staff but also by lighting more oil lamps across the city, especially where disciplinary problems might arise (Borsay, 1977).

### THE SUPERNATURAL AND THE FEAR OF THE NIGHT: WITCHES AND WEREWOLVES

Superstitions and belief in non-human entities are intimately connected with the fear of the unknown. Fear will create superstition, a sort of fictitious ritual performed to avoid misfortune; it is at once a kind of religious feeling that projects responsibility and the protection of humankind onto God or another divine or superhuman being (Braga, 1986, p. 40). The night becomes the most favourable ground for fueling the emotion of fear. In fact, night fright is one of the oldest fears and the cause of many others, such as the fear of nocturnal creatures from the natural and supernatural worlds (Delumeau, 1989, p. 99). Witches and werewolves, for example, were two creatures from the supernatural world that appeared in eighteenth-century Portuguese popular narratives (Pedroso, 1988). First, a distinction must be drawn between "witch" and "sorceress" because, in Portuguese legends, these are two different beings, though the former may be an evolution of the latter. The fundamental difference is that "the sorceress is a woman, generally old and hideous, who maintains communication and a pact with the Devil, but without losing human form or possessing unlimited or extra-human powers" (Pedroso, 1988, p. 100). The witch belongs to a further stage of development, in which the contact with the Devil is even closer: "According to tradition, witches began as sorceresses, and after communicating with the Devil he leads them with false promises to becoming witches", adopting more violent behaviour and putting at risk the lives of those around them, mainly children. Additionally, sorceresses are associated with natural medicine and healing through plants and incantations or spells (Pedroso, 1988, p. 100).

Curiously enough, in Portuguese traditional folk tales and legends whose protagonists are witches or sorceresses, the horrible deeds are attributed to neither. These stories, spread mainly through oral tradition, explore the mysterious aspect of the magical powers bestowed upon these female characters, their nocturnal meetings with the Devil, or their transfiguration into small lights that flickered in clusters at night. (Pedroso, 1988, p. 101) In some episodes, the witches even become protectors of the weak. A common point in several tales was how the

witches travelled to meet the Devil: "Fly, fly, over every leaf". The following transcription details with precision how the summoning occurred:

The days when they join the devil are Wednesdays (or Thursdays, in other places)... At night, when the clock strikes ten, or before that, they rub certain ointments on their skins and stand by the window, saying: 'Fly, fly, / over every leaf !'...The instant such words are uttered, the Devil takes them through windows, chimneys, or any other hole, and in a moment and flying through the air, he places them in certain fields whose name they do not know. (Pedroso, 1988, pp. 101-102)

Witches, however, were not the most feared threat in Portuguese folklore. Their presence in the supernatural night imagery is linked to women and their mysteries, their relation to the earth, the moon, the seasons, and even the Devil, just like Saramago's character, Blimunda, a mysterious woman with strange powers, but who harmed no one (Federici, 2004).

José Pedro Paiva emphasises how there never really was a "witch-hunt" in Portugal like in other European countries such as the United Kingdom, Germany, or Denmark, where civil and religious movements existed with that sole purpose (Paiva, 2002). The witch's image existed mainly in rural areas due to the influence of the Catholic Church's demonization of women since the Middle Ages, and her activities invariably occurred at night. In any case, the fact that the Portuguese religious school was essentially Thomist, as Paiva argues, is likely to have contributed significantly to the modest dissemination of this form of misogyny, since the postulate of Saint Thomas Aquinas did not allude to "sabbaths or deaths caused by witches", nor to "ceremonies of adoration of the Devil" (Paiva, 2002, p. 339). As a result, the legends of witches and sorceresses in Portugal were mainly fueled by the people and their superstitions, often to ostracise suspicious individuals from the community. Many legends contain only a few signs of supernatural forces. In addition to popular tradition, the supernatural was an extremely useful tool for generating fear and respect for anything not blessed by God, such as the nocturnal world. On numerous occasions, the Court of the Inquisition arrested and convicted women accused of witchcraft or other similar arts.

There is also literature, mainly ecclesiastical, on how to recognize this type of woman, such as the *Art of knowing and confessing sorceresses* (1745) by Father Domingos Barroso Pereira. The main intent of this book was to serve as a manual for the religious interested in fighting the crime of witchcraft. To that end, it indicated the main methods to recognize its

practitioners as well as related practices: "a small and resourceful work very useful for any priest in the holy sacrament of penance to find out if the people who confess have or do not have a pact with the devil, whether or not they are witches and sorceresses" (Pereira, 1745, fl.1).

However, it is interesting how over the course of the eighteenth century, the Inquisition started to change its position regarding these beings who were supposedly in contact with the supernatural, treating them not as threats but as victims of popular and outdated superstitions:

In the second half of the eighteenth century, a significant number of titles started to emerge, some of them translations with prefaces added by the Portuguese translators, in which the impossibility of witchcraft is affirmed, and it is claimed that witch stories were part of a popular world that was ignorant and backward. (Paiva, 1997, p. 87)

The Enlightenment was starting to have an effect, and a more rational perspective was also expected of the Church. Witchcraft was from the ignorant and dark past, and the light of Reason obliged the religious to explain these phenomena only as popular superstitions. According to José Pedro Paiva, the few legends and superstitions in Portugal related to witchcraft were mainly the result of a kind of "cultural fusion" of influences from other European countries:

[...] the most stereotypical accounts I know of « Sabbath » narratives date from the eighteenth century, when there had already been sufficient time for the shape of that myth to be amply disseminated. On the other hand, the more time and « cultural colonisation » campaigns undertaken by learned people moved forward, the rarer, fragmented, and distorted the references to ancestral beliefs in contact with the world of the dead and nocturnal witches became. (Paiva, 1997, p. 159)

Werewolves, in contrast, are relatively present in the Portuguese popular imaginary. Although most legends and superstitions correspond to the countryside, several references can be found in oral tradition and literature in Lisbon as well. Let us begin with the female form of the werewolf, much less common in popular culture but still extant. Ethnographers have collected some testimonies about the origin of this creature. According to one account, the female werewolf is the result of a genetic anomaly afflicting a couple's seventh consecutive daughter if nothing is done to prevent it: "In a house with seven sisters, the seventh will become a wolf fairy (*peeira dos*

*lobos*). She will live seven years among the wolves; she will sleep with them and will be fed by them." It is clear that "the female werewolf is much rarer in the tradition of our people" since it appears in very few of the legends spread across the country (Pedroso, 1988, p. 197 and 200).

Though written in the nineteenth century, John Latouche records several legends and superstitions in his memoirs that refer to the previous century and earlier. He offers, for example, a complete transcription of a legend told in the northern region of Portugal about a female werewolf who, after being taken in by a rural family to work for them, murders the family's newborn baby on a full-moon night when she metamorphosed into a wolf: "At this very instant the moon rose, and we saw a huge brown wolf standing over the body of the child, his fangs bloody, and his eyes looking like fire." (Latouche, 1878, p. 32) According to the ethnographic studies by Consiglieri Pedroso, there are two rare elements in this legend. First, the woman did not merely "run with wolves", but rather she metamorphosed into an animal, specifically a wolf, not a donkey. Second, the conclusion of the legend coincides with similar ones: if a werewolf tasted the newborn's blood, his "fate" would cease. The tale closes with the death of the woman by gunfire, still in her animal form:

They buried her where she lay, and the 'wise woman' who came to look at her said she had the mark of the *lupis-homem* [wolf-man] quite plainly on her breast and was evidently a servant of the Evil One. The woman said that if she had seen the girl's eyes, she could have told at once what she was, for the *lupis-homems* [wolf-men] all have the long, narrow eyes and savage look of the wolf. (Latouche, 1878, p. 33)

There are different versions of the male werewolf legend throughout Portugal, but they coincide in their treatment of the metamorphic ritual and the details of the "fate." Usually, the fate was a "run" between eleven and midnight, or during the hours of dawn, though werewolves were also "seen" "at dusk in dark places; escaping through villages making a great noise on the street, a noise that was heard particularly by the people whom they wish to influence" (Pedroso, 1988, p. 189). Most descriptions draw attention to the noise they made, not only their screaming but also the destruction of objects in their wake while "running their fate." These descriptions explain the nocturnal noises that echoed in the rural inhabitants' frightened hearts. Ultimately, when strange noises were heard, these stories of werewolves running their fate emerged spontaneously to explain and frighten the most reckless against the perils and horrors that inhabi-

ted the night. Indeed, legends about supernatural creatures are woven around scientific evidence, such that they persist over time. To that effect, some accounts assert that werewolves have an adverse or possibly allergic reaction to artificial light since moonlight nourishes them. The fact that the werewolf could not be in the proximity of humans or artificial light is especially favourable to the non-verification of its truthfulness (or at least likelihood), as only the diffuse and deceiving light of the moon may fall upon him:

The sight of a light produces extraordinary effects on the werewolf, even physical pain. Therefore, when escaping down a path, they put out the lights they find along the way with a blow...When they pass a house where a light is on, they start kicking at the door and only retire once the light is put out. (Pedroso, 1988, p. 189)

The ritual was always very similar, regardless of where the legend was told. Usually, it would be nighttime, and the transformation would occur mostly after coming into contact with the place where an animal had "rubbed" before. Already metamorphosed, the werewolf would run loudly around the place, often cursing people, or simply crying out to be saved from his "fate", as the following description of this phenomenon in Lisbon highlights:

As the clock struck midnight, upon the last strike being heard, even if he were asleep, he would rise and wallow in Beco do Mirante, in the place where the neighbours' donkey usually wallowed. He immediately turned into a donkey and ran his fate, shouting at the people he passed: *touch me, for you will rid me of my fate.* (Pedroso, 1988, p. 187)

Alexandre Herculano, in line with his well-known interest in Portuguese legends, also talks about the topic of werewolves in the mid-nineteenth-century magazine *Panorama*:

Wolfmen are those whose fate or destiny it is to undress at night in the middle of a path, especially at a crossroads, turn five times rubbing on the ground in the place where some animal has rubbed before and thus transform into the shape of the animal that had rubbed there. These poor people harm no one; they merely obey their destiny, in which they show a very courteous stubbornness, since they pass no path or street where there are lights and they blow and whistle greatly so that these are put out. (Herculano, 1840, p. 164)

In this way, Alexandre Herculano tries to demystify the threat that the werewolf might pose, emphasising that they "harm no one" and will even show a "very courteous stubbornness."

In his memoirs, Francisco Xavier de Oliveira, who was a striking figure in eighteenth-century Portugal, primarily for his libertine adventures, often hints at the presence of the supernatural in the very centre of Lisbon. One experience that stands out among the many that Oliveira records about the time he lived in Lisbon before the earthquake is the attempt to hunt a werewolf in the city streets and the packs of street hounds that roamed them:

More than once, I came across between thirty and forty dogs fighting with one another, with no way to set them apart no matter how mercilessly I struck them with my sword. Given my presumption, finding among these poor animals one more robust and extraordinary than the rest, which bit me the hardest, I was even more led to strike. Though I injured many, I have never had the pleasure of witnessing the wondrous transformation. They remained what they were before, animals and demons, not a hint of a werewolf. (Oliveira, 1966, p. 260)

These testimonies help to draft a 17th century city nightscape populated with all kinds of supernatural fears and superstitions, even among educated men and women. The presence of werewolves in the streets, or among social circles, was quite well accepted as a possibility, as the writings of Francisco Xavier de Oliveira demonstrate. In the same journal quoted above, the Portuguese intellectual claims that one of the highly regarded ambassadors of the Reign is one of "Lisbon's werewolves" (Oliveira, 1966, p. 261). Lisbon's landscape would soon be radically different. However, as Brian D. Palmer points out "Conceptions of monsters grew out of many sociocultural and political processes, including peasant superstition and attraction to the practices of the supernatural as well as ruling-class fears of social rebellions among the masses" (Palmer, 2000, p. 117).

## AFTER THE EARTHQUAKE: NEW CITY, OLD HABITS

The eighteenth-century Portuguese mentality might have always been, even during the reign of D. José I (1750–1777), highly marked by superstition and fears regarding the night. Though there was a gradual decrease, popular beliefs succeeded in keeping them alive. The night was always a place of fear and the realm of demons. Hence, for example, the existence of the *Hail Mary* ritual, which for centuries continued to be performed at

dusk to scare evil spirits away. This nocturnal rite was a sort of communal prayer held in some of Lisbon's neighbourhoods. At around eight o'clock, people stood on the threshold of their doors with a lit candle or lamp, praying the rosary for approximately one hour and, in turn, illuminating the city's dark streets. Charles Dumouriez, a foreign visitor to post-catastrophe Lisbon, describes this ritual, which seemed like a truce between the residents and the criminals since, soon after, the city would plunge into the usual peculiarity:

At around eight at night, in the Winter, the entire bourgeoisie and the people stand at the threshold of their doors reciting the rosary in a sort of full chant; this clamour lasts about an hour, after which the streets are inundated by thieves, chamber pots, dogs, and people of the law. (Dumouriez, 2007, pp. 123-124)

In this sense, comparing the French and English position regarding the Church's relation to the night, Alain Cabantous mentions how the Church and State institutions worked together to keep people away from the night, creating and feeding fears of demonic possessions or visits to hell (Cabantous, 2009, pp. 131-158). Those who went out at night put themselves not only in danger but also under suspicion; therefore, the wisest option was to remain at home, as advised by the authorities in charge of security. Several stories were told about nocturnal adventurers, who were always associated with immorality, crime, or mere defiance of order, in contrast to those who returned early to the comfort and safety of their homes (Ekirch, 2005, pp. 31-56).

However, it is important to notice how this way of thinking was changing as the end of the eighteenth century approached. In Portugal, as in other European countries, a sort of self-mythification of the Enlightenment occurred, a discourse that legitimised its proponents and their reforms by associating their action with the metaphor of light (Czennia, 2010). Consequently, reason gradually triumphed over darkness: "From 1774 onward... disbelief regarding the Sabbath and the pacts with the Devil took hold of the religious and secular elites in Portugal," and that began to be noted in the registries of judgments of the Court of the Inquisition (Paiva, 2001, p. 100). Many sentences referred to the accused as an ill or ignorant person, fascinated by popular superstition, thus the accusation was not of witchcraft but of fabrication of lies and fictional stories about the devil and evil powers that obviously could not exist in a modern progressive society. As Koslofsky argues, "In this new era of the history of the night, women accused of witchcraft evoked pity rather than Satan's dark powers" (2011, p. 238).

In the second half of the eighteenth century, after the Marquis of Pombal took the reins of power in the State and the Holy Office, the Inquisition softened its harshest judgments, practically ceased the use of torture to obtain confessions, and discredited witchcraft and pacts with the Devil, considering all to be fabrication and lies. From that point onward, the Inquisition began convicting the doers of such practices not as agents of a pact with the Devil but for their belief in superstitions, inciting them to declare why they had "invented and plotted the pretences and impostures" of which they said themselves to be capable (Paiva, 1997, p. 88). It was a paradigm shift, reflective of the evolution in the Portuguese mentality during this period.

In summary, although the Inquisition was an institution that traditionally fostered an environment of control and restraint, that power was getting weaker. Even in the twenty years during which it existed in the nineteenth century, both its presence, its influence, and its intervention in society went practically unnoticed. In addition, the weakening of the Inquisition, together with the expulsion of the Jesuits from the Kingdom of Portugal in 1759, served to strengthen Pombaline power and make way for his measures to be applied in the city of Lisbon. Among others, his policies prioritised improving conditions and opportunities for the entertainment, both daytime and nocturnal, of the residents of Lisbon. This improvement plan included the construction of theatres and the Public Promenade, the first public city park, in 1760, and the entire renewal and regulation of public space. These projects, through information and education, helped to demystify old superstitions and traditions related to the night.

Following the Pombaline government, during the reign of D. Maria I (1777-1815), the General Intendency of the Police was led by Diogo Inácio Pina Manique, the man who brought public lighting to the streets of Lisbon. Of all the duties of the General Intendency of the Police, security and lighting were those that Diogo Pina Manique considered necessary to achieve the improvements he envisioned for the city. From the moment he took office as the Intendant-General, his effort to illuminate Lisbon by night was met with resistance. The main objection was the steep cost of olive oil, which fueled the lamps. As the public treasury did not permit such an expense, the solution was to charge the sum to the population through a tax paid either in cash or with one *quartilho* of olive oil. Public lighting began in Lisbon on 17 December 1780, Queen D. Maria I's birthday, with 774 olive oil lamps lit across the city in honour of the Queen. The news was announced in the *Lisbon Gazette* two days before the event:

By way of a Notice of the General Intendant of the Police, affixed in the public places of this capital, it is announced that its main streets will be illuminated from the seventeenth of the current month. HM has decided to bear the expense for the lamps and the residents of each street contribute a *quartilho* of olive oil every twenty-seven days. ("Supplemento a Gazeta de Lisboa", 1780)

This measure infuriated the residents: the number of lamps was insufficient, the light feeble, and olive oil quite expensive. In response, several lamps were immediately vandalised, thus putting an end to the unwanted expense.

The people's discontent, the internal institutional opposition, and the high cost of the lamps led to Lisbon's public lights being put out in 1792, after just twelve years, returning only in 1801. In this year, the "Guarda Real da Polícia" (Royal Police) was founded, the first official, organised police corporation, and public lighting was restored and enhanced by Queen Mary's royal decree. The measures were part of a more rigorous security policy in the city of Lisbon, especially vigilant to the Jacobin influences from post-revolutionary France.

## CONCLUSION

In Portugal, and specifically in Lisbon, the capital of the Kingdom and the empire, the eighteenth century was one of transition between the old and the modern world. This transition was reflected strongly in the meaning of the night. Security ordinances, attention to public space, legislative changes, the action of the Holy Inquisition, and street lighting all allow us to consider the night as the territory in which it was possible to test – most authentically – the measures that the royal administration sought to implement. In the Portuguese case, the Church and the Inquisition tangibly lost power and influence gradually throughout the eighteenth century, and reason and technology progressively prevailed, consequently weakening ancient myths and superstitions.

The extinction of the Court of the Inquisition in 1821, and the severe wave of anticlericalism that spread throughout Portugal during the second half of the nineteenth century, would confirm this eighteenth-century tendency. In Lisbon, mainly from the end of the eighteenth century onward, myths, which were often based on facts, were more associated with violence perpetrated by humans in the form of robberies, attacks, rapes, or even murders. The urban and technological imagery dictated as such well into the next century: the greatest threat was no longer the animal, the witch, or the supernatural monster but the criminal, the delinquent or in short, man.

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# NOCTURNAL URBAN IMAGINARIES: THE RISE AND FALL OF TURIN AS A 24-HOUR PARTY CITY

## IMAGINÁRIOS URBANOS NOCTURNOS: A ASCENSÃO E QUEDA DE TURIM COMO UMA CIDADE DE FESTAS 24 HORAS

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### Abstract

Nocturnal urban imaginaries are a powerful instrument to examine how the night has been planned, experienced, and thought of in post-industrial urban settings. Through these imaginaries, we tackle Turin's shift from one company town to post-industrial city and its implication for the night and its activities.

Thanks to a qualitative analysis of interviews with a data-driven modality we make sense of the way night punters approach going out. We identify three imaginaries that we call '*confetti*', '24-hour party' and '*Notti Bianche*', looking beyond the bidimensional and romanticised mystery of the night. Moreover, we examine how these imaginaries perform at the level of local governance and policing; nightlife on offer (type of venues/events and their spatialisation); and the experiences (practices and affect) of night punters.

We argue that domesticating, regulating, and overseeing nightlife has a detrimental and constraining impact on the way people engage with and enjoy the night, curbing its potential to serve as a realm of joy, escapism, and excitement.

**Keywords:** spatial imaginaries, post-industrial Turin night, experience

### Resumo

Os imaginários urbanos noturnos são um instrumento poderoso para examinar a forma como a noite tem sido planeada, vivida e pensada em ambientes urbanos pós-industriais. Através destes imaginários, abordamos a mudança de Turim de uma cidade empresarial para uma cidade pós-industrial e as suas implicações para a noite e as suas actividades.

Recorrendo a uma análise qualitativa de entrevistas com uma modalidade baseada em dados, damos sentido à forma como os apostadores noturnos abordam as suas saídas. Identificamos três imaginários a que chamamos '*confettis*', 'festa de 24 horas' e '*Notti Bianche*', indo para além do mistério bidimensional e romantizado da noite. Além disso, examinamos a forma como estes imaginários funcionam ao nível da governação local e do policiamento; da oferta nocturna (tipo de avenidas/eventos e sua espacialização); e das experiências (práticas e afectos) dos frequentadores da noite.

Argumentamos que domesticar, regular e supervisionar a vida nocturna tem um impacto prejudicial e constrangedor na forma como as pessoas se envolvem e desfrutam da noite, restando o seu potencial para servir como um reino de alegria, escapismo e excitação.

**Palavras-chaves:** imaginários espaciais, noite pós-industrial de Turim, experiência

## INTRODUCTION

Human activities after dark have been explored for their economic value (Shaw, 2010), for their political dimension (Acuto et al., 2021), as nightlife and dancing cultures (Gilbert & Pearson, 1999) and have also been increasingly subject to governance initiatives of late. Nighttime research has examined the night in relation to contemporary post-industrial urbanisation (Shaw, 2015; Yeo & Heng, 2014) and to the 24-hour city paradigm (Crary, 2013). Municipalities around the world have also shown interest in the adoption of night governance, with the appearance of 'night mayors' and night commissions (Seijas & Gelders, 2021). The main tendency has been to study the night in its strategic role, concerning contemporary urbanisation and capitalism. However, the night contains complex and ambivalent features, which cannot be fully commodified and governed, where popular music, for instance, works as a socialising instrument of pleasure and resistance (Petrilli, 2020; Stahl & Bottà, 2019).

On a collective level, celebration and socialisation at night are important aspects of urban life, representing the antidote to segregation, anonymity and greyness and reaffirming active inclusive citizenship. The night is a space for augmented socialisation and without it, urban culture is unthinkable. Without live music, performances, and events in public spaces at night, life in a city becomes difficult not only to live but also to justify. The night has also historically represented a stronghold where LGBTQ+ communities could enjoy experiences and manifest identities in safe environments (McCartan & Nash, 2022). Furthermore, a lively, sustainable, and safe night is an existential question for migrants and other marginalised groups (Brandellero et al., 2022).

The nighttime economy has also played a significant role in saving post-industrial cities from spatial shrinking and bankruptcy, providing jobs and leading to the regeneration and revitalization of whole districts (Bianchini, 1995). Moreover, it has provided images, which are nowadays used in a plethora of visual representations, ranging from corporate presentations to underground aesthetics. Nightlife has often been co-opted into creating an exploitable buzz for new housing projects and the touristification of urban life (Nofre et al., 2018; Sequera & Nofre, 2020). However, the development of the nighttime economy in the 1990s, as well as the more recent touristification of nightlife, are both accompanied by an increase in social concern related to anti-social behaviour such as disturbing the peace, violence, and vandalism (Hadfield, 2015), re-actualising the negative connotations of the night as a dangerous and risky place, especially for ethnic and sexual minorities (Brooks, 2008; Talbot & Böse, 2007). Therefore, the extraction of the night in its

aesthetic dimension has been counterbalanced by policies, ranging from noise control to securitisation, from pandemic to energy crisis restrictions, which are undermining its existence.

To approach such complexity, we argue that the urban night can be best grasped as an imaginary (Lennon, 2015), that is, as a social entity tied to the symbolic dimension but at the same time embedded into individual and collective life; therefore responding both to its own inner logic, but also articulating complex cultural and economic constellations of values, attitudes, and narratives (Davoudi et al., 2018). For this reason, nocturnal urban imaginaries are a powerful instrument to make sense of the way the night has been planned, experienced, and thought of in a post-industrial urban setting. Within this framework, we have chosen as a case study the nightlife of Turin (Italy) due to its post-industrial aspirations: lived experiences of going out at night have been deeply affected by the above-mentioned 'oscillations' in terms of cultural and non-cultural governance, but also in terms of night scene gatherings and practices, that we gathered into distinct but not exclusive 'nocturnal urban imaginaries'. Turin exemplifies the destiny of several other industrial European cities that were deeply affected by global economic restructurings towards neoliberalism and which faced deindustrialisation. The consequent step towards a post-industrial city led by consumption, touristification, services and competition for talent was felt as necessary but its implementation has been fragmented and not always successful.

In the next section, the concept of the imaginary and its main applications in the social sciences are presented so that we can begin to investigate the under-researched topic of nocturnal urban imaginaries. This is followed by a section where we introduce the research from which this publication is derived, along with a description of its sample and how the empirical documentation was constructed. In the results section, the three nocturnal urban imaginaries that have emerged from the analysis are presented, reconstructing how these '*confetti*', '24-hour party' and '*Notti Bianche*' imaginaries perform at the levels of local governance, available night destinations, such as clubs and bars, and night punters' experiences. Lastly, in the conclusion we summarise the results of this contribution, address some limitations, and offer some general take-away points about the night, understood both in its performing dimension and as a space to be safeguarded.

## THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The imaginary should be first approached in terms of perception. In both Castoriadis (1997) and Lacan (1977) the imaginary works as an instrument to see and make sense of the world and of the self

in terms of images, patterns, and forms, although Lacan sees it as an illusionary element and as a stage in the development of the ego. At a very general level, the imaginary builds upon consolidated ideas about imagination being “a (creative) capacity to experience the world in a certain way, in the form of images”, (Lennon, 2015, p. 15). Lennon (2015) also emphasises imagination as a creative force able to weave together past, present, future and the elsewhere. The imaginary is therefore an affective texture, which allows us to perceive and make sense of the real. It cannot be simply dismissed as an illusionary category; it rather constitutes how we are in the world in phenomenological terms.

Another concept related to the imaginary is representation. However, this relies on a semiotic or hermeneutic separation between the real and the represented; it is a significant instrument when dealing with the arts for instance, and with the ideological dimension of the medial world (Hall, 1997; Timeto, 2015). We have chosen to employ the concept of the imaginary because, in its social and spatial dimension, it is more useful here in tracing the night through material infrastructure, affect and performance.

Spatial imaginaries are embedded into a sociological tradition, where the term imaginary is mostly used to refer to social entities and their being tied to a symbolic dimension, be it at the national level (Anderson, 2006), the ideological (Castoriadis, 1997) or the sociological (Mills, 2000). In planning and geographic research, spatial imaginaries are seen as the dynamic, strategic, and pervasive field where material spatial change is made possible and finds its justification (Davoudi et al., 2018; Watkins, 2015). In this regard, performativity seems to be the most interesting element: spatial imaginaries are always able to manifest themselves into certain policies on one hand and into specific infrastructures on the other. Moreover, these policies and material infrastructures hit back in changing imaginaries and shifting meanings, values and imagining potential (Davoudi & Brooks, 2021; Davoudi et al., 2018).

It is also relevant to address the fact that not all spatial imaginaries have the same performative dimension and that for instance, the urban represents a powerful imaginary with a distinctive genealogy and traction (Lindner & Meissner, 2018; Suttles, 1984). The world population is continuously migrating and exponentially exposed to the urban and some scholars have adopted the notion of global or planetary urbanisation to address the pervasiveness of this specific scale and its imaginary (Birch & Wachter, 2011; Brenner & Schmid, 2017; Lancione & McFarlane, 2021).

However, the night mode has rarely been considered when discussing possible urban imaginaries and consequently nocturnal imaginaries are an

under-researched topic. We understand the night as able to generate specific urban imaginaries with their own symbolic and material features. These imaginaries' importance has often been side-tracked or limited to their representational appeal, because due to the binary opposition between day and night, with its cultural constructs that depict the latter as a dangerous and unproductive negative pole, “night has additionally become a source of fascination and seduction” (Gallan & Gibson, 2011, p. 2510). From film noir to gothic music, from urban branding based on nightlife to cultural quarters, the night has been romanticised, acquiring an expendable fascination. Our objective is to look beyond the bidimensional and romanticised mystery of the night. The first objective of this article is to investigate the different types of nocturnal urban imaginaries related to a specific case study. Secondly, it aims to understand how these imaginaries perform at the level of local governance and policing; nightlife on offer (type of avenues/events and their spatialisation) and the experiences (practices and affect) of night punters. Finally, studying the different imaginaries of the night allows us to shed light onto the city as a site of unequal development and injustice and where the public dimension is increasingly used as a site of value extraction for profit that is turning the urban night into a financialised and silenced entity. In this regard, Turin represents an interesting case worth examining more closely.

Located in the northwest of the country, the city quickly developed into a primary industrial site after the unification of Italy in 1871, mostly thanks to the establishment and development of FIAT (*Fabbrica Italiana Auto Torino*) automobile company. In the post-war era, Turin was subject to mass migration from the south of the country. Together with the city's industrial background, this had the effect of increasing social and political tensions from the late 1960s onwards, involving political radicalism and terrorism at the end of the 1970s. In a similar way to other industrial cities in the Western world, the industrial crisis has also required Turin to move towards a post-industrial paradigm (Bottà, 2020). Attempts to showcase its culinary heritage (Bourlesas et al., 2022), its hosting of big events (Cenere & Vanolo, 2022) and its diversity in nighttime playscape (Crivello, 2011) have brought some results but have not been able to create a sustainable framework for the city to prosper.

## METHODS

The data collected for this article are part of the *What is left of the night - The securitization of Turin's nightlife* research funded by the University of Milano-Bicocca. We focus on one of the two case studies that made up the project, a history

of nightlife in Turin from the point of view of those who have experienced it. These witness reports on the nightlife of Turin from the beginning of the 1990s to the pre-COVID era, are collected through semi-structured interviews with patrons with at least 15 years of experience of night venues, such as clubs and other spaces where live music is played, and evening facilities such as restaurants and wine bars.

The interviews were conducted in the winter of 2020-21 with eighteen participants, selected through a snowball sampling procedure. This non-probability sampling technique was chosen due to the high value of informal relational networks within the so-called world(s) of the night (Garcia, 2013). Participants are divided into three distinct age groups (35-39; 40-44; 45-50 years old), equally distributed by gender, while other variables such as sexual orientation, level of education and profession were monitored to increase the sample's heterogeneity (see Table 1). We decided to work with different age groups so that the narrative would not be too distanced via nostalgia. In addition, interviewing people with 15 or more years of experience allowed for the selection of research participants who were deeply familiar with the history of the nightlife in Turin. This direct knowledge was significantly diversified since interviewers'

accounts reported different scenes: some have a subcultural past (and in a few cases a present) having frequented underground music (hip-hop, punk and tekno among others) spaces for sexual minorities, whereas others have frequented almost exclusively mainstream venues. This diversification is also due to their different roles, with a few of them having worked in the industry as organisers, staff, musicians, and photographers.

The interview outline consisted of three sections: the first about the interviewees' nocturnal biography; the second about their assessment of the control strategies implemented by local administrators; and the third investigating social representations of the night and nightlife. Due to the social distancing required by Covid-19 regulations in Italy, it was necessary to conduct the interviews by telephone or online, depending on the availability and preferences of each participant. They were all made aware of the research topics and asked to give written consent before the interview. Each interview was audio-recorded, transcribed verbatim, anonymised, and coded using a program for computer-assisted qualitative data analysis. The coding procedure took place using a data-driven modality: the codes were not deduced from a theory of reference but, for their identification and definition, taken from empirical material (Gibbs, 2007).

**Table 1** ▶ Interviewees list

#N Name	Sex	Age	Degree	Profession
01 Leonardo	M	40/44	Upper secondary diploma	Employed
02 Andrea	M	40/44	Bachelor's degree	Self-employed
03 Agata	F	35/39	Master's degree	Employed
04 Francesca	F	35/39	Master's degree	Employed
05 Lorenzo	M	35/39	Bachelor's degree	Self-employed
06 Benny	M	40/44	Lower secondary diploma	Employed
07 Giuly	F	40/44	Upper secondary diploma	Employed
08 Arturo	M	45/50	Upper secondary diploma	Employed
09 Federica	F	40/44	Lower secondary diploma	Employed
10 Barbara	F	40/44	Master's degree	Employed
11 Gabriele	M	45/50	Lower secondary diploma	Self-employed
12 Giorgia	F	35/39	Master's degree	Employed
13 Irene	F	45/50	Master's degree	Self-employed
14 Sara	F	45/50	Upper secondary diploma	Employed
15 Nino	M	45/50	Upper secondary diploma	Employed
16 Clara	F	45/50	Master's degree	Employed
17 Pier	M	35/39	Lower secondary diploma	Unemployed
18 Davide	M	35/39	Bachelor's degree	Unemployed

## RESULTS

The main nocturnal urban imaginaries that emerged from the analysis of the empirical material are presented in the following section. Their salient features are summarised in Table 2.

### #1 *Confetti* imaginary

The first nocturnal urban imaginary of Turin can be best grasped as *confetti* (Wynn, 2015): the city's night is polycentric, scattered around in a variety of temporary or consolidated venues to be explored in rhabdomantist fashion.

Until the early 1990s, Turin nightlife was still strongly linked to the city's industrial past and, as a result, there were only a few venues open until late and few people roaming the city at night, as our interviewee (11\_) Gabriele stated: "I was driving down Corso Vittorio [a major street in the centre] and there were maximum three cars around at 2:00 a.m.". Several elements led to the transition from a fully functioning industrial city led by production, to a post-industrial model where the night began to play a role outside the 'workers' rest' imaginary. Surely deindustrialisation as experienced by the automobile industry and its articulation as a cultural change towards consumption played a role, together with the so-called *riflusso* (term used to describe the political and social disengagement that characterised Italian society in the late 1970s and early 1980s). What is certain is that this change towards 'going out' was not favoured by specific policies in this field, since there was no night-related urban governance and local politicians were not interested in promoting the nighttime economy (Crivello, 2011).

The main result of this *laissez-faire* governance was that the nighttime economy developed without any precise order or logic, both in terms of type of premises and spatial dimension. No one kind of venue dominated the night ecosystem, it offered instead a wide range of disparate and heterogeneous night attractions. There were "upscale discos for kids in white shirts" (13\_Irene) and more working-class discos, with "sketchy people that you had to look out for" (02\_Andrea). Alternative clubs hosted indie band gigs and performances by underground DJs, while ARCI (*Associazione Ricreativa Culturale Italiana*, a left-wing non-profit cultural association) cultural centres organised exhibitions, live shows and offered food and game evenings. Moreover, the city had a rich ecosystem of 'non-premises': permanent squats and temporary raves were scattered in the many empty and abandoned buildings and open spaces left by the industry's demise. On a spatial level, venues were scattered throughout the city, *confetti* style, with no differences between the city centre and peripheries:

In the past, clubs were really scattered all over the place, it was quite normal...we had *Torinosette* [a local news magazine], you went through the news with your friends, and you said: 'Where do we go tonight? Let's find out what's going on'. So, it was cool to go and explore, visit different districts depending on which club you wanted to visit, or just out of curiosity (02\_Andrea)

Within the framework of a very diverse and expanded night scene, we found, however, two main nightlife districts: the Murazzi Po riversides and the former industrial conurbation of Docks Dora. Within these areas, it is possible to observe the impact of the above-mentioned lack of interest by local politicians in nighttime issues surrounding how the nighttime economy is monitored and controlled. Interviewees recall the presence of law enforcement only in the areas surrounding Murazzi (mainly the very central Piazza Vittorio), but with very few interventions on the site itself, which is remembered as "a no man's land, even tolerated somewhat I think by the police" (08\_Arturo). Even in the other main night hotspot, Docks Dora, "they never did inspections" (08\_Arturo) and therefore the premises owners had to organise a self-financed surveillance service.

Probably due to these increase in venues and events, their distribution throughout the entire municipality and the lack of law enforcement control, a key aspect in interviewees' accounts is what Irene described as their "*via Crucis*, [because] you could go to at least four or five clubs per night", that is, moving around from one part of the city to the other in an aimless manner. Thanks to their "wandering from club to club" (11\_Gabriele), the Research participants recall very chaotic experiences characterised by excitement, experimentation, and discovery. They often encountered something new; this could be new places, new sounds, new drugs, but most importantly people, because there was a lot of mixing between night tribes, with central spots (such as Giancarlo in Murazzi) working as aggregators.

### #2 24-hour party imaginary

The 24-hour party imaginary is that of a city that never goes to sleep and every night there is a concert or a party to enjoy, as expressed by the Manchester anthem '24 Hour Party People' by the Happy Mondays. In 1999 Turin was selected as the host city for the 2006 Winter Olympic Games and on Labour Day a police raid tore apart *Askatasuna*, the most important social and political squat in Turin. These events are not directly related to the nighttime economy, but they show the changes that the city was grappling with, which are intertwined

with this second nighttime imaginary. At the same time, the Olympic Games were a turning point whereby the city became “not as dark as it used to be” (14\_Sara), and one which was finally leaving behind its industrial past to become an international city of culture and tourism. On the other hand, the raid against *Askatasuna* is just one of several that struck the city’s politicised spaces since – as (13\_) Irene summarised – “there was a desire to tidy up, to make Turin a little sleeker”.

Within this framework, it is not surprising that nighttime urban governance was less detached than in previous times and was seeking more control over what happens at night, especially in the most ‘problematic’ contexts. This does not only refer to the evicted squat mentioned above or to raves that have been pushed out to the countryside. Every single venue in *Docks Dora* closed due to the complaints of neighbourhood residents and other public order issues. *Docks Dora*’s reputation as a noisy and unsafe area was dissonant with the attempt to create a tourist city, marketable in connection to the Winter Olympics bid. Moreover, the urban renewal of *Barriera* and the possible implementation of the *Docks Dora* area for other than nocturnal use also affected its fate as it was subject to NIMBY (not in my backyard) initiatives: “They built apartment buildings and [new] people decided to petition etc. against degradation” (09\_Federica).

Concomitant to these strategies of redevelopment, two interesting phenomena related to mobility occurred. In 2002, a new penalty point driving licence was introduced together with an alcohol limit of 0,5 g/l creating a “great fear of being stopped at night” (01\_Leonardo). Moreover, the 2008 financial crisis and a concomitant reform also brought a considerable rise in taxi fares (Bentivogli, 2008). The demise of *Docks Dora* and the legislative and fiscal changes targeting car mobility had the consequence of clustering Turin’s nightlife in its city centre and above all in the *Murazzi* district (Crivello, 2011).

“Suddenly Turin... was alive, it was alive ! Then after the Olympics, it really detonated, like a bomb”, (06\_) Benny’s statement sums up well a common sentiment of the interviewees, who remember very positively and with great fondness the period of the Olympics and the following years. Research participants highlight a busy atmosphere where there was always something to do – for (08\_) Arturo ‘after the Olympics the events really exploded [...] you would go out all the time from Monday to Sunday’. Turin in this period felt like, and was, a city that never went to sleep, where every night there was a concert or a party to enjoy. As (10\_) Barbara’s quote made it clear: “it felt like the night never ended”.

A strong pride toward their city is evident in the interviewees’ accounts, and is one of the

distinguishing features of this period. This is due to the following reasons: the variety and quality of the nightlife on offer, since not only local and underground artists were playing as in the past, but also the most famous performers came to town; the city ceased to occupy a marginal position within the global nightlife scene and party tourists began to visit Turin and specifically *Murazzi*, thanks to their electronic dance music programme:

in those years, when you travelled around... to Berlin, to other places with clubs... and everybody came to Turin ! There were a lot of foreigners who came here to have fun, really a lot ! In fact, there were some great DJs who came, Carl Cox was there, Derrick May came. [...] One night I was playing volleyball with friends at the *Pellerina* and at the same time Lou Reed was playing [at the *Traffic Festival*] (07\_Giuly)

All these changes translate into interviewees’ practices and affect. Firstly, they no longer moved around at night, since the new alcohol limit dissuaded people from driving towards the city limits: “Over my dead body ! I got my driving licence removed because of *Hiroshima* [a peripheral gig venue]” (10\_Barbara). Secondly, they became much more interested in curated events, organised by specific promoters, where a famous DJ/band would be playing: “Every week you could go to a club with 300 people and hear a DJ from Berlin, New York and so on” (02\_Andrea). Altogether this means that people stayed more in their own bubble compared to the previous imaginary, they encountered different scenes less often and mobility/random exploring became less central at night. However, when compared to the past, nighttime leisure is no longer a marginal affair for creatures of the night, but it is becoming increasingly popular and mainstream.

### #3 *Notti bianche* imaginary

*Notti bianche*, the Italian translation of white nights, was first conceived in reference to cultural events held at night in Berlin as *Lange Nacht der Museen* (see: <https://www.lange-nacht-der-museen.de/ueber-uns>) and in Paris as *Nuit Blanche* (Evans, 2012) for instance. In Turin, the first events with this name were organised during the Winter Olympics.

“Cool situations and places...look, once upon a time Turin had a lot to offer in that regard [...] until they closed the *Murazzi*... since then, Turin has had fewer and fewer possibilities” (02\_Andrea)

This imaginary began in 2012 when most venues in the Murazzi district closed due to different investigations related to noise disturbance, building regulations and licences (Crivello, 2018). Despite attempts –, which proved futile –, to reverse this decision through a petition and a demonstration, 2012 was a ‘tipping point’ for Turin’s nightlife, giving way to a series of closures that continued throughout the decade. This process became more severe after the 2017 Piazza San Carlo stampede, where during a screening of the UEFA Champions League Final, panic erupted among the crowd; three people died and more than 1500 were injured (Petrilli, 2022). Safety in public places became one of the main topics of the city’s political agenda and night urban governance strongly increased its control over what was happening after working hours, not targeting only the most problematic contexts as in the past.

In 2012 another event marked the city’s nighttime history, at least symbolically. In the Royal Palace square the first edition of *Unconventional Dinner - Cena in Bianco* took place, a public dinner where everything is strictly white and where “everyone brings everything from home: table, chairs, food, ceramic dishware, glassware” (<http://www.cenainbiancounconventionaldinner.it>). This event can be seen as an evolution of the White Nights organised during the Olympic year, since both represent a contraction of the night’s temporal boundaries, making it less and less a frontier territory and increasingly something tame and attractive, even for a ‘daytime’ public. None of the research participants ever mention or talk about either ‘*notti bianche*’ or ‘*cene in bianco*’, demonstrating the extraneousness of this genre of initiatives from people of the nights’ experience and interests. With its emphasis on culinary aspects, White Dinner makes it a forerunner of a central development of the period: after the demise of the last nightlife districts, followed by the closing of many other clubs around the city, the after-work activities of Turin’s inhabitants are now concentrated in the so-called ‘*movida* districts’ such as Quadrilatero, San Salvario and Vanchiglia, where the main activities are food and beverage consumption in wine bars, restaurants, trattorias, tapas bars and so on (Perucca & Tessarin, 2022). This is why, for (06\_) Benny: “*minchia* [vulgar exclamation, similar to holy shit], everything looks like a restaurant nowadays.”

Due to the rise of the *movida* districts, the escalation in security measures affected both night- and evening-time economies. Law enforcement controls in night venues increased exponentially due to problems such as noise, opening hours and capacity, or from (04\_) Francesca’s point of view: “[due to] the most absurd security regulations”. New strategies

were implemented such as – amongst others – the municipal ordinances that limit takeaway alcohol consumption or regulate terraces’ opening hours, and an inter-force law enforcement squad patrolling the San Salvario district. Educational activities by street artists inspired by Parisians’ *Pierrots de la nuit* and innovative surveillance technologies for noise nuisance were also introduced (Petrilli & Stefanizzi, 2022).

For the interviewees, the situation did not seem serious/problematic at the beginning of the reported period, because there were still many alternatives in the city. Nevertheless, as time went by, more and more venues were forced to close or reduce what they could offer due to the changes in urban governance; even historic underground venues adapted to survive controls and fines and had to “totally zero out their program, going from being cult venues to venues of nothing” (01\_Leonardo). Among the various cases cited by research participants, there is the area surrounding Valentino Park where within a few years most of the clubs closed: Rotonda in 2014, Cacao in 2017, Chalet in 2018, and Rush Club in 2019. The disco bar composed of Fluido and Club Gamma closed in 2019, while Imbarchino closed in 2016 and reopened in 2019. The local crisis of the live music and clubbing scene became evident, so much so that for (15\_) Nino it is as if “they have closed everything down now”.

There is not much of an alternative anymore, there used to be this kind of vent.... and I miss that stuff like air. Today you find yourself in cocktail bars and what do you do... everyone is complaining like me. (09\_Federica)

As Federica’s quote hints, this period witnessed a radical change in interviewees’ practices and affect. The fall in nighttime entertainment together with the increase in evening attractions means that “in the last ten years, we can say that *aperitivo* has won [over dancing], without any doubt” (16\_Clara). Regardless of the age of the research participants, they all complain about going out mostly in evening-type venues and consequently how their social life is more boring and self-enclosed compared to the past. Night practices are increasingly limited to regulated precincts. Turin’s nightlife, famous even abroad, is a distant memory too, and the city continues to attract party tourists only for large festivals such as Kappa FuturFestival or Club to Club, consequently, research participants travel more often. Enjoying other cities’ nights forces them to “also see the differences” (12\_Giorgia) compared to Turin, it exposes its limits and its ‘provincialism’ (05\_Lorenzo), increasing their frustration and disappointment toward their city.

**Table 2** ▶ The three types of nocturnal night imaginaries and their main features

	<i>Confetti</i>	24h party	<i>Notti bianche</i>
<b>Governance</b>	<i>Laissez-faire</i>	Attention towards 'problematic' settings.	Securisation and control
<b>Policing</b>	Absent	Attention towards curbing 'drinking and driving'	Active
<b>Offer</b>	Heterogeneous	International and curated	Evening-centred
<b>Space</b>	Scattered around the city	Clustering in the centre	Precincts and terraces
<b>Mobility</b>	<i>Via crucis</i>	Limited to the city centre	Limited to the <i>movida</i> districts
<b>Affect</b>	Excitement, experimentation, and sense of novelty	Fondness, busy atmosphere, pride	Frustration, complaints, and disappointment

## CONCLUSIONS

In recent decades, the urban night scene has been increasingly subject to academic research, planning projects and governance initiatives. In all these fields the night has often been romanticised, reproducing a simplistic and binary understanding of nocturnal phenomena, useful to make it marketable. To overcome this easy representation of the urban night, we decided to work with the notion of the imaginary, in its spatial, social, and performative dimensions. Nocturnal urban imaginaries are powerful instruments to make sense of the way the night has been planned, experienced, and thought of in an urban post-industrial setting.

The three different types of nocturnal urban imaginaries we identified are strongly bound up with the diurnal city's history. The rise of the *confetti* imaginary is articulated within the city's industrial crisis and within the attempt to move the city's paradigm of development towards the post-industrial. Moreover, it profits out of industrial shrinking and the availability of disused warehouses and other sites of Fordist production. The city's night at this stage is polycentric, scattered around in a variety of temporary or consolidated venues to be explored in rhabdomantist fashion. The 24-hour party imaginary represents, on one hand, a kind of recognition by the city of what happens at night, on the other it is an attempt to mobilise and exploit the new and growing nighttime market, according to the post-industrial logic of redevelopment. Control over nightlife increases by concentrating the latter in the city centre and tackling the most 'problematic' contexts. This is a central step because, alongside the positive narrative about nightlife, it is possible to observe the emergence of the securitarian vision that will mark the third and final imaginary. The *Notti bianche* imaginary is one of an urban night that is increasingly domesticated, losing the positive features that had been its hallmark and concentrated in

precincts. Put another way, the city has failed in its metamorphosis towards a post-industrial night city.

The scope of our paper is therefore limited to the case study under scrutiny here and to its timeline and we are unable to determine if these specific imaginaries reflect a common path of development for the industrial city in general. Moreover, we are unable to determine what a possible future for Turin's night is going to be under the current difficult economic and geopolitical circumstances. Nonetheless, our work confirms that nocturnal urban imaginaries in Turin cannot be considered just as illusionary or merely symbolic categories, since their impact on the interviewees' accounts is remarkable.

Future research on the night should consider that imaginaries are performative, firstly in their being eventful and joyful expressions of nocturnal desire and aspirations, in creating spatial and temporal arenas of celebration and in safeguarding each night in its unfolding. Secondly, they articulate and respond to the continuous process of urbanisation in its material, financial and social dimensions; nocturnal urban imaginaries are not subsets of urban imaginaries, they offer complementary and sometimes alternative modes of experiencing the city, therefore enriching, and sometimes subverting daytime urban life. This makes the night problematic and unable to be fully subjected to the logics of daytime capitalism.

By linking the limited night studies' literature about Turin with narratives of Turin nightlife from the 1990s to the pre-Covid period, it was possible to reconstruct how these imaginaries perform at three levels: local governance, range of night attractions and night punters' experiences (see Table 2). If the first two points have already been mentioned in the previous paragraph, here it is necessary to highlight the impact of the above-mentioned security escalation on interviewees' direct experiences. We moved from the emotional territory of the 1990s which was characterised by excitement, experi-

mentation, and a sense of novelty, to that of the late 2010s defined by frustration, complaints, and disappointment. As mentioned in the introduction, celebration and socialisation at night have important positive effects on people and urban life, so this research advises more judicious management of nightlife phenomena, where the focus on safety goes hand in hand with its promotion and safeguarding. Turning the clocks backwards into evening times is not enough, because darkness and its imaginaries rise nevertheless, every night.

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### Competing interests

No competing interests declared.

### Contribution of authors

Enrico Petrilli initiated the idea of the study and conducted the data collection, drafting the methods and results of the paper. Giacomo Bottà contributed by providing the theoretical framework of the paper and its conclusion. Both authors collaborated on the introduction and jointly shaped the manuscript. All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

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# "LAS COSAS QUE UNO HACE POR LOS AMIGOS": VINCULACIONES SENSIBLES DEL HABITAR LA NOCHE DE LA CIUDAD CENTRAL Y LA NOCHE SUBURBANA EN LA CIUDAD DE MEXICO

*"AS COISAS QUE ALGUÉM FAZ PELOS AMIGOS": LIGAÇÕES SENSÍVEIS DE VIVER NA NOITE DA CIDADE CENTRAL E A NOITE SUBURBANA NA CIDADE DO MÉXICO*

*"THE THINGS ONE DOES FOR FRIENDS": SENSITIVE LINKS OF LIVING IN THE NIGHT OF THE CENTRAL CITY AND THE SUBURBAN NIGHT IN MEXICO CITY*

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## Resumen

Este artículo busca establecer vínculos entre la noche de la ciudad central y la suburbana en la Zona Metropolitana de la Ciudad de México. La metodología incluye entrevistas en profundidad con participantes de la ciudad central y los suburbios, centrándose en barreras para la participación en el ocio nocturno, como factores de género y económicos. Además, se explora la jerarquización de los espacios de ocio nocturno y su impacto en las sensibilidades de los participantes. Los resultados indican que las diferencias en las sensibilidades, relacionadas con la segregación socioespacial, influyen en cómo se vive el ocio nocturno y en la configuración de vínculos de amistad. Este trabajo contribuye a la comprensión de la noche como un fenómeno integral a través de las sensibilidades y los lazos afectivos.

**Palabras-claves:** vínculos afectivos, ocio nocturno

## Resumo

Este artigo procura estabelecer ligações entre a vida noturna da cidade central e dos subúrbios na Área Metropolitana da Cidade do México. A metodologia inclui entrevistas aprofundadas com participantes da cidade central e dos subúrbios, centrando-se nas barreiras à participação na vida noturna, como o género e os factores económicos. Além disso, é explorada a hierarquia dos espaços de diversão noturna e o seu impacto na sensibilidade dos participantes. Os resultados indicam que as diferenças de sensibilidades, relacionadas com a segregação socio-espacial, influenciam a forma como a vida noturna é vivida e a configuração dos laços de amizade. Este trabalho contribui para a compreensão da vida noturna como um fenómeno integral através das sensibilidades e dos laços afectivos.

**Palavras-chaves:** laços afetivos, vida noturna

## Abstract

This paper seeks to establish linkages between the night of the central city and the suburban one in the Metropolitan Zone of Mexico City. The methodology draws up on in depth interviews with participants from the central city and the suburbs, focusing on barriers to engaging in nightlife, such as gender and economic factors. Furthermore, the hierarchization of nightlife spaces and its impact on the sensibilities is explored. The results indicate that differences in sensibilities, related to socio-spatial segregation, influence how nightlife is experienced and how friendship ties are configured. This article contributes to the understanding of the night as an integral urban phenomenon through sensitivities and emotional ties.

**Keywords:** emotional ties, night leisure

## INTRODUCCIÓN

Los Estudios sobre la Noche se han desarrollado principalmente en regiones anglosajonas y apenas en los últimos tres años ha surgido una proliferación de investigaciones en torno a la noche producidos desde y sobre países del sur global y lenguas distintas al inglés (Briseño y Pérez, 2021; Licona y Figueroa, 2020; Mercado y Hernández, 2020). Hasta ahora, se han centrado en la noche urbana (Chatterton y Holland, 2002; Gallan, 2013; Grazian, 2008) dejando a las múltiples facetas de la noche en contextos rurales, suburbanos o periféricos en segundo plano. Si bien hay estimulantes investigaciones que se han enfocado en las intersecciones de las noches previamente mencionadas (Mercado, 2017), son las menos dentro del campo, limitando nuestro entendimiento de la noche como un fenómeno integral.

Este artículo busca contribuir al corpus académico que analiza los vértices de noches geolocalizadas en zonas diversas, en específico, la noche de la ciudad central y la noche suburbana en la Zona Metropolitana de la Ciudad de México a fin de robustecer nuestra comprensión de la complejidad del fenómeno nocturno en ciudades masivas, violentamente desiguales, y diversas, como tantas en el sur global.

El interés por dilucidar un fragmento de la relación de la noche en la ciudad central y la suburbana, que frecuentemente se asumen escindidas una de la otra, se desprende de la identificación de la sociabilidad nocturna como el principal recurso de cuidado del vínculo amistoso. Los integrantes de grupos de amigas y amigos tienen una importante diversidad de características en múltiples sentidos y frecuentemente surgen tensiones en los diálogos para concertar encuentros: dónde y cuándo verse tiene implicaciones variadas para las personas del grupo, pues su lugar de residencia predispone condiciones de traslado, las percepciones de riesgo, el costo económico, e incluso el tiempo que les demanda. Los acuerdos, o el fracaso de ellos, pone en duda condiciones necesarias para el vínculo, como la reci-

procidad o el interés; pone en controversia la amistad misma. De esta manera, las tensiones alrededor de los encuentros nocturnos amistosos de residentes de la ciudad central y los suburbios se revelan como una herramienta para visibilizar que ambas zonas, como todo espacio, producen sensibilidades específicas en quienes los habitan. Visibiliza que, además, dichas sensibilidades están en interacción con otras opuestas, y que esa interacción modifica el uso de los espacios (Martínez Lorea, 2013). La noche de la ciudad central y la de los suburbios no son independientes, están vinculadas entre ellas a través de un complejo entramado de sensibilidades que se hace presente en las relaciones más íntimas de las personas, incluso aquellas que se asumen son vínculos horizontales, como la amistad, al producir y reproducir los procesos urbanos de segregación y exclusión.

Es pertinente señalar que, en este caso, la noche tiene un papel doblemente determinante: por una parte, la exacerbación de las vulnerabilidades diurnas es un hecho reconocido por las personas (Gwiadzinski, 2005, como se cita en Straw, 2014; Macías, 2020), pero por el otro, la sociabilidad nocturna es un espacio simbólico que se presume voluntario, que alude al placer y que, en ese sentido, aparece de manera reiterada en las narrativas biográficas como el tiempo-espacio en el que las personas "pueden ser quienes de verdad son". Es decir, el ocio urbano en la ZMCM ocurre en un contexto de alta vulnerabilidad y percepción del riesgo, al mismo tiempo, resistirse a participar en él se interpreta como un rechazo del vínculo afectivo y los cuidados que requiere.

## RECURSOS TEÓRICO-METODOLÓGICOS Y APUNTES CONCEPTUALES PARA ENTENDER LA VINCULACIÓN DE LA NOCHE DE LA CIUDAD CENTRAL Y LA NOCHE SUBURBANA DESDE LAS SENSIBILIDADES

En este artículo recurro a dos cuerpos teóricos principalmente; las sensibilidades y las nociones de

lo suburbano en contraposición a la ciudad central. Desde la sociología de los cuerpos y los emociones, entiendo las sensibilidades como la relación, construida socialmente, entre percepciones, emociones y sensaciones (Scribano, 2013) que informan sobre las experiencias de las personas en un tiempo-espacio definido, y sobre su lugar en el mundo, relacionamente hablando (Vergara y Fraire, 2018). Es decir, "la experiencia de los sujetos en la creación activa del espacio a partir del cuerpo" (Aguilar Díaz, 2014, p. 322) en interacción con otros cuerpos posicionados relacionamente (Cervio, 2015, 2020; García-Andrade y Sabido Ramos, 2014). La sociología de los cuerpos y emociones reconoce la carestía estructural que condiciona los sentires y experiencias en las ciudades del sur global ya sea desde la polarización de la precariedad o el extremo opuesto del privilegio. Los sentires corpóreo-emocionales nos informan los significados de habitar ciudades polarizadas, además de mostrar repercusiones menos obvias de los sistemas de segregación y reproducción social (Scribano, 2012). Utilizo este marco conceptual para dar cuenta de la expresión de fricciones entre personas con accesos diferenciados a recursos de ocio nocturno debido a su lugar de residencia, pero que comparten un lazo afectivo, y sus repercusiones sobre las sensibilidades, así como su rol en la reproducción de los mecanismos de estratificación.

En segunda instancia, entiendo como "suburbios" los espacios ubicados a las afueras de la ciudad, donde habitan principalmente clases medias y clases medias altas, donde predomina el uso de suelo exclusivamente residencial con áreas designadas de recreación caracterizadas por grandes centros comerciales, y algunos andadores de restaurantes. La oferta de ocio nocturno en los suburbios es mucho más limitada que en la ciudad central y se mantiene inmutable a lo largo del tiempo en parte debido a las regulaciones estrictas de las zonas comerciales establecidas (Giglia, 2007).

A la construcción de los suburbios les precedió la aparición del "imaginario suburbano idílico" (Tarrés, 1999) que prometía una vida cómoda, con acceso a la naturaleza, suficientemente cerca de la ciudad central, pero con centros comerciales y seguridad (de Alba y Caprón, 2007; Lindón, 2007, 2008). Actualmente la distancia, la precaria infraestructura de movilidad y la limitada oferta de ocio nocturno del suburbio configura experiencias de segregación.

Una diferencia fundamental entre el suburbio y la ciudad central es la diversidad de usos del suelo de la segunda, lo que permite que la oferta en cuanto a ocio nocturno se renueve constantemente y los negocios compitan a través de creatividad, autenticidad e innovación.

Ambos recursos teóricos, las sensibilidades y los imaginarios urbanos, se han utilizado principalmente para estudiar las características de un área en espe-

cial como las sensibilidades de barrios populares en Argentina (Cervio, 2020, 2021) o las experiencias de habitar ya sean las zonas suburbanas de clase media (Cruz, 2015; Lindón, 2007; Tarrés, 1999), las periferias pauperizadas (Lindón, 2002), o las clases altas en la Ciudad (Roselló, 2021).

En este artículo propongo un análisis en interacción que ilumine, en primer lugar, que las personas desarrollan vínculos afectivos con otras que habitan áreas diferentes a las propias en la ZMCM. En segundo lugar, que las personas tienen repertorios de ocio nocturno variados y que implican tránsitos dentro de la zona metropolitana fuera de donde residen, estudian, o trabajan con fines de ocio nocturno. En tercer lugar, que los lugares que habitan necesariamente forman sensibilidades del habitar que pueden entrar en conflicto con las de las personas con quienes se comparte un vínculo afectivo. Y finalmente, cómo esos vínculos, trayectos y sensibilidades transforman a su vez cómo se habita la ZMCM, y engarza noches urbanas y suburbanas que, erróneamente asumimos son independientes entre sí.

## MÉTODOS

El primer acercamiento con algunos de las y los colaboradores ocurrió a partir de encuentros en persona en un bar ubicado en la calle principal de la Alcaldía Cuauhtémoc; el distrito con una mayor oferta de entretenimiento nocturno en la ciudad central, donde realizaba una investigación sobre vínculos afectivos en el ocio urbano. El criterio de selección inicial para pedir una entrevista fue identificar una participación frecuente y prolongada en actividades de ocio nocturno en el bar. Así, realicé quince entrevistas que mencionaban en su mayoría al ocio nocturno como recurso de cuidado del vínculo amistoso a la vez que describían conflictos con su círculo de amistades por participación dispar, principalmente en función a su lugar de residencia.

Decidí entrevistar a un núcleo de amistades para ahondar en esa vinculación compleja. Por medio de un muestreo de bola de nieve descubrí que tres de las personas que ya había entrevistado eran parte de un grupo de amigos, y por medio de ellas y ellos pude realizar cuatro más. Así, los hallazgos de este artículo derivan del análisis de entrevistas en profundidad con siete personas entre 26 y 32 años realizadas a lo largo de seis meses en los años 2019 y 2020. De esas siete personas, dos mujeres y dos hombres habitaban en la alcaldía Cuauhtémoc en la ciudad central, y tres, dos mujeres y un hombre, habitaban suburbios del Estado de México. El primer eje temático de la guía de entrevista fue los repertorios de ocio nocturno y su potencial correspondencia con el lugar de residencia. El segundo eje temático

fue la exploración de los obstáculos para participar en la oferta de ocio nocturno de los suburbios y de la ciudad central a partir del lugar de residencia, también emergieron incomodidades con respecto a la configuración del vínculo amistoso. El tercer eje versó sobre las motivaciones de participación en el ocio nocturno. Estas entrevistas ocurrieron cara a cara con las y los siete colaboradores. Posteriormente, en los primeros meses de la pandemia durante el 2020 por medio de videollamadas y comunicaciones por la aplicación WhatsApp con las y el habitante de los suburbios y una habitante de la ciudad central indagué sobre el estado del vínculo amistoso ante el confinamiento. Para analizar e interpretar las entrevistas, las respuestas fueron codificadas y organizadas en tres dimensiones analíticas que organizan la estructura de este texto.

### **LA ARTICULACIÓN DEL HABITAR LA NOCHE DE LA CIUDAD CENTRAL Y LA SUBURBANA. UNA LECTURA DESDE LAS SENSIBILIDADES**

Este apartado está organizado en dos partes, en primer lugar, los hallazgos relacionados con los imaginarios del suburbio y la ciudad central nocturnos, y en segundo lugar aquello que atañe a los obstáculos de participación y la configuración de las sensibilidades.

#### **La movilización de los imaginarios y estereotipos de la ciudad central y los suburbios**

El primer eje temático de la guía de entrevista; los repertorios de ocio nocturno, es decir, la trama de actividades diversas en que participan las y los colaboradores, reveló correspondencias entre los espacios del ocio nocturno en la ciudad central y los suburbios. En los suburbios, el ocio nocturno se circunscribe al espacio doméstico, mientras en la ciudad central la casa y los espacios privados mantienen tránsitos constantes entre ellos. El patrón suburbio-espacio doméstico advierte desapego al vecindario, puesto que la casa actúa como una alternativa ante la deficiente oferta de ocio nocturno (Relph, 1976, como se cita en Lindón, 2008). Por otra parte, la amplia disponibilidad de alternativas de ocio nocturno de la ciudad central fomenta la espontaneidad y la contingencia posicionándola jerárquicamente sobre el suburbio como el lugar idóneo para experimentar la vida nocturna, e indirectamente atribuye a los habitantes del suburbio la responsabilidad de trasladarse a la ciudad central.

Partir de las respuestas obtenidas alrededor del eje "repertorios de ocio nocturno" fue posible desentrañar en qué consisten los imaginarios alre-

dedor del habitar la ciudad central y los suburbios que se *incorporan* en las personas, predisponen sus interacciones, sientan las coordenadas de expectativas de los encuentros nocturnos y aquello que es válido negociar en el marco del vínculo amistoso. Del mismo modo, designan socialmente los lugares que *importan* y modifican efectivamente cómo se habita la ciudad de noche.

Los imaginarios asignan cualidades morales basadas en el lugar de residencia, y en el caso de los suburbios, crean fricciones identitarias.

El imaginario de habitar los suburbios del Estado de México, ubicados al norte de la ciudad, está articulado por el estereotipo del *sateluco*. El *sateluco* es típicamente un hombre cuyas preferencias alrededor del ocio nocturno se engarzan con mandatos de la masculinidad tradicional como el consumo excesivo de alcohol, flirteos hipersexualizados y demostraciones de solvencia económica (Grazian, 2007). La oferta mayoritaria de ocio nocturno en el suburbio privilegia espacios homogéneos que se mantienen inmutables a lo largo del tiempo, Es decir, residir en el espacio suburbano se asocia no solo a determinadas preferencias, sino a cualidades intrínsecas que conforman la identidad de las personas, independientemente si esa identidad se reclama o no.

Los habitantes de la ciudad central asumen que quienes continúan viviendo en los suburbios al iniciar la vida laboral lo hacen por una decisión personal que denota un reconocimiento identitario, por lo menos parcial, con el estereotipo del *sateluco* sin tomar en cuenta otro tipo de desigualdades.

El imaginario del habitar la ciudad central, en contraste, aparece aparejado de un estereotipo de habitante que, propongo, tiene una sensibilidad orientada a una identidad cosmopolita (Mitchell, 2007) que valora la oferta de ocio nocturno en la ciudad central cimentada en la distinción de los espacios a través de la creatividad. La posibilidad de transitar entre los espacios doméstico, público y semiprivado debido a la proximidad y variedad en la oferta de ocio nocturno que favorecen la improvisación, sitúa a la ciudad central nocturna como un espacio idílico en el imaginario urbano.

En consecuencia, se asignan responsabilidades de movilidad a los habitantes de los suburbios para apegarse a la jerarquía de los imaginarios urbanos compartidos por el grupo. El desplazamiento nocturno emerge como una estrategia por parte de los habitantes del suburbio para separarse del estereotipo del *sateluco* y busca reflejar una muestra de compromiso y conformidad con los valores cosmopolitas compartidos por el grupo de amistad. La segunda estrategia para hacer una demostración de alineación valorativa por parte de los habitantes del suburbio a partir de los imaginarios es, en caso de no poderse trasladar a la ciudad central, abstenerse de explorar la oferta

de ocio nocturno local y restringir sus actividades al espacio doméstico.

Estas prácticas de (in)movilidad (Vergara y Fraire, 2018) desde los suburbios se activan en la intersección de la segregación social y las sensibilidades, siendo las mujeres quienes recurren a ellas con mayor frecuencia debido, principalmente, a la mayor percepción de riesgo en los traslados, la percepción de hostilidad en los espacios locales y la resistencia a verbalizar y renegociar las jerarquías de la movilidad dentro del vínculo amistoso como un mecanismo de soportabilidad social que naturaliza la segregación y adjudica las responsabilidades de la desigualdad estructural a las personas (Scribano, 2010).

### **Los obstáculos de participación y la configuración de sensibilidades mediadas por la segregación**

El segundo eje temático en la guía de entrevista fue la exploración de los obstáculos para participar en el ocio nocturno de la ciudad central y del suburbio por habitantes de ambas zonas. Como parte del trabajo de interpretación, las respuestas fueron codificadas y organizadas en tres dimensiones: barreras de índole corpóreo-emocional, estructurales, y el ámbito de las sensibilidades. Cada una de estas dimensiones está atravesada por el reconocimiento de habitar o no zonas de socio-segregación en cuanto al ocio nocturno. Así, los resultados están organizados por zona de habitación dentro de cada dimensión analítica.

En la CDMX, los grupos de amistad de jóvenes de clases medias son típicamente heterogéneos en cuanto a su lugar de residencia; la transición universidad-primer empleo acentúan esa condición. No obstante, esta diversidad supone un desafío para la viabilidad de la convivencia nocturna de alta demanda, ya que conlleva una exigencia desigual de recursos entre los miembros del círculo de amistad, teniendo implicaciones más gravosas particularmente para las mujeres que residen en los suburbios.

#### ***Barreras corpóreo-emocionales: el traslado y el cansancio***

Las mujeres, aún aquellas de estratos socioeconómicos privilegiados, se reconocen vulnerables a agresiones sexuales solo por el hecho de ser mujeres, así como feminicidios o desapariciones. Los trayectos de ida y vuelta suburbios-ciudad central se experimentan como potencialmente peligrosos y llenos de miedo (Soto, 2012) y aunque las mujeres de la ciudad central también se reconocen vulnerables, los trayectos más cortos, la posibilidad de caminar y de contar con compañía masculina reducen el miedo considerablemente.

El riesgo latente demanda que las mujeres de los suburbios diseñen estrategias para reducir su vulnerabilidad en los trayectos. Dichas estrategias, refieren, merman la experiencia del ocio nocturno, y a consecuencia, el vínculo amistoso. Uno de los principales recursos de fortalecimiento del vínculo es el descubrimiento de espacios novedosos y compartir no solo estados afectivos, sino afectaciones sensoriales por el consumo de alcohol o alguna droga.

Al tener que volver a casa conduciendo o bien en transporte privado, en general deciden consumir menos alcohol y no consumir drogas, lo que evita que se tenga una experiencia corpórea común, y se experimenta como una distancia afectiva.

Los hombres del suburbio también se reconocen vulnerables, pero experimentan menos miedo y priorizan la experiencia del ocio nocturno. Interpreto la participación en conductas de riesgo, como conducir bajo el influjo del alcohol, como la ratificación de mandatos de la masculinidad hegemónica, aunque rechacen discursivamente otras prácticas de ocio que se alinean con ella, como el ocio nocturno local de los suburbios.

La otra estrategia para reducir el miedo respecto al trayecto en tanto barrera de participación del ocio nocturno en la ciudad central, son los cálculos de las mujeres de los suburbios respecto a cómo se presentan físicamente: a saber, "[no vestirse] para el lugar al que vamos, [sino] para volver a mi casa segura. O bueno, menos en peligro" (Alejandra, HS, 29 años). La estrategia que radica en utilizar ropa práctica para huir de ser necesario, o que no llame la atención, impide que se acoplen a las expectativas estéticas del lugar reforzando la sensación de no pertenencia que se aloja en las sensibilidades del suburbio.

La segunda barrera de participación de la dimensión corpóreo-emocional que aparece en los relatos de los habitantes de los suburbios es el cansancio. Los tiempos de traslado de la casa al trabajo en la ZMCM son en promedio 60 minutos (Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Geografía, 2017), pero el tiempo se eleva cuando se habla de los suburbios y las periferias. El cansancio no impide participar en primera instancia, pero sí disfrutar de la velada, de modo que a la postre las personas deciden evitar participar del ocio nocturno en la ciudad central.

(...) yo tengo que levantarme más temprano que ellos [los que viven en la ciudad central] para volverlo a hacer todo de nuevo al otro día. Hay veces que no puedo ni divertirme porque siento que me voy a dormir en la mesa (Ramón, HS, 25 años)

El ocio nocturno demanda estados de ánimo placenteros y un estado corporal óptimo para que

el ocio nocturno sea exitoso, ya que los fracasos en la experiencia equivalen a la no participación y, por lo tanto, al detrimento del vínculo amistoso como ahondaré en el apartado de las resistencias del ámbito de las sensibilidades.

### **Los obstáculos estructurales**

El principal que se identificó a partir de las entrevistas, además de la interseccionalidad del género y la residencia en una zona socio segregada, es la disponibilidad de recursos económicos que se puedan destinar a la realización exitosa del ocio nocturno. Es decir, no se demanda una disponibilidad económica equitativa, sino que puedan solventarse las necesidades económicas que corresponden a cada persona en tanto su posición relacional en el mundo. Quienes habitan la ciudad suburbana deben hacer inversiones económicas más altas para participar en el ocio nocturno, siendo la principal un medio seguro de transporte, ya sea un automóvil propio o servicios privados bajo demanda. La frecuencia de la demanda de participación eleva los costos del ocio nocturno en la ciudad central hasta en un 60 %. El salario de las mujeres que habitan el suburbio equivale grosso modo al 80 % del salario del promedio de los hombres de la ciudad central, de manera que son quienes requieren mayor inversión para salvaguardar su seguridad, mientras tienen menos recursos para hacerlo. Estas demandas implícitas y las consecuencias que reproducen los ciclos de segregación se piensan al margen del vínculo amistoso. Los esfuerzos por lograr un performance de clase que afiance la pertenencia en el grupo social ocurren, tanto como es posible, en privado, puesto que abstenerse de participar es interpretado como una discrepancia moral entre las y los miembros de los círculos de amigos. Esto puede explicarse a través de la consideración de cómo los discursos capitalistas meritocráticos permean la esfera íntima produciendo sentimientos de vergüenza y perpetuando la configuración del vínculo amistoso a través de intereses, actividades y rituales que se alineen con los valores estructurales hegemónicos (Bourdieu, 2007).

### **Las sensibilidades y la configuración del vínculo de amistad**

A lo largo de este apartado por medio de las resistencias corpóreo-emocionales y estructurales se han advertido someramente las discrepancias en las sensibilidades alrededor del ocio nocturno de los habitantes de la ciudad central y los suburbios a partir de la variable de la socio-segregación. En este apartado se busca explicar la interacción de dichas sensibilidades en el marco del vínculo afectivo.

La amistad como vínculo social ha recibido menor atención en las Ciencias Sociales, en comparación de otros vínculos como las relaciones de pareja. A partir del aislamiento de la pandemia y el desgaste de los vínculos sociales que supuso, la amistad ha empezado a estar en el foco de conversaciones cotidianas y de la cultura popular. En las investigaciones académicas ha aparecido tangencialmente al estudiar trayectorias biográficas ordenadas por la soltería. De este modo, la amistad se pone al centro de la vida afectiva y se convierte en el vínculo primario (Lahad, 2017). Las y los colaboradores afirmaron en las entrevistas que su red de amistades es el primer recurso para obtener cuidados, apoyo, acompañamiento, validación, construir intimidad, complicidad y también gozo en esos primeros años de vida independiente del hogar parental.

En ese sentido, las demandas de co-presencia son muy altas. El vínculo se nutre por el acompañamiento, la presencia, el cúmulo de anécdotas y actividades sobre todo en espacios nocturnos, que es típicamente el tiempo que tienen las y los jóvenes libres de trabajo, sin importar si los encuentros ocurren ya sea en ambientes públicos, semiprivados o domésticos. Sin embargo, las afirmaciones en las entrevistas alrededor del eje de los repertorios de ocio establecen que el tipo de lugar es irrelevante siempre y cuando ocurran en la ciudad central, puesto que en ese contexto contingente y propicio para la improvisación, los tres tipos de lugares forman parte del itinerario del ocio nocturno.

La jerarquización de los espacios de ocio nocturno en la ciudad da cuenta de sensibilidades en conflicto a pesar de que las y los habitantes de ambas zonas operen aparentemente en un acuerdo tácito al respecto. Las experiencias del habitar cada zona producen sensibilidades diferenciadas que al encontrarse en interacción delatan racionalidades y motivaciones en pugna.

Así, para quienes habitan los suburbios, la motivación del encuentro nocturno es el encuentro en sí mismo. Priorizan procurar el vínculo amistoso sin necesidad de que haya una actividad, espacio o experiencia sensorial extraordinarios mediando el acercamiento. Incluso, la presencia de alguno de estos factores tiene el potencial de arruinar esa sesión de ocio nocturno como se detalló en el apartado de resistencias corpóreo-emocionales. Es decir, habitar el suburbio y experimentarlo como un espacio socio-segregado en cuanto al ocio nocturno, configura una sensibilidad que le resta poder a la experiencia de ocio en tanto recurso para cultivar la sensibilidad cosmopolita, debido a su escasez y alto costo en varias dimensiones, y prioriza la convivencia al alentar el vínculo amistoso. Mientras se es más vulnerable a la segregación, la sensibilidad otorga más valor al vínculo como acompañamiento, aunque se someta a la jerarquía que subsume el ocio

doméstico nocturno del suburbio al ocio nocturno de la ciudad central.

Para los habitantes de la ciudad central, en cambio, el vínculo afectivo amistoso se refuerza a partir de la experiencia colectiva de la ciudad central nocturna.

En caso contrario, surgen disputas que se interpretan desde ambas sensibilidades como brechas en el vínculo. Para quienes habitan los suburbios aparecen sentimientos de tristeza y frustración por las diferencias de racionalidades para el encuentro nocturno:

Las veces que he llegado a decir que mejor ellos vengan, dicen que aquí *no hay nada*. Pero yo no voy [a] *allá* porque quiera ir a algún lugar, voy porque quiero verlos a ellos, digo, esas son las cosas que uno hace por los amigos, ¿no? ¿Por qué ellos no pueden venir a verme a mí? (Alejandra, HS, 29 años)

Mientras que para los habitantes de la ciudad central la disminución en la frecuencia de los encuentros se experimenta como una prueba de la diferencia de valores y preferencias que no se circunscribe a qué hacer en la noche: "supongo que pasa el tiempo y la gente cambia. Antes nos gustaba ir a los mismos lugares o hacer las mismas cosas, pero últimamente cuando nos vemos siento que cada quien está en su *trip*" (Raúl, HCC, 30 años). Estas frustraciones, sin embargo, no se expresaban espontáneamente en el grupo de amigos en general. Se discutían con quienes compartían sensibilidades; en duplas entre habitantes de los suburbios o de la ciudad central.

Las sensibilidades mediadas por la segregación atribuyen significados a las experiencias del ocio nocturno y de los vínculos afectivos, a la vez que construyen percepciones sobre las zonas que conectan a lo largo de la ZMCM.

Para la sensibilidad hegemónica de la ciudad central es menos evidente la jerarquización de las zonas de ocio, así como el privilegio de habitarlas. Tergiversa la percepción de la distancia y caracteriza los suburbios como lejanos, aunque lógicamente los trayectos entre el suburbio y la ciudad central son equidistantes en ambas direcciones. Esta percepción de la distancia geográfica emula la distancia social entre el "ellos" y el "nosotros".

Paradójicamente, las privilegiadas sensibilidades del suburbio y la ciudad central, aunque la primera se experimente a través del tamiz de la segregación en cuanto al ocio nocturno, invisibilizan los espacios que se ubican entre una y otra. Los reconocen únicamente como el espacio que las mantiene separadas y que se experimenta como miedo al ser el escenario de los trayectos. Las representaciones de la ciudad desde el binomio suburbio-ciudad central prescinden de las periferias, sus prácticas, sensibilidades y habitantes.

Sobre el estado del vínculo amistoso ante el aislamiento, quienes habitaban la ciudad central siguieron encontrándose mientras quienes vivían en los suburbios se apegaron a prácticas de inmovilidad. Las emociones derivadas de la exclusión estimularon resistencias entre las habitantes del suburbio como negarse a participar en encuentros en la ciudad central y en cambio recibir a sus amistades en casa en el suburbio, explicitando las dificultades económicas. Las mujeres empezaron a encontrarse en la ciudad central, pero solo si podían quedarse a dormir en casa de sus amigas y volver al otro día en transporte público. Estas prácticas que buscan anteponer el vínculo a los encuentros mediados por la lógica capitalista del consumo dan pistas para pensarse efectivamente como recursos potencialmente intersticiales, más comunes en estratos sociales populares (Vergara y Freire, 2018).

## REFLEXIONES FINALES

El artículo se enfoca en las vinculaciones de la noche de la ciudad central y la suburbana en la ZMCM, con el objetivo de comprender la complejidad del fenómeno nocturno en ciudades del sur global. Al explorar las dinámicas de los encuentros nocturnos entre residentes de la ciudad central y los suburbios, se arroja luz sobre las sensibilidades distintivas que surgen en cada uno de estos entornos y cómo se interconectan. También se examina cómo estas dinámicas influyen en las relaciones personales y los patrones de participación en la vida nocturna.

Las sensibilidades desempeñan un papel esencial en la formación de amistades. En el caso de los residentes de los suburbios, la convivencia es el factor que fortalece sus lazos, mientras que para quienes viven en el centro de la ciudad, la experiencia colectiva de la vida nocturna es crucial para mantener sus relaciones.

Los procesos que retrato en este trabajo, y que se aterrizan en cuerpos sensibles en interacción, son procesos sociales de largo alcance hechos cuerpo. No es posible interpretarlos como interacciones fugaces circunscritas a esas personas, en ese momento y lugar; la afectación circular que describo finalmente reproduce lastimosamente los mecanismos de segregación del orden social, y lo hace en los dos campos que las personas asumen más libres de estructuras opresivas, a saber, el ocio nocturno, y sus vínculos personales más íntimos (Cervio, 2021).

## Notas

- <sup>1</sup> En adelante 'ZMCM'.
- <sup>2</sup> Entiendo el ocio como todas aquellas prácticas que no son trabajo remunerado o sin remunerar, y tampoco procuran el sostenimiento de la vida.

- <sup>3</sup> Los suburbios que menciono se ubican en el Estado de México, parte de la Zona Metropolitana de la Ciudad de México.
- <sup>4</sup> Cuando incluyo fragmentos de sus entrevistas los nombres han sido cambiados para conservar su anonimato. Por medio de los acrónimos HS o HCC señalo si son habitantes de los suburbios o de la ciudad central.
- <sup>5</sup> Ubicados a 17, 33 y 36 kms de la alcaldía Cuauhtémoc.
- <sup>6</sup> Hace referencia a Ciudad Satélite, el primer asentamiento en la Zona metropolitana de la Ciudad de México que emulaba el trazo urbano de los suburbios estadounidenses.
- <sup>7</sup> Si bien las dimensiones de orden corpóreo-emocional y estructural son componentes de las sensibilidades, en este apartado se presentan de manera independiente para distinguir las emociones que surgen en el momento del ocio nocturno y elementos que condicionan el acceso material, de las sensibilidades como una forma de experimentar e interpretar el mundo que, en este caso, se han configurado primordialmente a partir de la socio-segregación.
- <sup>8</sup> Las desapariciones de mujeres aumentaron 161.6 % entre el 2015 y el 2021 ; se presume que los motivos están vinculados con diversas expresiones de la violencia de género feminicida. Únicamente en el año 2021 se acumularon 2,729 casos (Instituto Mexicano de Derechos Humanos y Democracia A.C., 2022).

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La autora declara que no existe ningún conflicto de intereses.

#### Contribución del autor

Toda la investigación, análisis, escritura y edición necesarios para el presente artículo fueron realizados por la autora.

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# NOCTURNAL FUTURES: A NECESSARY REFLECTION IN TIMES OF UNCERTAINTY

*FUTUROS NOCTURNOS: UMA REFLEXÃO NECESSARIA EM TEMPOS DE INCERTEZA*

*FUTUROS NOCTURNOS: UNA REFLEXION NECESARIA EN TIEMPOS DE INCERTIDUMBRE*

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## Abstract

This text serves as an epilogue of the special issue entitled *Nocturnal Cities : Past, Present, and Future*. The first part of the text below presents a series of research topics that are central to the interdisciplinary area of Night Studies, and whose objects of research and reflection can be referred to as 'nocturnal urban futures'. The second half denounces the absence of 'the night' in the design of the so-called '15-minute city', which is the main paradigm of ongoing urban development in many cities worldwide (especially from the Global North). The final section sheds light on the urgent community, institutional, industry and academic need for debating and discussing the role that the 'nocturnal city' should have in the construction of climate-neutral cities in the long-term future.

**Keywords:** nocturnal city, future, uncertainty

## Resumo

Este texto serve como epílogo do número especial intitulado *Cidades Nocturnas : Passado, Presente e Futuro*. A primeira parte do texto que se segue apresenta um conjunto de temas de investigação que podem ser centrais na área interdisciplinar dos Estudos Noturnos, e cujos objectos de pesquisa e reflexão podem ser designados por "futuros urbanos noturnos". A segunda metade denuncia a ausência da 'noite' no desenho da chamada 'cidade de 15 minutos', que é o principal paradigma do desenvolvimento urbano em curso em muitas cidades do mundo (especialmente do Norte Global). A secção final lança luz sobre a urgente necessidade comunitária, institucional, empresarial e académica de debater e discutir o papel que a 'cidade nocturna' deve ter na construção de cidades climaticamente neutras num futuro a longo prazo.

**Palavras-chaves:** cidade noturna, futuro, incerteza

## Resumen

Este texto sirve de epílogo del número especial titulado *Ciudades Nocturnas : Pasado, Presente y Futuro*. La primera parte del texto presenta una serie de temas de investigación que pueden ser centrales en el área interdisciplinar de los Estudios Nocturnos, y cuyos objetos de investigación y reflexión pueden denominarse 'futuros urbanos nocturnos'. La segunda parte denuncia la ausencia de 'la noche' en el diseño de la llamada 'ciudad de los 15 minutos', que es el principal paradigma del desarrollo urbano actual en muchas ciudades del mundo (especialmente del Norte Global). La sección final arroja luz sobre la urgente necesidad comunitaria, institucional, industrial y académica de debatir y discutir el papel que la 'ciudad nocturna' debe tener en la construcción de ciudades climáticamente neutras en un futuro a largo plazo.

**Palabras-claves:** ciudad nocturna, futuro, incertidumbre

## INTRODUCTION

Franco Bianchini (1990, 1995) and Charles Landry (1991), who are the authors that conceptualised the idea of 24-hour cities, most likely did not anticipate the challenges that would threaten this paradigm in today's world. Many complex phenomena are emerging today as potentially negative factors in the present and future development and viability of 24-hour cities in many regions across the globe. The case of European 'nocturnal cities' is paradigmatic of this uncertain scenario. The changing global power dynamics resulting from the emergence of a new hegemonic block led by China, Russia, and India has mainly led to the depreciation of the value of Western currencies, leading to inflationary pressures that severely punish the financial and commercial balance of the nightlife industry which had already been severely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. In this sense, and in particular, the case of the United Kingdom is tragic. According to the Nighttime Industries Association, "more than half of nighttime economy businesses had seen trading costs increase more than 30 % compared to pre-pandemic levels while more than 70 % were barely breaking even or losing money in the current financial climate" (Weller, 2023). Moreover, both local and transnational speculative real estate funds remain as the main agents of an extractivist urban (re-)development that, in London, Manchester, Dublin, Berlin, Lisbon, Mexico City and Miami (among many other worldwide cities), has over the past years led to the destruction of a significant part of their nocturnal cultural fabric.

Despite all the potential negative factors mentioned up to this point, it is worth highlighting the ongoing but still insufficient urban ecological transition towards more sustainable and livable cities. However, the lack of resilience strategies, mechanisms and tools at local, national, and global levels for the readaptation of urban nighttime economies and social activities in times of climate

emergency is unexplainable (Nofre & Garcia-Ruiz, 2023). Moreover, and surprisingly, two-thirds of the Resilience and Recovery Plans approved under the European Next Generation Funds make no mention of the nightlife industry and offer no support for its green transformation, although a growing number of Europe's nightlife industry stakeholders have initiated a promising path for its 'green' transformation based on reducing their carbon footprint, energy and water consumption, and waste generation (Nofre & Garcia-Ruiz, 2023). However, Europe continues to be a privileged bubble of the world system whose political stability, the relative solidity of the economic-financial system and the fabric of civil society allow the implementation of processes of profound economic, social and cultural depth, such as the new European Green Deal. In most of the Global South, the urban ecological transition is still far from constituting a transnational urban transformation agenda, due in large part to the urgent need to address as far as possible the enormous socioeconomic inequalities that characterise the cities in this region of the world. The differentiated geo-economic, political, social, cultural and urban context between the Global North and the Global South is clearly reflected in the range of actions (or lack thereof) related to the governance of cities at night (Acuto et al., 2021).

The nocturnal city is indeed much more than pubs, clubs, and discotheques. In broadening our scientific gaze, the nocturnal city appears as a complex system – in the terminology of Ortman et al. (2020) and Rybski and González (2022) – made up of a dense network of informal/formal economies, mobilities (at urban and metropolitan scale), social and cultural activities (in domestic, private, and public spaces), and their multiple actors (both formal and informal, institutional and non-institutional). In the current transition towards more ecological and inclusive cities, the nocturnal city, which has been neglected worldwide in policy-making processes until very recently (Acuto et al., 2021; Seijas &

Gelders, 2021), is called to play a fundamental role in the path towards the achievement of the United Nations' *Sustainable Development Goals* and, more particularly, of the specified objectives of the United Nations' *New Urban Agenda* (2017). However, at the time of writing, the academic community has only timidly expressed the urgent need for more sustainable, resilient and egalitarian nocturnal cities.

Today, as never before in the forty years of interdisciplinary epistemological development of urban night studies, Night Studies is enjoying growing interest among the scholarly community of the Global North, South and East. This not only demonstrates how the excellent quality of most of the works published to date has awakened a growing interest in colleagues from different scientific disciplines and geographic regions, but also the need to reflect on (1) what our nocturnal cities should be like in the future, and (2) the civic commitment of a growing part of the nightologist community that denounces how our nocturnal cities have been, and still are, highly marked by inequalities in class, age, sexual orientation, transport provision, dis/ability, ethnic/national origin, cultural and religious backgrounds and their multiple intersections (e.g., Aramayona & Guarneros-Meza, 2023; Koren, 2023; Kosnick, 2018; May 2022).

This text serves as an epilogue to the special issue entitled *Nocturnal Cities: Past, Present, and Future*. The first part of the text below presents a series of research topics that are central to the interdisciplinary area of Night Studies, and whose objects of research and reflection can be referred to as "nocturnal urban futures". The second half proposes to denounce the absence of 'the night' in the design of the so-called "15-minute city", which is the main paradigm of ongoing urban development in many cities worldwide (especially from the Global North). The final section sheds light on the urgent community, institutional, industry and academic need for debating and discussing the role that the 'nocturnal city' should have in the construction of climate-neutral cities in the long-term future.

## RESEARCHING NOCTURNAL FUTURES

The design of urban futures can be seen as an ongoing dialectic between the 'politics of probability' (the desires of the ruling classes) and the 'politics of possibility' (the desires of the governed) (Appadurai, 2013). This has been particularly accentuated since the coronavirus pandemic and the irruption of the media-institutional discourse of the "new normal" (e.g., Dixon & Tewdwr-Jones, 2021; Jon, 2021; Kabisch et al., 2022). As expected, the number of publications on the impact of pandemic politics on both the present and the future of cities has been overwhelming worldwide (e.g., Askarizad & He, 2022;

Pasqui, 2022; Sharifi & Alizadeh, 2023). However, the number of scholarly publications on the impact of the pandemic on the nocturnal city and its implications for its future is very small – despite a few brilliant exceptions such as Acuto et al. (2021) and Dunn (2022a). Interestingly, Nick Dunn also argues that the potential for urban places after dark can be seen as "a means of thinking and moving through processes of change that could lead towards a more sustainable, diverse, and nuanced future city [lit.]" (Dunn, 2022b).

If we take into consideration what Appadurai (2013) argues about 'future-making' as an object of analysis, we can establish a list of big research topics on the urban night whose both empirical results and the scientific discussions associated with them could be very useful on the road to more ecological, resilient, inclusive, egalitarian and violence-free nocturnal cities. We therefore identify the following topics: environment; transportation; urban planning and development; tourism and mobilities; public health management; personal safety and public security; governance and policy-making; nocturnal informal work and economies; nocturnal formal work; nighttime culture and leisure (both formal and informal); social and cultural heritage; and, finally, the intangible dimension of the night (Andersson, 2023; Aramayona & Guarneros-Meza, 2023; Dunn & Edensor, 2023; García-Carpintero et al., 2023; Kapitza, 2022; Liu et al., 2023; Pawlusiński, 2023; Zhang & Zhang, 2023; Zielinska-Dabkowska, 2023). We argue that these big topics are meant to make up a research agenda for the development of the interdisciplinary field of Night Studies in the coming years. This is an open, non-exhaustive list that aims to demonstrate the magnitude and importance of a research object, the urban night, whose bibliographic production is much smaller than that which characterises the 'daytime city' (Shaw, 2018). In the second part of this text, the authors have chosen the future of the nighttime leisure industry and its relationship with the currently in vogue 15-minute city model as an item of special relevance, to demonstrate the lack of academic and public debate on the present and future of the nocturnal city.

## A NIGHT OF PROXIMITY?

A retrospective analysis of the evolution of nightlife in cities around the world over the last half-century unequivocally establishes that nighttime leisure remains a central aspect of social and cultural life in our global society, evoking vibrant memories for people all over the world (Chatterton & Hollands, 2003; Nofre & Eldridge, 2018; Thurnell-Read, 2021). In the particular case of Europe, nighttime commercial leisure has often been crucial for place branding strategies and local/regional development, in various

settings, ranging from metropolitan cities and coastal tourist areas to Southern European islands and even small to medium-sized towns in mountainous regions (Cardona et al. 2019; Eldridge & Smith, 2019; Gössling et al., 2023; Nofre, 2021a; Río-Rama et al., 2019; Segreto et al., 2009). In the Global South, nighttime leisure has gained popularity as a local development instrument, mostly in tourist areas and in the large metropolises of the region. However, while there is already a solid epistemological body on the transformation of the tourism industry into a more socially and environmentally sustainable industry (Fennell & Cooper, 2020; Hardy et al., 2002; Harris et al., 2012; McMinn, 1997; Seraphin & Gowreesunkar, 2021; Yfantidou & Matarazzo, 2017), the study of how Europe and Latin America's nighttime leisure industry can contribute to a climate-neutral and 'socially just' world still remains largely unaddressed – with the exception of Nofre and Garcia-Ruiz (2023).

The lack of debate on the role of the nighttime leisure industry in the transition to more sustainable cities highlights the need for a thoughtful discussion on how the nighttime leisure industry should be in the mid and long-term future, and how it can contribute to fostering more ecological, resilient, inclusive, and egalitarian nights in a climate-neutral world. Interestingly, this discussion entails two critical questions that still do not have a clear answer. Firstly, the political and civic debate on the urban ecological transition of the nighttime leisure industry should not be restricted to a purely environmental discussion such as reducing its ecological and carbon footprint. It should consider that the environmental discussion cannot be dissociated from two of its fundamental components: "the spatial" and "the social". In other words, the question of whether city centres can experience a sustained growth of the nightlife economy, whether it should decrease, or whether these activities should be located away from urban residential areas, needs to be thoroughly investigated in the current context of a climate emergency. On the other hand, the second critical question related to the discussion on '*how the nightlife industry should be in the mid and long-term future*' inherently involves a debate on the spatial distribution pattern of nightlife activities in the city (Mercado-Celis 2017, 2020). Crucially, this debate is strongly related to the still unresolved conflict between the *right to rest* of the residents and the presence of a large number of nightlife venues, especially in central urban areas (e.g. Aramayona & García-Sánchez, 2021; Mach et al., 2022; Ngesan & Karim, 2012; Roberts & Turner, 2005). But at the same time, this debate is strongly linked to the so-called right to the city at night (Acuto et al., 2023) as well as, more broadly, to the development of the proximity city model, or 15-minute city model (Allam et al., 2022; Khavarian-Garmsir et al., 2023).

These latter concepts have recently emerged in the field of urban planning, offering a new framework for fostering sustainable, livable and healthy urban environments (e.g., Allam, Bibri, Chabaud & Moreno, 2022a; Allam, Nieuwenhuijsen, Chabaud & Moreno, 2022b). However, Khavarian-Garmsir et al. argue that the 15-minute city model may not adequately address the need to protect local culture and heritage, among other factors (Khavarian-Garmsir et al., 2023). In parallel, they point out that differences in urban morphology between cities in the Global North, South and East, or between Nordic and Southern European cities (just to provide another example) reveal the potentially unfeasible nature of the implementation of this '15-minute city' model worldwide (Khavarian-Garmsir et al., 2023).

The 15-minute city model as a driver of sustainability, livability, and health in dense urban areas is not novel in the global urban geography (Alberti & Radicchi, 2023). Moreover, the history of utopian urban planning and regeneration aimed at creating sustainable, inclusive and vibrant communities has largely been based on desegregating disadvantaged groups (Casarin et al., 2023), while the role of powerful transnational corporations has become central to the development of smart cities' governance (Fonseca Alfaro et al., 2023; Pieterse, 2022). In addition, and related to the purpose of this text, the nocturnal city has never been a central element in the history of urban theory in the Global North, South and East. In fact, there is still no publication to date that clearly presents the role of 'nighttime leisure' and 'nighttime culture' (formal or informal) in the 15-minute city. In the existing scholarly works on the 15-minute city, leisure only refers to the playful practices of children in the public space of the neighbourhoods, or to the range of sports in which citizens take part (e.g., Di Marino et al., 2023; Janpavle & Île, 2022). However, we should not forget that urban planning is intrinsically linked to moral values about how the habitat in which we live should be in the future (Gébert et al., 2023; Krarup, 2022; Lau et al., 2021). Therefore, the absence of nighttime leisure and nighttime culture in the numerous works already published on the implementation of the 15-minute city model should lead us to discuss the hypothetical existence of a conservative, anti-night moralising agenda that would underlie the expansion of the 15-minute city model.

## FINAL THOUGHTS

The absence of references to the city at night by the theorists of the 15-minute city demonstrates the urgent need for further exploration of the multifaceted, complex, non-linear factors and processes that characterise the nocturnal city in the present – and that should characterise it in the future. Although

this final section is therefore not intended to confirm or refute any specific statement, the conspicuous absence of formal and informal nighttime leisure activities from future city design and planning models is surprising to say the least, since these activities contribute to socio-emotional well-being, community building, and multicultural understanding (Mercado-Celis 2018; Nofre, 2021b; Wheatley & Bickerton, 2022). In sum, the irruption of the '15-minute city' and its implications for daily urban life makes visible the urgent community, institutional, industry and academic need for debating and discussing the role that the 'nocturnal city' should have in the construction of inclusive, egalitarian, violence-free, climate-neutral cities. Assuming that many nightologists love the night and their work (which, in many cases, is part of a very personal lifestyle), the juxtaposition of an uncertain present scenario and an unknown future challenge us to adopt a "militant/activist socio-environmental approach" to promote greener, more resilient, inclusive and egalitarian nights. However, it is crucial to acknowledge that as we express this "eco-militant/activist approach" in the interdisciplinary field of Urban Night Studies, we should not forget the (growing) existence of a wide range of inequalities and injustices that continue to characterise the Nocturnal City worldwide.

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The authors declare that they have no competing interests.

### Contribution of authors

The first and the second authors were responsible for the article's conceptualization, and writing (draft, review & editing). The third author was responsible for writing (review).

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## INFORMAÇÕES AOS AUTORES

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JPG/PNG (com resolução mínima de 300 dpi). As citações e referências bibliográficas devem seguir a norma APA 7th Edition.

Os artigos devem ter no máximo 40.000 caracteres (incluindo espaços, resumos, notas de rodapé, bibliografia, tabelas, gráficos e figuras, o que perfaz cerca de 18 páginas) e só serão considerados para avaliação científica caso os autores não ultrapassem o limite de caracteres estipulado. Recomenda-se que os autores sigam a seguinte estrutura para os artigos empíricos: introdução; enquadramento teórico; métodos; resultados; discussão; agradecimentos; notas; referências.

Os artigos devem ser iniciados com título, resumo e palavras-chaves no idioma principal do texto e no idioma Português e Inglês, caso o texto não seja escrito nestes idiomas – com um máximo de 1.000 caracteres (10 linhas) cada resumo, seguidos de 3 ou 4 palavras-chave nesses mesmos idiomas – e da indicação do número de global caracteres (com espaços incluídos). Os resumos deverão contemplar as seguintes informações: introdução ao estudo; referência às abordagens teórica e metodológica; principais resultados; conclusões; e relevância do trabalho.

Os artigos devem ainda apresentar as seguintes informações: **1)** declaração sobre a/s função/ões desempenhada/s por cada autor listado na produção do texto, conforme as nomenclaturas da taxonomia CRedIT; **2)** declaração sobre a existência ou ausência de conflitos de interesse; e **3)** declaração sobre a existência ou ausência de fontes de financiamento à pesquisa.

É política editorial da Forum Sociológico respeitar a opção ortográfica dos autores para a língua portuguesa, devendo ser explicitado numa nota final qual a ortografia adotada.

A utilização de material de terceiros deverá vir acompanhada de uma declaração de autorização de utilização com consentimento legal e deverá ser obtida pelos autores do trabalhos.

Os autores listados nos trabalhos originais deverão cumprir todos os seguintes critérios de autoria: **1)** ter contribuído de modo substantivo para a conceção/desenho do trabalho ou na recolha, análise ou interpretação dos dados; **E 2)** ter contribuído de modo substantivo na escrita ou revisão crítica; **E 3)** aprovar a versão final submetida, responsabilizando-se pela totalidade do trabalho realizado, incluindo as suas implicações éticas. Os colaboradores que não se enquadrem nos critérios de autoria deverão ser mencionados na seção "Agradecimentos". A Forum Sociológico desaprova a atribuição de autoria honorária, oferecida, convidada ou fantasma nos trabalhos propostos à publicação. Neste âmbito, seguimos as diretrizes do COPE no que diz respeito às definições de autoria (disponíveis aqui).

Ao publicarem na revista Forum Sociológico, os autores concordam com a cedência, a título gratuito e exclusivo, do direito de primeira publicação ao CICS.NOVA – Centro Interdisciplinar de Ciências Sociais, Faculdade de Ciências Sociais e Humanas da Universidade NOVA de Lisboa, reservando-se este o direito de o reproduzir e publicar em suporte de papel e/ou suporte digital e de o distribuir e promover por todos os meios normais à sua disposição. Além disso, os autores autorizam o CICS.NOVA, a título gratuito, o direito de disponibilização em acesso aberto do respetivo artigo nos *websites* da publicação e do CICS.NOVA, no Repositório da Universidade NOVA de Lisboa – o RUN, e em bases de dados e plataformas de agregação de conteúdos científicos.

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Os trabalhos publicados também recebem um identificador persistente, o *Digital Object Identifier* (DOI), atribuído através da plataforma *OpenEdition Journals*.

## PROCESSO DE ARBITRAGEM CIENTÍFICA E DECISÃO SOBRE PUBLICAÇÃO DOS ARTIGOS

O Conselho de Redação reserva-se o direito de publicar/não publicar os artigos recebidos, comprometendo-se a informar os autores sobre a decisão. A decisão é apoiada num processo de apreciação dos artigos com base num sistema anónimo de arbitragem científica realizado em duas fases sucessivas:

1. Os artigos propostos são submetidos a uma primeira análise por parte do Conselho de Redação, que decide sobre a passagem dos artigos à fase seguinte de submissão a parecer de especialistas. Esta decisão tem

em consideração a pertinência, o interesse e a qualidade dos artigos, assim como os critérios definidos de acordo com a política editorial da revista e as normas para a apresentação de originais.

2. Os artigos selecionados na primeira fase são submetidos ao parecer de avaliadores, num mínimo de 2, em regime de anonimato bilateral. Os pareceres dos avaliadores irão fundamentar a decisão final do Conselho de Redação no que respeita à publicação dos respetivos artigos.

O Conselho de Redação envia os pareceres dos avaliadores aos autores de forma anónima, sugerindo a realização das alterações ou correções propostas nos referidos pareceres, podendo condicionar a publicação dos artigos a uma nova apreciação das versões revistas.

Caso os artigos que passem à segunda fase de apreciação não sejam aceites para publicação, a *Forum Sociológico* informará os autores acerca dos

motivos dessa decisão, podendo enviar os respetivos pareceres dos avaliadores.

A decisão final de publicação é da responsabilidade do Conselho de Redação, com base nos pareceres emitidos pelos avaliadores e a partir de critérios previamente estabelecidos pelo Conselho de Redação.

Os textos publicados são da responsabilidade dos respetivos autores.

## NORMAS PARA APRESENTAÇÃO DE DOSSIÊS TEMÁTICOS

A *Forum Sociológico* poderá publicar dossiês temáticos sobre temas relevantes no âmbito das Ciências Sociais.

As propostas de dossiês temáticos deverão ser enviadas para o *email* da revista ([forum@fcsh.unl.pt](mailto:forum@fcsh.unl.pt)) e deverão conter as seguintes informações:

- Título proposto para o dossiê;
- Nome do(s) coordenador(es) do dossiê juntamente com a(s) sua(s) respetiva(s) afiliação(ões) institucional(ais), indicada(s) a três níveis (Universidade, Faculdade; Departamento ou Centro), e *email(s)* de contacto;
- Um pequeno texto de apresentação que identifique o tema do dossiê, a sua relevância e articulação com o domínio científico de publicação da *Forum Sociológico*.

A coordenação deverá indicar uma data prevista para a publicação do dossiê e também para a entrega dos artigos e deverá informar o número de artigos previstos para o dossiê;

As propostas de artigos deverão ser enviadas para o *email* da revista ([forum@fcsh.unl.pt](mailto:forum@fcsh.unl.pt)) e deverão cumprir as normas de publicação adotadas pela revista.

Todos os artigos propostos serão submetidos ao processo de arbitragem científica da revista. A coordenação ficará responsável pela seleção de pelo me-

nos dois árbitros científicos por artigo, os quais ficam sujeitos à aprovação do Conselho de Redação.

A revista ficará responsável pela gestão do processo de avaliação científica (recepção de artigos; envio de convite aos árbitros científicos; envio de pareceres aos autores; envio de artigos ao(s) coordenador(es) do dossiê);

Os artigos a integrar os dossiês temáticos serão publicados segundo os critérios do processo de arbitragem científica adotados pela revista. Em complemento, a coordenação do dossiê poderá fazer convites de publicação a especialistas no domínio em causa, os quais ficam sujeitos à aprovação do Conselho de Redação;

No caso de os árbitros científicos sugerirem aos autores alterações ou correções, o Conselho de Redação zelarà pela efetiva introdução das mesmas. A decisão final de publicação é da responsabilidade do Conselho de Redação, com base nos pareceres emitidos pelos *referees*, a partir de critérios previamente estabelecidos pela revista;

A coordenação ficará responsável pela organização e revisão final dos artigos a serem publicados e por escrever o Editorial;

A publicação do dossiê temático no ano em que é feita a sua submissão estará sempre dependente do calendário da revista planeado pelo Conselho de Redação.

## DECLARAÇÃO DE ÉTICA E BOAS PRÁTICAS

A revista *Forum Sociológico* defende e segue os Princípios de Transparência e Boas Práticas em Publicações Académicas e as Práticas Base do COPE (Committee on Publication Ethics).

O Conselho de Redação e os seus revisores científicos promovem a igualdade na publicação

científica para todos os artigos e autores que colaboram com a Revista.

As práticas de plágio, manipulação de citações e de imagens e a fabricação de dados são desaprovadas pela Revista. Todos os trabalhos submetidos para publicação serão submetidos a

um reconhecido programa de deteção de plágio. Ao suspeitar algum tipo de má conduta, antes ou depois da publicação de originais, o Conselho de Redação seguirá as diretrizes do COPE, quer no que respeita à definição de plágio quer no que respeita às medidas a tomar (disponíveis em <https://publicationethics.org/files/plagiarism%20A.pdf>). A confirmação de plágio implicará a não publicação do artigo submetido assim como de outras publicações durante um período de tempo a ser definido pelo Conselho de Redação.

Os autores indicados nos trabalhos originais deverão cumprir todos os critérios abaixo referidos: 1) ter contribuído de modo substantivo para a conceção/desenho do trabalho ou na recolha, análise ou interpretação dos dados ; E 2) ter contribuído de modo substantivo na escrita ou revisão crítica ; E 3) aprovar a versão final submetida, responsabilizando-se pela totalidade do trabalho realizado, incluindo as suas implicações éticas. Os colaboradores que não se enquadrem nos critérios de autoria deverão ser mencionados na seção "Agradecimentos". A Forum Sociológico desaprova a atribuição de autoria honorária, oferecida, convidada ou fantasma nos manuscritos propostos à publicação. Neste âmbito, seguimos as diretrizes do COPE no que diz respeito às definições de autoria (disponíveis em [https://publicationethics.org/files/COPE\\_DD\\_A4\\_Authorship\\_SEPT19\\_SCREEN\\_AW.pdf](https://publicationethics.org/files/COPE_DD_A4_Authorship_SEPT19_SCREEN_AW.pdf)).

A Revista promove a transparência e a integridade na publicação científica de modo a combater quaisquer conflitos de interesses que possam emergir durante o processo de pesquisa, de escrita ou de publicação de um trabalho científico. Em casos em que se identifique um conflito de interesse por parte da Revista, de autores, de revisores, de membros dos Conselhos ou da equipa técnica, a Forum Sociológico seguirá igualmente as diretrizes do COPE (disponíveis em <https://publicationethics.org/>).

Em caso de suspeitas de má conduta científica ou da necessidade de correções, revisões ou retratações em originais, estas deverão ser dirigidas por escrito para o endereço eletrónico da Revista ([forum@fcsh.unl.pt](mailto:forum@fcsh.unl.pt)). Além disso, todas as reclamações sobre a Revista, a equipa técnica, ou o Conselho de Redação deverão ser igualmente dirigidas por escrito para o email da Revista.

Caso um artigo já tenha sido publicado online, a deteção de uma violação dos princípios éticos, da integridade da investigação científica e/ou dos princípios orientadores da Revista, pode originar a publicação de um complemento do artigo com uma errata explicativa ou, em casos graves, a retratação do artigo, sendo, neste caso, adicionada uma nota explicativa da redação com a justificação dessa retratação.

## INDEXAÇÃO

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- DOAJ
- SciELO Portugal
- SciELO Citation Index na Web of Science
- OpenEdition Journals
- Dimensions
- Qualis-CAPES
- Google Scholar
- Latindex 2.0
- ERIH PLUS
- MIAR
- ClassifICS
- CIRC
- SHERPA/RoMEO
- DRJI

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