

The embodied margins

By Jota Mombaça, excerpt of the magazine Transnational dialogues, 2016

The following artist, Tertuliana Lustosa, is an anti-colonial writer and activist for trans-gender rights. The picture I choose to display here was taken during 2015 Rio Slut Walk. Among other trans activists, the artist dressed in a mest-bikini and walked along the waterfront of Copacabana with the banner “one is not born a woman, but rather becomes traveca”. More than the bodily presence of the artist and the meat clothing she was dressed in, I would like to high-liht the parody of Beauvoir’s famous statement, “one is not bor, but rather becomes a woman”

As a trans-gender artist-theorist, Lustosa’s sentence makes problematic both normative gender definitions, and the canon of construction gender perspectives. It consequently disrupts the historical erasure of trans-gender voices and perspectives in the intellectual, artistic and political fields, as well as in Westerised society in general. Lustosa writes, “this manifesto arises as a weapon for intellectual illegality (clandestinidade),” She continues, “even if it won’t bring effective solutions for the Transphobia problem in Brazil, it breaks my silence as a Travesti Baiana, which I consider as a step towards Transrevolutions in this country.”

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