

Romantic love, regional differences and cultural capital
a comparative study between Germany and Brazil

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Berlin, 25. September 2015.

Renata Sternberg

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Abstract

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The present empirical study investigates how love has been practiced and signified in two different contexts, Germany and Brazil, and examines the implications of cultural capital in this process. Regarding the disparity of scholarly opinion on the subject, the theoretical chapter offers a broad definition of love as a system of meanings and attempts to bring together the contributions of different social scientists on the subject. Grounded in the interpretivist ontological-epistemological approach, this study was conducted under the framework of qualitative social research. Using participant observations, questionnaires, interviews and field notes, the study investigated the amorous conduct of the regional and cultural capital groups. Participant observations of events for singles and reports of respondents who are or were in a binational relationship (Brazil - Germany) were analyzed to describe a courtship process between strangers on-site, and the differences observed in the conduct of the regional groups were highlighted. Bourdieu's concepts of field and habitus were applied to explain possible nuances in regional amorous codes. Regarding the explanations of respondents for their courtship conduct it was observed how the particular socio-historical trajectories of liberal democracy and feminism in those countries seem to lead the regional groups to favor different artifices of seduction, to follow different paths to an intimate relationship and to deal with different dilemmas and conflicts during courtship. The role of cultural capital in the amorous experience was investigated through the reports of respondents on romance. Although no difference in the experience of romance could be observed between cultural capital groups, some could be observed between the regional groups, which were presented and again related to the socio-historical trajectories of liberal democracy and feminism in those countries.

Keywords: romantic love, regional differences, cultural capital, courtship, romance, social construction of reality, intimacy, individualization process, Germany, Brazil, Qualitative Social Research

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1. Introduction

Love is not a new topic of discussion. It has been contemplated by numerous thinkers from ancient to modern times. Although much work has been produced on love throughout history, it was only at the beginning of the 20th century that love became an acknowledged scientific object (see Simmel 2004[1921-1922]). Nevertheless, only in the last four decades has the social scientific production on love intensified. This transformation can be traced to the change of paradigm that took place in the social sciences at the end of the 20th century. Highlighting the role of symbolic structures and collective meanings in the construction of the social world, the cultural paradigm brought significant changes to epistemology, methodology, empirical research and social theory (Reckwitz 1999:20; Reckwitz 2000:18, 22-38).

As Geertz (1973:89) defines, culture is a “historically transmitted pattern of meanings embodied in symbols, a system of inherited conceptions expressed in symbolic forms by means of which men communicate, perpetuate, and develop their knowledge about and attitudes toward life.”

Regarding the social world no longer as a product of norms and intentions, but as collective structures of meanings – orders of knowledge, semantics, cultural models, schemas of interpretation, symbolic codes – that provide sense to the world, describe objects and explain functions (Reckwitz 1999:25-26; Reckwitz 2000:16), social scientists started to adopt those systems of meanings as the object of their empirical research (Reckwitz 2000:22).

The aim of science became to provide an adequate reconstruction of the structures of meanings of the social world and its products (Reckwitz 1999:20). In their attempts to comprehend the social world, scientists apply and develop particular linguistic frameworks, contributing to the collective structure of meanings and offering heuristic tools more or less adequate for their contingent interpretation of social realities (Reckwitz 1999:20; Reckwitz 2000:24; della Porta and Keating 2008:24).

Despite the great number of scientific studies on love, a common definition of the object does not exist. The most advanced social scientific productions on love can be found in English-speaking and German-speaking centers of study. Although a collaborative work between those language-centers would be desirable, this has rarely occurred, leading to a proliferation of concepts of love which hampers any theoretical integration.¹

But the theoretical disparity on love is apparent not only between language centers, it can also be observed within them. Scholars rarely agree on basic assumptions about love and they tend to regard the object in different forms – as cultural discourse, emotion, practices, social

¹ As summarized by Felmler and Sprecher (2006:405) in their article on the main psychological and sociological studies on love – which only regard English literature – at least thirteen different conceptualizations of love can be found.

interaction, relationships and so on – and to go beyond their disciplinary paradigms, as by mixing social and evolutionary theories to explain love (Felmlee and Sprecher 2006:404).

Ignoring the contributions of others and highlighting different aspects of love, the studies on the subject seem at first like unsorted pieces of a puzzle. In an effort to remedy this, the present study, grounded in the cultural paradigm, focuses in the chapter *The socio-historical construction of love* on influential social studies on the subject in the English, German and Portuguese literature and attempts to bring together the contributions of different scholars under a broad definition of love as a system of meanings that is produced and transformed by humankind in its socio-historical trajectory. Thus, love is understood here as comprising symbols and images; metaphors; stories and folk theories; ideologies; and prescriptions of conducts, of emotions and of practices. It is a common knowledge that people resort to in order to make sense of their experience. This system of meanings is learned and incorporated in different forms, from practical experience to the consumption of cultural resources: by observing, experiencing and practicing amorous gestures such as touching and saying “I love you”, by hearing and telling love stories, by reading romances or magazine articles and self-help books on amorous relationships, and so on.

Regarding the social construction of reality (Berger and Luckmann 1966), the present study assumes that social relationships are constitutive of the process of nomos-building, i.e. in the construction of a meaningful reality (Berger and Kellner 1964:1). Each society has its specific way of defining and perceiving reality, which can be most clearly observed in the spoken language of a group, which forms the base and instrumentality of a much larger symbolic system (Berger and Kellner 1964:2-4). This symbolic system enables individuals to signify and order their everyday experience, and by applying it, the individual helps to actualize the socially constructed reality grounded in it. Held in common by the members of a society, their symbolic system acquires the character of objectivity and is taken for granted as their social reality. Without a shared symbolic system, social life would be impossible, since without such ordering principles individuals would not be able to share their experiences and conduct would not be mutually intelligible (Berger and Kellner 1964:3).

In order to sustain one’s reality, identity and place in the world, the individual must constantly validate them, which occurs through ongoing social interaction with others who share the same reality. Nevertheless, some validations are more important than others, and those are provided by the few individuals who are one’s truly significant others. All the actions and the continued presence of the co-inhabitants of one’s social world, and especially of significant others, have a sustaining function for one’s reality (Berger and Kellner 1964:4). In other words,

The plausibility and stability of the world, as socially defined, is dependent upon the strength and continuity of significant relationships in which conversation about this world can be continually carried on. Or, to put it a little differently: The reality of the world is sustained through conversation with significant others. This reality, of course, includes not only the imagery by which fellowmen are viewed, but also includes the way in which one views oneself. The reality-bestowing force of social relationships depends on the degree of their nearness, that is, on the degree to which social relationships occur in face-to-face situations and to which they are credited with primary significance by the individual. (Berger and Kellner 1964:4-5)

Although scholars highlight different bases for the flourishing of the modern form of love, i.e. romantic love – the emergence of an emotional moral order (Luhmann 1986), separation between workplace and home and the sexual division of work (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 1990), the invention of home and maternity and transformation of the child-parent relationship (Giddens 1992a), and the advent of a leisure culture (Illouz 1997) – they all refer to social changes that pushed the process of individualization further, i.e. the movement of individuals to focus on themselves, to cultivate a personal history, own interests, a self, and to develop a subjective perspective of the world. Furthering the separation of the individual from the group, the individualization process has been intensifying the modern dilemma between the wish for individuality and the necessity for intimacy and leading to transformations on love through time, as the short description of the occidental formation of romantic love offered in the chapter *The socio-historical construction of love* attempts to explain.

Romantic love flourishes in modernity as an expression of the new individual mentality and the human resolution to the rising modern dilemma between intimacy and individuality. As the first form of love that is clearly regarded as located in the individual, romantic love became consequently an integral element not only of the process of the constitution of the self, by offering meanings for its conceptual definition as lover and beloved, by providing prescriptions of practices – e.g. to kiss, to send love letters, to say “I love you” – and physiological reactions – e.g. happiness, longing, euphoria, sorrow – but also of the process of the constitution of society, since, by directing the *I* towards a *you*, romantic love provides an orientation for social interaction and a definition for close relationships.

As scholars (Illouz and Wilf 2009, Illouz 2012, Sternberg 1995, Swidler 2001) have pointed out, the relevance of love in society lies not only in the fact that it is one of the most common subjects of cultural productions, being present in literature, film, art, music, history, theater and so on, but also in the fact that love is a central subject in the lives of people and serves as a guideline for biographical narratives. Love has become in modernity a binding element responsible for the establishment of intimate relationships (Luhmann 1986) and consequently for the formation of families (Simmel 2004, Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 1990). It orients sexual mores and is responsible for social cohesion, reproduction and integration (Bourdieu 2001, Giddens 1992a). Studies on love have helped to investigate culture in action, to explore the expression of the self, and to analyze the constitution of modern society.

Since social scientists are particularly interested in the physical and social reproduction of society, they have been focusing on the form of love that has been related in modernity with the formation of families and of intimate heterosexual relationships,² i.e. romantic love, and they have been investigating it in different forms. Those more interested in identifying the

² Social changes in the last few decades in Western countries, such as same-sex marriage and adoption by same-sex couples, as well as the development of reproductive technologies such as artificial insemination, have been enabling new family constellations and therefore breaking the focus of social scientists on heterosexual relationships. Nevertheless, the majority of studies on love still fail to regard same-sex relationships, and therefore inadvertently help to sustain heteronormativity.

meanings of love have examined the cultural productions on love – such as literature, films, music and so on [e.g. Luhmann 1986, Singer 1984]; others, more interested in the function of the definition of the self, have looked at how individuals apply discourses on love to define themselves and their choices in life [e.g. Swidler 2001; Illouz 2012], or investigated the relations between romantic love and consumer culture [e.g. Illouz 1997, Hochschild 2003]; and a third group, interested in its function of social cohesion, have analyzed the types of interaction and models of relationships that romantic love engenders in the realm of family and gender relations [e.g. Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 1990; Bourdieu 2001, Giddens 1992a, Lenz 2009]. Although for theoretical purposes it is possible to classify the studies on love into one of these fields of investigation, empirically they are intertwined and reinforce each other, since the meanings of love orient the self and its interaction and relation with others, making it impossible to restrict a study on love to only one of these fields.

The importance of romantic love in modernity is unquestionable; nevertheless, scholars have pointed out how social changes in recent decades have been leading to a transformation in the realms of love. They have suggested that the romantic form of love is coming to an end in late modernity, whether because it is being replaced by a new form, or because of the process of secularization. One of the most active researchers on the subject, Eva Illouz, argues that through modernity love has become appropriated by the market, rendering the experience of romance dependent upon one's economic and cultural capital³ (Illouz 1997) and points to the secularization of love through the market, the cultural industry and new technologies (Illouz 2013).

Considering the importance of romantic love in contemporary society, the divergent opinions among scholars about the future of love, Illouz's consideration that cultural capital stipulates the "romantic competence" of individuals in contemporary society (Illouz 1997:286) and the small number of studies on love in Latin America, the present study proposes to investigate how love has been practiced and signified in two distinct contexts, Germany and Brazil, and the implication of the cultural capital in this process.

While Germany has one of the most advanced sociological productions on love, in Brazil the sociological studies on love are limited. Nevertheless, the studies in Germany are mostly sociohistorical reviews of the subject and lack investigations that privilege amorous practices, interactions and exchanges, as highlighted by Burkart (1998:29). In Brazil, the few empirical studies on love can be found chiefly in the fields of psychology (Féres-Carneiro 1996), sexuality (Heilborn 2004) and anthropology (Rebhum 1999).

As described in the chapter *The research: epistemological and methodological standpoints*, this study shares the assumptions of the interpretivist ontological-epistemological approach that arose in social sciences with the cultural turn at the end of the 20th century, and therefore it was conducted according to the guidelines of qualitative social research. Because of the

³ Cultural capital as defined by Bourdieu (1986) is the result of learning, i.e. it is the socially valued knowledge that an individual may have. More explanations about it can be found in the chapter *Love and cultural capital: the impact of the level of education on the experience of romance*.

initial broad aim of this study, the field research was characterized by different and parallel lines of investigation. Given that amorous interactions do not restrict themselves to stable relationships, the field research was initiated with the observation of individuals at events for singles. A questionnaire on romantic love answered by high-school students in Berlin was provided to the researcher at the beginning of the field research, giving rise to a new line of investigation. Although romantic love is a subject that incites people's interest, its investigation is complicated, since individuals not only tend to regard their amorous interactions as private and therefore are not so willing to discuss them with strangers, but also because they tend to regard love as natural and self-evident. The difficulties encountered in the field and the conclusions drawn from the first two lines of investigation and the observation that the foreigners in the acquaintance and friend groups of the researcher⁴ could easily describe differences between their amorous experiences with fellow nationals and individuals in Germany, led to a third line of investigation based on questionnaires and interviews with individuals who are or were in binational relationships (Brazil - Germany). The methods and instruments applied in this study, the sampling process, the definition of the sample, the treatment of the collected material, and the description of the sample are presented in the methodological chapter and in the appendix.

Focusing on the process of establishing an amorous relationship, the presentation of the data begins in the chapter *Courtship: observing the formation of intimate relationships* by providing a report on the observations conducted at events for singles in Germany and in Brazil. The settings are described, as well as the main observations gathered in both regions. Descriptions of courtship situations in both settings are offered in order to illustrate the subtle differences in interactions in each region. At the end of the chapter the inferences that can be drawn from the data are pointed out.

Regarding the regional differences observed in the events for singles and in the reports of individuals who are or were in a binational relationship (Brazil - Germany), the chapter *The courtship process: grasping the meanings behind courtship* attempts to investigate further the establishment of intimate relationships by summarizing common and divergent behaviors of the regional groups in the process. Therefore, a detailed description of the three phases that seem to constitute a face-to-face encounter between strangers is presented, pointing out the different nuances observed between the regional groups during the process.

In the chapter the differences observed between the regional groups during courtship are discussed. The chapter starts by offering a theoretical explanation for the particularities observed in courtship in each regional group. Referring to Bourdieu's concepts of "field" and "habitus", it is argued that different socio-historical trajectories of nations lead to different field constellations and consequently to different amorous codes. Regarding the discourses that respondents applied to explain their courtship behavior, the chapter highlights how

⁴ This methodological approach is referred by Manning (1987) as "existential field work", and emphasizes the relationship between researcher and object and allows the first to apply his/her own knowledge and use his/her circle of discussions to establish hypotheses and allegations about the object.

liberal democratic and feminist discourses in Germany and in Brazil seem to have generated specific courtship dynamics, which seem to lead the regional groups to regard courtship acts as more or less intimate, to favor different artifices of seduction, to follow different paths to an intimate relationship and to deal with different dilemmas and conflicts during courtship.⁵

With reference to Illouz's consideration that cultural capital stipulates the "romantic competence" of individuals in contemporary society (Illouz 1997:286), the discourse of respondents about romance and their romantic experiences is analyzed in the chapter *Love and cultural capital: the impact of the level of education on the experience of romance*. As could be observed, individuals apply romantic clichés to communicate their romantic intentions, and a more accurate analysis of the data suggests that two main experiences seems to constitute romantic moments: the experience of realizing how much one is cherished by the partner and how much one cherishes the partner, and the experience of communion. Although no significant difference could be found between individuals with higher and lower levels of education in regard to romance, some could be observed between the regional groups, which were discussed again regarding the socio-historical trajectory of democracy and feminism in each nation.

As a qualitative study, the results of this investigation cannot be regarded as representative of the amorous behavior of the majority of individuals in Germany and in Brazil or of individuals with higher or lower cultural capital. Nevertheless, it provides insights into culture in action, into how different socio-historical trajectories may lead to different amorous codes, into how love has been *in part* practiced and experienced in Germany and in Brazil, into how those codes may orient individuals' lives, into what form of amorous relationships may emerge in each nation, and into what may be the future of love.

⁵ It is important to note that this study does not attempt a systematic comparison of the political culture in both regions, but to discuss the construction of love in Germany and in Brazil.

2. The socio-historical construction of love

2.1. The origins of romantic love: from ancient times to the 17th century

Socio-historical studies have revealed the different meanings attributed to love through time, which seem to conjugate in its modern form, i.e. *romantic love*. Discussions on love can be observed in occidental history at least since ancient times. Plato in “Symposium”, offering an outline of a theory on *eros*, suggested that love is “the desire of the whole” (Plato 2013: position 86 / 1224). Through the myth of creation presented in the speech of Aristophanes, Plato defined love as the longing for the lost half of oneself (Kundera 1984 apud Burkart 1998:16-17). According to the myth, originally humans were created by the Gods as double beings – i.e. as a round middle with four legs, four arms and two heads – but after they attempted to overthrow the gods, those decided in retribution to split humans into two parts (Plato 2013: position 87 / 1224). Because of their original form, humans would tend to keep searching for their other half in order to become once again a whole. This original platonic description of love with its emphasis in the search for the missing part introduced the meaning of longing for completeness in the concept of love, and by stressing the role of the body, of physical interaction as a mean to reunite, it intensified the erotic and sexual aspects of love. In *eros*, love is a force that impels us toward others, the desire for a missing part, the yearning for someone, the longing for completion, the utter joy in the possession of the loved one (Costa 1998:36-37).

As Taylor (1989:121) observes, oppositions are crucial to Plato, such as that of the soul versus the body, which can easily be observed in his myth on love described above, and which has been appropriated further by other thinkers, giving rise to the dualism of mind-body that reverberates through Western society until today (Howes 2005:6; Taylor 1989:113).

Socrates also contributed to the concept of *eros* in “Symposium” by asserting that love is the pursuit of the beautiful (Plato 2013: position 94 / 1224): “Love is of something, and that which love desires is not that which love is or has; for no man desires that which he is or has. And love is of the beautiful.” For Socrates, love is a human response to the recognition of the true values that should be aspired to by wise men, i.e. Good and Beauty (Costa 1998:37). By arguing that love is the quest for something one lacks, Socrates’s discourse emphasized again the aspect of desire in the conception of love (Burkhart 1998:16-17).

Another three concepts of love also blossomed in ancient times: *philia*, *nomos* and *agape*. Aristoteles introduced *philia* in “Nicomachean Ethics”, describing it as friendship, as a moral category that enables and promotes social cohesion (Burkhart 1998:17-18). The essence of *philia* was not the longing and desire for a missing part as present in *eros*, but the common wish for the other’s happiness (Burkhart 1998:17-18). *Nomos* and *agape* were forms of love promoted by the Jewish culture; with the former referring to the love for the laws of God and the subjection to His will, and the latter referring to the love of God for humans (Burkart 1998:18). Since God loves His children for their existence, His love is spontaneous, gratuitous

and absolute; it does not depend on His children's personal qualities and they cannot be held accountable for His love (Illouz 1997:211). Irrational and inexplicably bestowed on someone, *agape* introduced in the concept of love the idea of love as an uncontrolled and unrestrained force.

It is important to note that in the context of ancient Greece, the conceptions of love mentioned above – *eros* and *philia* – were usually discussed in reference to relationships between men and not between a man and a woman (Burkart 1998:16). They were commonly applied to speak about homosexual relationships in which an older man was a mentor and protector of a younger one.

As time passed, the four conceptions of love – *eros*, *philia*, *nomos*, *agape* – were appropriated and transformed by the arising Christian culture (Burkart 1998:18). Augustine, for example, through his central and essential discussions of oppositions such as spirit/matter, higher/lower, eternal/temporal, immutable/changing in terms of inner/outer, intensified the dualism of mind-body (Taylor 1989:128-129). For him, the inner was the soul, while the outer was the body, the physical, "what we have in common with the beasts, including even our senses, and the memory storage of our images of outer things" (Taylor 1989:129). By suggesting that the way to God was through an inner path, i.e. through the soul, Augustine furthered the exaltation of the mind and the disregard of the body, of concupiscence.

Introducing to the concept of love the ideas of virtue as value and of social equity, the Christian culture turned love – *agape* – into charity (Burkart 1998:24), which reverberates even until today, as the popularity of the text "The Greatest Gift"⁶ (approx. AD 55), chapter 13 of the first epistle to the Corinthians well illustrates. This comprehension of *agape* came in direct conflict with the *eros* tradition and intensified, as observed above, the antagonism between spirit and flesh (Burkart 1998:18).

The contemporary concept "platonic love" illustrates well the transformation engendered by Christian culture, which eliminated the sexual sensuality that belonged originally to the concept of *eros* and led to the most acknowledged element of the term in its current colloquial use, i.e. the idealization of the beloved and the disregarding of sexual urges (Burkart 1998:17).

⁶ ¹⁾Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I have become a sounding brass or a clanging cymbal. ²⁾And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. ³⁾And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, but have not love, it profits me nothing. ⁴⁾Love suffers long and is kind; love does not envy; love does not parade itself, is not puffed up; ⁵⁾does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil; ⁶⁾does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth; ⁷⁾bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. ⁸⁾Love never fails. But whether there are prophecies, they will fail; whether there are tongues, they will cease; whether there is knowledge, it will vanish away. ⁹⁾For we know in part and we prophesy in part. ¹⁰⁾But when that which is perfect has come, then that which is in part will be done away. ¹¹⁾When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things. ¹²⁾For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then I shall know just as I also am known. ¹³⁾And now abide faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love. [1 Corinthians 13]

The emphasis of Christian theologians, like Augustine, in calling us to our inner selves was a significant push to the individualization process. As Taylor (1989:129-131) observes in the work of Augustine, by suggesting that the road to God lies within, Augustine encouraged individuals to focus on their subjective world, to cultivate a “self”, to develop reflexivity.

Augustine’s turn to the self was a turn to radical reflexivity, and that is what made the language of inwardness irresistible. The inner light is the one which shines in our presence to ourselves; it is the one inseparable from our being creatures with a first-person standpoint. What differentiates it from the outer light is just what makes the image of inwardness so compelling, that it illuminates that space where I am present to myself. (Taylor 1989:131)

The Christian culture also furthered the developing doctrine of the will (Taylor 1989:137). The Stoic thinkers had already highlighted the human capacity to give or withhold assent, i.e. to choose (Taylor 1989:137). According to them, humans have the same sensuous impulses as animals, but they are able of choosing to follow or not follow those urges (Taylor 1989:137). By emphasizing that the way to the higher, i.e. to God, demands a full commitment of the will, the Christian culture returned to the stoic concept of the faculty of conscious and deliberate action (Taylor 1989:137). However, in contrast to the teleological theory of nature underlying Greek moral philosophy, which supposes that everyone is motivated by a love of the Good, Christian culture introduced a new perspective. Regarding the sin of Adam, it suggests that our dispositions are to the bestial urges and not to the higher, and therefore they are radically perverse [as Taylor (1989:138) points out in Augustine’s work]. The discussion on humans’ inclinations to good or evil helped to establish will as a basic disposition of our being.

The further development of the doctrine of the will in Western Christendom and its successor culture weaves together these two master ideas, not without some tension and difficulty: the will as our power to confer or withhold all-things-considered assent, or choice; and the will as the basic disposition of our being. According to the first facet, we speak of people as strong- or weak-willed; according to the second, we speak of them as of good or ill will. (Taylor 1989:138)

In the late Middle Ages the concept of *minne* – *amour courtois*, *courtly love*, *höfische Liebe*, *amor*, *gallantry*, *fin’ amors* – flourished in Europe in the realms of nobility combining elements of the *eros* tradition and Christian mysticism (Singer 1984a apud Burkart 1998:18). However, *minne* was characterized not by the dangerous appetite familiar to Greeks and Romans, nor by the tormenting temptation condemned by the Church, but as an ennobling passion (Swidler 2001:112). *Minne* appeared as an idea of perfection derived from the perfection of the beloved, i.e. the perfection of the beloved justified love (Luhmann 1986:48). The expanding aristocracy of the time was concerned in distancing itself from the vulgar and therefore sexuality was marginalized and idealization and sublimation were exalted (Luhmann 1986:43).

The Christian mystic, by applying a sensorial vocabulary to describe the experience of union with God, introduced the idea of ecstasy to the concept of love (Dinzelbacher 1981, 1993 apud Burkart 1998:19). The repression of sexual urges by the Christian culture fostered an erotic longing in the individuals that led to a fascination for sexuality and emphasized further erotic aspects in the concept of love (Burkart 1998:19). The concern to distinguish between the love for God and the love for human was common in the Middle Ages; however, in *minne* the highest ideals take on erotic connotations and a clear distinction between rationality and sexuality is no longer possible; people can no longer differentiate between what is sacred and

what is profane (Luhmann 1986:44). Both the love for God and the love for human promised a mystical unity. *Minne* was the desire to become a unity and sexuality was a means to achieving redemption through a higher form of love (Luhmann 1986:48-49).

The idea of a “great love” appeared for the first time and in a heterosexual traditional discourse, i.e. the love of a man for one and only one woman, whose appreciation needed to be earned by special merit (Luhmann 1986:44). The focus on the beloved exalted her singularity and turned her into the only source of eroticism, which motivated the knight to attend to all her requests. Gallantry emerged as an art of seduction.

Minne introduced the idea that love could transform the person and forge a noble character. The love of a knight for a noble lady was what “makes a man virtuous and causes him to perform many heroic deeds” (Capellanus 1957:41 apud Swidler 2001:112). On the other hand, Christian mysticism also reintroduced in love the ancient association between love’s passion and disease, promoted by the old tradition of *mania*. Thus, the same love that inspires virtue also carries aspects of insanity, of the annihilation of oneself in the obsession for the other (Cancik 1976 apud Burkart 1998:19; Luhmann 1986:52), and leads also to suffering and death, as epitomized by the medieval story of “Tristan and Isolde” (Swidler 2001:112; Burkart 1998:18). Isolde was given in marriage to King Mark, Tristan’s uncle, and Tristan was ordered to escort her to the King’s land. During their journey, Tristan and Isolde drink a love potion that makes them fall helplessly in love with each other. Isolde marries the King, but because of the potion she and Tristan yearn for each other and see each other secretly. The King finds about their betrayal and, depending on the version, they are either killed or sentenced to live apart for the rest of their lives. The medieval tales of unfulfilled love reintroduced the aspect of longing and exaltation of the beloved – also present in the *eros* tradition – and stressed aspects of yearning and suffering as part of the concept of love (Rougement 1966 and Schenk 1987 and Huizinga 1924 apud Burkart 1998:18).

Minne was also a significant push to the individualization process, since it highlighted the singularity of individuals and related love for the first time to an exclusive relationship (Ireland 1988 and Campbell 1988 apud Burkart 1998:19), furthering the development of personal biographies; since it suggested for the first time an individual capacity for affective experience and emotional self-discovery (Burkart 1998:19); and since it promoted love as a force able to transform individuals by making them more virtuous and as a force that pushed them to defy social conventions in its name (Swidler 2001:112).

Growing among the aristocracy from the time of the Renaissance, the *amour passion* arose at the end of the 17th century in France. It completed the gradual dissolution of the previous contrast between sacred and corporal love and initiated the integration of sexuality into love (Luhmann 1986:45, 48). *Amour passion* was a sexual bond marked by urgency; it was invasive, ravishing and disruptive of personal relationships (Giddens 1992a:48). It was a performed emotion prescribed in literature with “one inherent clandestine goal: sexual enjoyment” (Luhmann 1986:45).

As opposed to the previous forms of love that tended to idealize and to worship perfection, *amour passion* was characterized particularly by paradoxes and imagination (Luhmann 1986:45, 48). If in ancient times and in the Middle Ages people were oriented by reason and love was an ideal, with passion and pleasure regarded as different from reason or subjected to it, at the end of 17th century passion and pleasure are assorted anew, becoming more important, and the difference between passion and pleasure became a common concern (Luhmann 1986:45).

Contradictory descriptions of love already existed in ancient times and in the Middle Ages, as the popular poem LXXXI from Luíz de Camões in “Rimas” from 1595 well illustrates.⁷ However, in the 17th century the paradox shifted from the level of the exemplary to the level of the individual (Luhmann 1986:58). If passion was previously understood exclusively as a passive mental state, i.e. a suffering one could do nothing against, in this new form of love it also becomes active, under the presumption that since one is not accountable for passion, when entering into an amorous relationship one must submit to it (Luhmann 1986:60). *Amour passion* was the fusion between active and passive, it was the conquest of the beloved women and at the same time the unconditional subjugation to her wishes – here again, the concept of *mania* is reintroduced, with love again the annihilation of the self and the rebirth in the other (Luhmann 1986:63).

This new understanding of passion pushed further towards individualization by promoting freedom of action under the disguise of compulsion (Luhmann 1986:61). Emerging discourses at the end of the 17th century that exalted the active character of the lovers and their freedom to choose a partner and to engage in an amorous relationship also furthered the individualization process. In the 17th century in France, women had their social status endowed with greater freedom to decide about their amorous involvement, which led to their classification as either *précieuses* or *coquettes*: the former being those who tended to deny the advances of men and the latter those who tended to accept them (Luhmann 1986:50).

Since *amour passion* was at the same time “driven by a self-propelling plaisir” (Luhmann 1986:71) and a rational choice, people could not control passion once it began, but they could decide whether or not to take part in the playful interaction that led to it (Luhmann 1986:71-72). In this context, love became the minimum prerequisite for achieving sexual realization, the conquest of women became a challenge for men and courtship became a game (Luhmann 1986:45, 50, 63). The rhetoric of the compulsion of passion served to encourage women to fulfill the desires of men, since according to this interpretation, it was her beauty that engendered love in man and led him to suffer helplessly if his urges were denied (Luhmann 1986:59). The emerging amorous literature transformed love into a doctrine of seduction and

⁷ *Amor he hum fogo que arde sem se ver; He ferida que doe e não se sente; He hum contentamento descontente; He dor que desatina sem doer; He um não querer mais que bem querer; He solitário andar por entre a gente; He hum não contentar-se de contente; He cuidar que se ganha em se perder He um estar preso por vontade; He servir a quem vence o vencedor; He hum ter com quem nos mata lealdade. Mas como causar pôde o seu favor; Nos mortaes corações conformidade; Sendo a si tão contrário o mesmo Amor? (Luíz de Camões 2013 [1595]: position 15450 / 46276)*

provided codes and rules for both sexes to play by (Luhmann 1986:63). Since those guides applied to anyone, i.e. to those with truly loving intent and to those with deceptive intent, the concern in unmasking the true intentions behind courtship attempts became a common one (Luhmann 1986:77).

The art of seduction initiated in *minne* (gallantry) was developed further and if in the Middle Ages the knight needed to overcome a danger to prove himself and attain the attention of a lady, in the 17th century the lover had to prove his love in his role as lover, which demanded constant demonstrations of love (Luhmann 1986:71). Love became a “temporal horizon of events” (Luhmann 1986:72) – with a start, a middle and an end; the sign of interest of a lover led the other to provide a sign as well and so they continued the game and heightened their expectations until they combusted in passion (Luhmann 1986:71-72). The temporal order pushed the individualization process further by leading people to regard love as a narrative; and the “love stories” turned into functional substitutes for myths, furthering the secularization process (Luhmann 1986:76).

The paradoxicalization of love in *amour passion* did not lead to an inability to act, nor did it demand the lovers to make a choice (Luhmann 1986:55). The excessive character of the rhetoric on love established the point where opposites could converge; love was an uncontrolled force that could not be denied, a force that led to conquest and to submission, to pleasure and to pain (Luhmann 1986:67, 68).

Encompassing positive and negative aspects, *amour passion* was able to explain and accept all sorts of behaviors, to regard all the facets of the lovers and of the relationship; it made the impossible possible (Luhmann 1986:55, 64). Love became all-powerful. However, if in the Middle Ages someone suffered with love because it engendered sensual and vulgar desires, now they suffered because their love was unfulfilled or because their love did not fulfill all of their expectations (Luhmann 1986:64).⁸

Although the emerging literature prescribed how an amorous interaction should happen and preached women’s freedom to accept or deny the advances of men, they still were not plausible tales (Luhmann 1986:53). Family and religion might no longer have defined love in the 17th century, but it was only a choice for those already married and looking for an affair; the single daughters were protected at all costs from seducers (Luhmann 1986:45, 50). At this point in history, to present oneself or to be treated in an overly individual manner would have been an infraction of the general rights of others (Luhmann 1986:54).

Amour passion was about ephemeral pleasure. It was grounded on physical experience, did not involve deep inner feelings and had no relation to marriage; lovers did not search for a partner, but for the erotic pleasure granted by a successful conquest (Burkart 1998:20). It was

⁸ Although *minne* and *amour passion* involved a tense relationship between pleasure and suffering, between fulfilment and yearning, there were other love concepts at the time that did not involve distress, like the hedonic form of love from the Renaissance (Sombart 1984 and Singer 1984b apud Burkart 1998:20).

a sexual relationship characterized by urgency, pulling individuals out of their ordinary lives and impelling them to make radical choices and sacrifices (Giddens 1992a:48).

The conceptions of love described up until now were forms of love in high society, i.e. in the aristocracy.⁹ Nobility and wealth were the prerequisites for love (Luhmann 1986:54) and sexual liberty (Giddens 1992a:49), and their lack could only be substituted, if at all, by virtue (Luhmann 1986:54). Only in the second half of the 18th century, in opposition to the compelling character of *amour passion*, did a new concept of love arrive, incorporating the emotional moral of the rising bourgeoisie and establishing personal traits as the prerequisite for affection, i.e. *romantic love* (Luhmann 1986:54, 46; Burkart 1998:20; Swidler 2001:112).

2.2. The modern form of love: romantic love

Although the individualization process can be followed since the time of the ancient Greeks, only in modernity did it achieve a mass and systemic character, especially in wealthy Western industrialized countries (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 1995:8). The industrial revolution and its institutional consequences led to an increasing separation of the individual from the immediate controls of public institutions – especially economic and political ones (Berger and Kellner 1964:6-7). Confronted with “an immensely powerful and alien world, incomprehensible in its inner workings, anonymous in its human character” (Berger and Kellner 1964:6), individuals found in close relationships the possibility to create a close reality that was both meaningful and understandable (Berger and Kellner 1964:6-7). At the same time, the industrial revolution gave birth to a new social, bourgeois and industrial world that led to the decline of the power of the church and of the family, and offered individuals virtually unlimited space to cultivate their interests and subjugate nature, using the drawing-board of technology (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 1990:13). The increasing focus on the individual in his or her private life led in modernity consequently to the crystallization of the private sphere, which became the main social area for the individual’s self-realization, for the exercise of individual choice and autonomy (Berger and Kellner 1964:6-7).

The emerging worldview of industrial capitalism gave birth to a moral individualism (Illouz 1997:9). The rising bourgeoisie brought with it a new mentality. With the aim of succeeding in business, an entrepreneur had to break with feudal norms and restrictions and to pursue his own interests against the needs of his competitors (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 1995:187). Modern philosophers started to strongly recommend rational behavior as a guiding principle, which meant:

...shrugging off restrictions, pursuing your own ends, serving no master, relying on your own intuition and experience, admittedly a freedom which depends on connections but still a

⁹ In Brazil, as Del Priore (2005:21-61) observes in her analysis on the transformations in the family and in gender relations since the 16th century, in the colonial period, the love exalted in poetry and music was very far from daily life. The religious repression of sexuality was severe. Passion could only be expressed by literature and eroticism only through secret pornographic material. There were two forms of love in the colony: the sacred conjugal love – in which the Church and the aristocracy were particularly interested and which was the traditional form for maintaining wealth and power – and the love that was expressed in extra-conjugal relationships.

categorical imperative which has to be defended against a whole range of subjective (other people's) interests. (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 1995:187)

Concomitant to the industrialization process, changes in the realms of religion in the first half of the 18th century led to the development of a semantics of emotions (Luhmann 1986:103). Religious countermovements – such as Puritanism, Jansenism and Pietism – by renouncing the intermediary role of the Church in the relationship with God and arguing for individual religiosity, left the individual alone with his/her own devices to deal with the world, leading to “an intensification of an understanding both of oneself as a person and of one's feelings” (Luhmann 1986:103).

The emerging emotional moral order accentuated the concern about the real intentions behind the acts of courtship: whether they were deceptive behaviors of a sexual conquest or sincere amorous declarations (Luhmann 1986:104). However, since it is not possible to be sure about the sincerity or insincerity of the other, the only possible resolution was to accept this dilemma as an integral aspect of love (Luhmann 1986:106). In the second half of the 18th century emotions were no longer regarded in terms of true or false, but became – at least in German literature – comprehended as the individual's cognitive reference to the world (Luhmann 1986:107).

Sentimentalism rose against the uncontrollable passion of *amour passion*, encouraging reasonable, moderate and self-controlled behaviors (Burkart 1998:21). Aristocratic amorous conduct, like the overwhelming descriptions of love, the excessive behavior of gallantry and the widespread practice of adultery, were firmly criticized by the ascending bourgeoisie, which regarded it all as “moral decadence” (Luhmann 1986:78, 126). Abstinence and the renunciation of passion became for the bourgeoisie a moral achievement and a source of pleasure (Luhmann 1986:78). This moral demand became especially strong for women, whose virginity became a sign of their virtue; a virtue that would affect men and eventually lead them to marriage (Luhmann 1986:126-127).

As can be seen, in such a context of social change, new cultural meanings are created and old ones are transformed in order to express the emerging mentality. Romantic literature surged in modernity as an expression of this process. The English novel of Samuel Richardson's *Pamela* from 1740 epitomizes the emerging bourgeois moral of the time (Swidler 2001:113). *Pamela* is a servant girl who – by defending her physical integrity, i.e. her virginity, from the advances of her employer, Mr. B – proves her moral integrity. Her virtue redeems him and he becomes virtuous himself and rewards her moral integrity by marrying her.

The industrial revolution brought significant changes in the structure of the family. Through the separation between workplace and home, the increasing industrialization process gave birth to the sexual division of work (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 1995:26-27). The assignment of men to work outside the home and of women to work within it established the grounds for the emerging nuclear family (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 1995:23, 26-27) and the essentialist and complementary two-sex model that would be consolidated through the 19th century with increasing emphasis on the emotional bond between children and parents and the invention of maternity (Giddens 1992a:52-53).

The decline of agrarian society with industrialization led to a weakening of the family's socio-political influence. If in pre-industrial society, marriage was not the union of two people but of two families or even clans, an arrangement for the families' prosperity and survival as an economic unit, with the advent of industrialization marriage was no longer a family business (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 1995:79, 81; Luhmann 1986:145). Nevertheless, marriage was still regarded by the family in early modernity as the development of the lineage and not as the creation of a new family, and therefore criteria such as social background, personal state, religion and upbringing still played a role in the choice of spouse (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 1995:81; Luhmann 1986:145). Conjugal love at this time was essentially rational and rested on the acceptance of their social roles as husband and wife, the latter being subordinated to the former (Luhmann 1986:129-130). However, with the weakening socio-political status of the family, the ancient assumption that love and passion were a sin against marriage started to fade through the 18th century (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 1995:184).

The pushes to individualization since the beginning of the 18th century – the crystallization of the private sphere, the emergence of a bourgeois mentality, the emergence of an emotional moral order, the romantic literature, the decline of the power of the church and of the family, the separation between home and work and the sexual division of work – further encouraged individuals to concentrate on themselves, to construct a singular identity and a subjective perspective of the world; they turned into “self-propelling, psycho-physical unities” (Luhmann 1986:14). The romantic literature with the previously mentioned social changes led at the end of the 18th century to the common acceptance of the singularity of the individual as a universal principle (Luhmann 1986:132).

As Simmel (1971:219-224) describes, two simultaneous tendencies can be observed in the individualization process in modernity. The first tendency refers to the longing for autonomy that led people to recognize themselves as equals, i.e. as identical beings that share a common identity as individuals, or as the scholar describes the longing for “singleness” [*Einzelheit*] (Simmel 1971:224). The second movement refers to the longing for differentiation through incomparability, i.e. for idiosyncrasy, or as Simmel calls, for “uniqueness” [*Einzigkeit*] (Simmel 1971:224).

As soon as the ego had become sufficiently strengthened by the feeling of equality and universality, it sought once again inequality – but this time an inequality determined only from within. After the individual had been liberated in principle from the rusty chains of guild, hereditary status, and church, the quest for independence continued to the point where individuals who had been rendered independent in this way wanted also to distinguish themselves from one another. What mattered now was no longer that one was a free individual as such, but that one was a particular and irreplaceable individual. (Simmel 1971:222)

The ego became the focal point of the individual's inner experiences and the environment started to lose most of its contours (Luhmann 1986:15). The classification of oneself within the social framework in the form of general categories like gender, age, social status and occupation started to fade and became no longer enough for the definition of one's identity. Focused on their subjective world, individuals started to develop singular personalities and with it their demand to be acknowledged by them (Luhmann 1986:15).

If previously the immersion of oneself in the common social world and one's compliance with it were all that it took to corroborate one's identity, in a context of increasing individualization these were no longer sufficient. One's subjective world withdraws the individual from the common social world and the validation of one's singular identity depends now on the positive feedbacks he/she receives from the few persons allowed in his/her private sphere (Berger and Kellner 1964:4; Luhmann 1986:15-16). The process of individualization also leads to the complexity of social life by virtue of its multiple subjective perspectives (Luhmann 1986:16). A longing for a social reality that is understandable, intimate and close consequently increases within the individual (Luhmann 1986:16).

As can be seen, the intensification of the individualization process in modernity brings with it a dilemma: on the one hand individuals are pushed to focus on themselves by developing a self-identity and a subjective perspective of the world and consequently separating themselves from the group, and on the other hand they are drawn to others, since only others can validate one's self-identify and subjective perspective of the world, and only with another person it is possible to construct an understandable, intimate and close reality.

Romantic love thus arose in modernity by combining meanings of its previous forms and integrating new meanings in order to overcome the dilemma between individuality and intimacy, i.e. to enable individuals to establish intimate relationships.¹⁰

If, in the previous forms of love from ancient times to the 17th century, lovers always searched for an objective Good, independent of the individual, and which was the ultimate cause of love – as the Supreme Good in the ancient times, God in the Christian culture, the lady in the middle Ages, the social position in the arts of seduction and gallantry in the Renaissance and Aristocracy (Costa 1998:41) – the push for individualization in modernity changed that. Love and its causes and purposes no longer originated from the object of love (Costa 1998:41). The increasing emphasis on the independence of emotions placed love within the individual, and the amorous experience became a subjective one. The emerging moral order started to describe love as sensible and tender, more related to reason and self-control than to overwhelming passion (Burkart 1998:20-21). Love became a matter of individual integrity and a clear, decisive and unwavering choice (Swidler 2001:113).

Combining the ideas of a carnal love – as promoted in the *eros* and *amour passion* tradition – and spiritual love – as present in the Christian reinterpretation of *eros* and the *minne* tradition (Burkart 1998:24) – *romantic love* joined sexuality with a “meeting of souls”. Although the romantic form of love arose in opposition to the lechery and sexual and erotic compulsion present in *amour passion*, sexuality became entirely integrated within it (Luhmann 1986:136).

¹⁰ The idea of love as a resolution to the individualization process was suggested first by Luhmann (1986:17, 140). However, while Luhmann (1986:20), based on his System Theory, suggests that love is a communication code developed to grant the relatively improbable communicative intentions between psychological systems some prospect of success, I regard love here as a system of socio-historically constructed meanings which agents make use of to signify their experience in the face of the inner dilemma between individuality and intimacy.

Exalting sublimity in opposition to sexual ardor (Giddens 1992a:51), *romantic love* turned each sexual and erotic act into its own celebration (Luhmann 1986:136).

Through modernity, physical, economic or moral attributes were no longer regarded as relevant to the choice of a partner, but rather his/her personal traits. The singularity of the beloved is appreciated in *romantic love* since it is the basis for the emotional bond. Love no longer depends on and rewards exclusively physical and moral qualities, it now also involves “being an individual in one’s own world” (Luhmann 1986:136) and the experience of sharing it with another person (Luhmann 1986:132, 136). *Romantic love* furthers the idea of an individual and personal narrative that presents an *I* and a *you* (other) and that is detached from broader social processes (Giddens 1992a:50, 56).

In modernity, the relationship became central to the experience of love, since only partners can undergo the psychic and erotic fusion characteristic of *romantic love* (Orlinsky 1979 apud Burkart 1998:22; Giddens 1992a:56). The singularity of their relationship enables the couple to separate itself from the common social world and to construct its own reality (Luhmann 1986:140), a reality in which lovers are granted with the special power to corroborate each other’s identity (Berger and Kellner 1964:4; Luhmann 1986:17). Therefore, *romantic love* is an odyssey in which self-identity hopes for validation in the discovery of the other (Giddens 1992a:50).

Because of the intimacy of the relationship and its significance for the individuals’ life, exclusivity and lastingness become important values for lovers (Burkart 1998:22). “True love” becomes unique and exclusive, it embodies the singularity of the individual self (Swidler 2001:113) and of the understandable, intimate and close reality generated by the lovers in their relationship.

The *I* and the *you* became the aim of love as constitutive parts of an amorous relationship (Luhmann 1986:138). The love of loving became the new emotional moral order, which “cultivated social reflexivity within mutual love” (Luhmann 1986::138); i.e. each other’s feelings must be emotionally affirmed and sought after (Luhmann 1986:138). As Luhmann (1986:138) observes, the reflexivity of loving led to an intensification of feelings but it also added to the enjoyable nature of feelings and the capacity to suffer because of them, i.e. love become self-referential. People started to love for the sake of love (Luhmann 1986:138). Love generated a reality of its own, where lovers aimed to adapt to each other, to make each other happy; “a common special world in which love was always able to inform itself anew by basing its reproduction on that which meant something to the other person” (Luhmann 1986:140-141). The intimate relationship “became the task of repeatedly earning love” (Luhmann 1986:141).

If in the previous form of love, the perfection or the beauty of the beloved were the origins of love, now beauty was in the eye of the beholder, i.e. love makes the lover see only good qualities in the beloved, and the beauty of the beloved became a consequence of love (Luhmann 1986:44, 64, 107). The self-reference of love enables the lovers to attribute to each other the qualities they desire, since they alone constitute their own private world (Luhmann

1986:412). Although in modernity “love makes one blind”, the choice of the partner remains a reasonable one as it was in *amour passion*; now, however, it is the joyful emotions that define what is reasonable or not (Luhmann 1986:80).

As can be seen, *romantic love* rose in modernity as an expression of the individualization process and as a solution to the dilemma of individuality versus intimacy. Nonetheless, *romantic love* has also been responsible for social changes in modernity, as will be observed in the next section.

2.3. Romantic love as a force of social transformation in modernity

The modern expanding cultural industry (e.g. publishing, advertising, mass media and education) identified the lure of *romantic love* and adopted it as a marketing instrument, which helped to further disseminate and expand romantic meanings in society (Illouz 1997:42). The lure of *romantic love* and the broad cultural production based upon it turned love into a force of social transformation.

As Giddens (1992a:53) points out, the distinction between workplace and home, the transformations in the child-parent relationship and the invention of maternity during the 19th century led to the association of femininity with maternity, as a “natural” characteristic of women, and to the shift of the family center from patriarchal authority to maternal affection (Ryan 1981:102 apud Giddens 1992a:53). As the first literature to reach the masses, romantic literature had a great impact on Western culture (Giddens 1992a:36). In conjunction with the idea of maternity, *romantic love* enabled women to develop new domains of intimacy (Giddens 1992a:55). Women became responsible for private and emotional life, while men were responsible for the economic status of the family and therefore oriented by the competitiveness and rational values of the job market (Cancian 1987 apud Illouz 1997:205). In this sense, *romantic love* favored women’s autonomy, although this was restricted to the domestic and private sphere (Illouz 2012:11-12), and pushed the individualization process further.

Strongly grounded on the ideas of “becoming a whole” and a “meeting of souls”, *romantic love* assumes a matching condition between the partners’ idiosyncrasies. Grounded in projective identification, *romantic love* provides the individuals a sensation of totality with the other (Giddens 1992a:72). This complementary idea not only makes the difference between partners attractive, but it also suppresses any concerns of power in the relationship (Giddens 1992a:72-73). Therefore, although the status of women improved in the private sphere, the essentialist and complementary two-sex model in which *romantic love* was based helped to conceal and further the inequality between the sexes (Giddens 1992a:53-54; Luhmann 1986:160; Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 1995:27). As Beck and Beck-Gernsheim (1995:26-27) observe, the sexual division of labor upon which the essentialist and complementary two-sex model is based led to an empowerment of women at home, but it also promoted their dependency on men. On the one hand, the realms of work were organized along contradictory lines: work outside the home followed market forces, furthering competitiveness and

mobility, while work within the home demanded the sacrifice of one's own interests for the sake of the collective project called the family; and on the other hand, work outside the home involved financial remuneration granting men financial means and social acknowledgment, while work within the home was unpaid and taken for granted, leaving women without financial means and social acknowledgement.

The emerging romantic literature in modernity also changed the institution of marriage by weakening the control of the family over it (Luhmann 1986:79-80, 117, 141).¹¹ It established love as the basis of marriage, i.e. an intimate relationship based on friendship, a friendship that could only be induced by love, and promulgated the idea that each person should be free to choose their partner and that marriage should no longer be imposed (Luhmann 1986:79-80, 117, 141). The refusal to marry the candidate chosen by one's parents based on an inability to love him or her became common in the 18th century and by the end of the century, the ideas of a marriage of love and conjugal love had become generally acknowledged as natural to humankind (Luhmann 1986:129, 146-147). In the course of the 19th century in Europe both were legitimated practices and *romantic love* became institutionalized in the form of marriage, which no longer served the reproduction of the family of origin, but rather the creation of one's own family (Luhmann 1986:147).¹² Husband and wife became partners in a joint emotional project that had primacy over the obligation to their children (Giddens 1992a:36). *Romantic love* became the basis for the genesis and the continuance of the couple's relationship (Lenz 2009:194). The location of love and sexuality in the marriage institution established love in modernity as an element of the social order that furthered the process of social reproduction (Burkart 1998:20; Luhmann 1986:47).

¹¹ In contrast, Swidler (2001) suggests that first came marriage of choice and that this brought a gap where action meets the institution, which furthered the culture of love. In her opinion, marriage had been an institution that structured individuals' lives – "with whom one shares a household, and usually income and expenses; one's sexual obligations and opportunities; with whom one socializes; who will care for one if one is sick" (Swidler 2001:131) – however when it became based on individual choice, it lost any institutionalized path – such as those that can be seen, for example, in education or the labour market, in which exams or interviews determine whether or not the individual obtains a diploma or a job (Swidler 2001:131). As Swidler (2001:131) suggests, in order to achieve marriage, individuals started to develop certain cultural, psychological and even cognitive equipment that enabled them to be "prepared to feel, or at least convince each other that they feel, that one person is the uniquely right 'one' [...] to recognize the 'right person' when that person comes along" (Swidler 2001:131). In other words, for Swidler (2001) romantic love is the result of cultural, psychological and cognitive mechanisms developed to justify the choice of a partner and enable the establishment of marriage in the face of the impairment of the traditional path to it. Nevertheless, whether the romantic ideal of a marriage of choice emerged from the impairment of the family in determining marriage or led to it, the dissemination of the ideal of a marriage of choice through modernity furthered social changes in the marriage institution as mentioned in this chapter.

¹² As Del Priore (2005:21-61) observes, in Brazil, in the 19th century, although romantic literature helped to deconsecrate marriage, exposing the game of interests behind the institution and highlighting the importance of love, in real life the choice of the beloved was still bound to class interests. The sexual practice in marriage was restrained to that which did not denigrate the wife's image, delegating the free expression of sexuality to extra-conjugal relationships. Only around the turn of the 20th century did marriage finally rely on the free choice of partner in Brazil. That change was not based on a romantic ideal but on the understanding that love should be the basis of marriage. However, as pointed out by Del Priore (2005), until the middle of the 20th century family opinion still had great influence on the choice of the partner, and it was expected that the bride would be a virgin.

The meeting of the lovers came to be described in the romances no longer as reasoned deliberation and gallant skill, as in the *amour passion*, but as chance – a chance that was at the same time fate and freedom of choice (Luhmann 1986:143). This paradox encouraged people to expand their spheres of contact and, by eliminating previous requirements for love, extended it to all classes of society (Luhmann 1986:143). This new amorous idea of chance, as well as the understanding of love as a force against social conventions – already observed in the *minne* tradition – and as an uncontrollable force bestowed on someone in virtue not of what he/she has but rather of who he/she is – observed in the *agape* tradition – combined to grant *romantic love* the power to transcend social boundaries and suppress social inequalities (Swidler 2001:113, Tyrell 1987:582 apud Burkart 1998:23, Burkart 1998:38). Following no moral or purpose, having no reason, being unconditional and now unpredictable (Beck 1990:262; Simmel 1983:20 apud Burkart 1998:25), *romantic love* enables and encourages individuals from different groups to marry, promoting exogamy, i.e. mixed relationships, such as interclass and interracial relationships and binational marriages.

Since the 19th century, the expanding visual mass media, such as advertising and cinematic productions, have also been encouraging particular meanings of love and thereby engendering changes in amorous relationships. By appropriating the subject of love, the visual mass media have associated it with consumption and other intense feelings (Illouz 1997:42). Love has been related to a powerful collective utopia of abundance, individualism and creative self-fulfillment, expressed in the cyclical performance of rituals of consumption (Illouz 1997:8).

Aiming for diversification in order to expand, the consumer market has been polarizing male and female identities (Illouz 1997:74-75). Men and women have been provided with different commodities – e.g. clothes, perfumes, cars, leisure activities – that are presented as their instruments of seduction in a context that defends the free choice of a partner rather than a coerced one and that sustains the impression that the partners' feelings must be equal and reciprocated (Illouz 1997:74-75). By offering commodities to both groups, the market provides all individuals a way to realize their wishes of autonomy, equality and romance (Illouz 1997:74-75).

The desire of people to participate in the new emerging realm of leisure, along with the decline of parental control and of sexual mores, furthered the new institution of dating, i.e. courtship (Illouz 1997:65). In a short period of time, forms of entertainment and of romantic encounters, such as going with a date to the movies, dance halls or amusement parks, became acceptable and standard (Illouz 1997:65). The main role of the partner was no longer to be a provider or a helpmate, but an entertaining and amusing friend (Illouz 1997:52). Couples should now share common tastes and recreational activities (Illouz 1997:53). The old meaning of friendship ascends again in *romantic love*, retaining, however, the physiological refinement of seduction developed in *amour passion*, now stimulated by the expanding leisure industry and instrumentalized by the market.

Invoking the values and principles of modern Western society, the consumerist dimension of *romantic love* promotes individualism, self-realization, affirmation of the individual's personal qualities and equality between the sexes in the mutual experience of pleasure (Illouz

1997:152). According to Illouz (1997:8), the romantic experience arose in modernity as one of the sites of the displacement of the experience of the sacred in the face of the secularization of the realm of religion.

As can be observed, the romantic form of love arose in modernity as a mighty system of meanings that on the one hand express the increasing individualization process and enables individuals to realize their “individualistic desires” – as the affirmation of one’s singularity, the development of personal narratives and the celebration of a moral individualism – and on the other hand enables individuals to establish an understandable and intimate reality, to corroborate one’s identity, and to experience the sacred. Social transformations in late modernity, however, have been leading to the impairment of romantic ideals and introducing new values in the lives of individuals, as the following subchapter shows.

2.4. Social changes in the realms of intimacy in late modernity

The most significant social changes in modernity occurred in the realms of intimacy, i.e. in sexuality, gender relations and the family. In the 19th century sexuality became a scientific subject. Usually regarded as internal impulses that should be controlled in the name of civilization, many sexual expressions were catalogued in diagnostic manuals as perversions (Giddens 1992a:27-30). (1905), in his “Three essays on the Theory of Sexuality”, was one of the first to argue that many of those sexual expressions were common to all individuals and were normal aspects of human sexuality. Freud’s work, by criticizing the pejorative connotation attributed to sexuality, encouraged the first queer movements and exposed for the first time the relation between sexuality and self-identity (Giddens 1992a:41; 43-44).

After the First World War, the advent of modern contraceptive methods broke the association between sexuality and reproduction. Improved control over childbirth enabled better family planning and led to a decrease in the size of families. Liberated from the fear of unwanted pregnancy, men and women could more freely enjoy their sexuality (Giddens 1992a:37; Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 1995:29).

The expansion of the labor market to women at the beginning of the 20th century and their increasing financial autonomy started to engender changes in the nuclear family, in which *romantic love* was based (Illouz 1997:49). In the 1920s, women started to expect from their relationship more than economic security; they wanted the emotional fulfillment promised in the romantic description of love advertised in the media (Illouz 1997:49). By the 1930s, friendship was no longer enough for a successful marriage; individuals also expected intense passion, fun and excitement (Illouz 1997:46).

The increasing importance of leisure, the commercialization of recreation, the relaxation of sexual prohibitions, the consolidation of a self-conscious middle-class ideology, new definitions of selfhood centred on the pursuit of intense experience, and increasing equality in the status of men and women started to lead to changes in the definition of marital and premarital relationships (Illouz 1997:48-49).

Since the 19th century marriage had been regarded as an institution that insured both biological reproduction and economic survival, and therefore it became an object of close social control and scrutiny (Illouz and Wiff 2009:124). Romanticism and the increasing emancipation of women began to be blamed – at least in the North American media – as the reasons for the expanding rate of divorce and therefore regarded as threats to the institution of marriage (Illouz 1997:49, 50). Scholars concerned with the end of marriage in the face of the recent social changes began to offer prescriptions on how to sustain it and consequently provided new definitions of marriage that were based on one common premise: that marriage should be controlled by the dispassionate logic of friendship or companionship and restrained feelings. Terms of emotional intensity were replaced by sober ones in amorous discourse: “fire” and “ebullience” gave place to “painstaking”, “long-term”, “daily”, “commonsensical”, “enduring”, “stable”, “real”, “practical”, “useful”, “old-fashioned” and “realistic” (Illouz 1997:52). As Illouz (1997:52) observes, “the ‘uncontrolled’ drives of passion and romance were exchanged for the ‘controlled management’ of one's emotions”.

In short, marriage was perceived to be under the assault of women's increased autonomy and of Hollywood fantasies, which led to unrealistic expectations of marriage as an arena of hedonistic satisfaction and consequently to disputes over money. The new concept of romance, linked to leisure and fun, was thought to undermine common sense, pragmatism, and realism; the threats it posed to the traditional family were translated into an old moral discourse opposing “fiction” to “reality”. (Illouz 1997:51)

Romantic passion may have been deemed an unreliable basis for love, but romantic ideals could not easily be put aside. The rationalized ideal of marriage was considered boring and it was consequently a threat to love (Illouz 1997:52). Concerns about how to combine friendship and love dominated the media and new discourses emerged suggesting that marriage could and should be sustained through fun and enjoyment (Illouz 1997:52).

The rhetoric of friendship merged, according to Illouz (1997:52-53), with the hedonistic rhetoric disseminated by the expanding leisure industry, giving birth to what she calls a hedonist-therapeutic model suggesting that partners should have a good time together, share common interests, talk, get to know each other, understand the other person's needs and compromise. This hybrid ethos mixed “work” and self-control with the pleasures of the spheres of leisure and consumption (Illouz 1997:53).

Resolving the conflict between the swelling consumer market of leisure and evolving definitions of family, intimacy and sexuality, *romantic love* became, according to Illouz (1997:7, 48), the important mythology of late modernity and a privileged site for the experience of utopia.

The changes in the realms of intimacy intensified after the Second World War. With the formation of the welfare state, life became organized in Western industrialized countries around the job market, leading to further transformations in the structure of the family (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 1995:27). The consequent democratization of education enabled women to achieve a professional education, which further promoted their freedom from housework and deprived the traditional sexual division of labor of legitimacy (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 1990:17). Women's status at home was improved through their income, and their economic

dependence on their husbands was broken (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 1990:17). More self-confident, more aware of inequalities, and motivated by the romantic utopia, women started to demand changes from men, and rates of divorce began to climb.

With the entry of women into the job market the number of remunerated workers – and consequently also the number of individuals with purchasing power, i.e. the number of potential consumers – increased. The consumer market acknowledged this and intensified the production of commodities oriented to each sex.

According to Illouz (2012:45), the consumer market, relying on the recent but increasing psychoanalyst discourses on the important role of sexuality in the healthy development of the psyche, intensified the association of the body with products and values such as beauty, eroticism, sensuality, health, and so on. A historical mark for this process can be found in the release of the first publication of the magazine “Playboy” in 1953 (Illouz 2012:44-45). As Illouz (2012:45) observes, from the middle of the 19th century onward, the eroticism of the body became a focus of the visual industry – e.g. film and photography – leading individuals to become more aware of it.

In the 1960s, the feminist movement arose, demanding more equality between the sexes, rejecting the legitimations of differences between men and women based on religion or biology and criticizing many double standards that had been favoring men – such as the sexual division of work and the restriction of female sexuality to marriage. Reconceptualizing sexuality as political, feminists turned orgasmic sexuality and mutual pleasure into moral acts of affirmation of autonomy and equality (Illouz 2012:46). As Illouz (2012:46) observes, “sexual pleasure became a way of affirming women’s access to full equality with men, as free and equal subjects, thus making sexuality into the repository of a positive and even moral affirmation of the self.”

Grounded in expanding liberal democracy, other sexual movements have emerged since the 1960s, promoting further democratic values of choice, self-determination and autonomy in the realms of sexuality and engendering significant changes in western society (Giddens 1992a:44-45, Illouz 2012:46). Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender movements, demanding the legitimation of same-sex relationships and of queer identity and sexuality, have been weakening the heterosexual order. These sexual movements, by criticizing the essentialist and complementary two-sex model – in which *romantic love* had been based – have been contributing to the decline of the association between sexuality and perversion, achieving more rights for women and queer groups, and promoting the separation of sexuality from *romantic love*.

Promoted by the sexual movements, sex became a common subject of discussion and investigation in late modernity. Non-fictional literature emerged which openly addressed sexuality and provided advice and encouragement for it (Luhmann 1986:160). Scientific discourses on the importance of sexuality in the life of individuals increased, furthering the establishment of sex and sexuality at the center of individuals’ biography (Illouz 2012:45). Sexuality started to be described in terms of youth sexual behavior, a sport in which

performance can be improved through training, and a sport in which one engages voluntarily (Luhmann 1986:160). The concomitant increasing commodification of sexuality by the market not only turned sexuality into a product itself, it also helped to separate it from emotions – i.e. from love – and to emphasize particular criteria for the evaluation of one’s physical constitution, such as beauty and eroticism (Illouz 2012:44-45).

The explosion of cultural productions on sex has furthered an institutional reflexivity that has led to major changes in the realm of sexuality (Giddens 1992a:39). Creating ideas, concepts and theories, the discursive productions on sexuality have provided new conceptual tools for individuals to resignify their sexual life. Greater geographical mobility and new media only contribute to the dissemination of information, intensifying the transformation of sexuality in contemporary society. Malleable and plastic, sexuality has become in late modernity a potential feature of the individual (Giddens 1992a:37).

“Sexuality” today has been discovered, opened up and made accessible to the development of varying life-styles. It is something each of us “has”, or cultivates, no longer a natural condition which an individual accepts as a preordained state of affairs. Somehow, in a way that has to be investigated, sexuality functions as a malleable feature of self, a prime connecting point between body, self-identity and social norms. (Giddens 1992b:15)

The previous moral order long kept women’s sexuality restricted to marriage, which helped to sustain this institution (Giddens 1992a:58). However, modern contraceptive methods and the feminist movement freed women’s sexuality from reproduction and from the bonds of matrimony. With the increasing emphasis on sexual experience in late modernity, women became as willing as men to enjoy their sex life (Giddens 1992a:96-97). Regarding sexuality as the expression of an emancipated lifestyle, women started to engage like men in serial sexual encounters (Illouz 2012:105). The opportunities for and numbers of impersonal and brief sexual encounters increased.¹³ The search for love no longer involved the postponement of sexual activity until marriage or the “right” relationship (Giddens 1992a:60) – a situation which, according to Luhmann (1986:152), is incompatible with the notions of romanticism. Luhmann observes that the increasing acceptance of pre-marital sexual relationships and the extensive variations of sex roles goes against one of the main feature of *romantic love*, i.e. the postponement of satisfaction (Luhmann 1986:152). For him, the increasing sexual liberation also turned the romantic idea of “a long, drawn-out pining for fulfillment” (Luhmann 1986:160) into something ridiculous in contemporary society (Luhmann 1986:160).

For Giddens (1992a:74) this emerging “plastic sexuality” is also incompatible with the romantic conception of love. According to him, this decentralized and malleable sexuality, free from the reproduction process, goes against the monogamous and heterosexual features of *romantic love*. Institutionalized in the form of marriage, *romantic love* had confined sexuality

¹³ In Brazil, however, as Del Priore (2005:300-310) observes, after the sexual revolution in the 1970s the church continued to repress sexuality and women were still perceived as an object of entertainment and not as a subject. Only in the 1980s did sexuality finally liberate itself from religious control and the pursuit of pleasure increase. Passion and sexual pleasure acquired increasing value in Brazil. Romantic love manifested itself through freedom of choice in a context of increasing urbanization. However, as the author emphasizes, there are still those who opt for the sublimation of sexuality in the name of morality and good customs, family and financial stability.

to a monogamous relationship. With the increasing pluralism of sexual identities, sexuality became, in late modernity, less restricted to heterosexual relationships and more a choice of life-style and a feature to be negotiated in the relationship (Giddens 1992a:74, 217). This new context led to the decline of the romantic ideal of “one and only one sexual partner”. Men and women became thrill-seekers in a world of open sexual opportunities. Since monogamy is no longer an ideal, and sexual enjoyment is, the biographical narratives became marked not by only one amorous bond, but by plural relationships, amorous and sexual, brief and long-lasting.

Another romantic feature demystified by the emergence of sexuality, according to Illouz (1997:159), is the ideal of “love at first sight”. Since love and sex now follow separate trajectories, what was previously regarded as an intense and immediate emotional bond that sublimated sexual arousal is now interpreted as pure sexual desire (Illouz 1997:159). As Illouz observed in her empirical study (Illouz 1997:160), individuals tend to be suspicious of intense emotions and to regard immediate and irrational feelings as untrustful, believing that intense and hasty emotional attachments are unreliable indicators of further feelings and should therefore be controlled and appropriately managed.

As Giddens (1992a:72) suggests, with the decline of the essentialist and complementary two-sex model, the projective identification characteristic of *romantic love*, which – based on the differences between the sexes – promoted the feeling of completeness, may still help to establish a relationship, but it is no longer adequate to sustain it. Giddens (1992a:96-97) goes further and argues that the romantic prescription of courtship seems no longer adequate in a context of sexual emancipation. If previously the motivation of the womanizer was to despoil a woman’s virtue, once women had been sexually emancipated and were no longer classified as virtuous versus licentious, the womanizer lost his purpose (Giddens 1992a:96-97). On the other hand, the previous restriction of women’s sexuality to marriage may have been a strong subterfuge applied by women to convince men to make a commitment; however, with the emancipation of sexuality this subterfuge lost its power, demanding from men and women a renegotiation of their agreement in order to establish a lasting relationship (Giddens 1992a:62). As Giddens (1992a:96) observes, seduction, i.e. gallantry, no longer makes sense in a society where both sexes are equally available for sexual interaction.

The transformation of sexuality through late modernity has been leading to its separation from *romantic love* and its establishment as a sphere in itself (Luhmann 1986; Giddens 1992; Illouz 2012). As Illouz (2012:45) observes, the intense commodification of the body by the market and the great attention given to the subject in society in late modernity has not only helped in the process of the emancipation of sexuality by separating it further from reproduction, marriage, long-term relationships and even emotionality, but has also led to the establishment of “sexual attraction” as a cultural category. As an expression of the cultural emphasis on sexuality and physical attractiveness in modernity and their detachment from a moral world of values, “sexual attraction”, or “sexiness” as Illouz (2012:42) calls it, expresses the transformation of gender identities into sexual identities, “that is, into a set of self-

consciously manipulated bodily, linguistic, and sartorial codes geared to elicit sexual desire in another” (Illouz 2012:42).

Since sexuality has become, in late modernity, not only a reflexive property of the self but also an emancipated field of experience, it has been facilitating the establishment of social bonds (Giddens 1992a:193). By engendering physical intimacy, sexuality enables the development of personal relationships. However, the lure of sexual freedom and sexual experimentation seems to push individuals to restrict their sexual encounters to one-night stands or brief affairs. As Luhmann (1986:160) notices, this increasingly episodic sexuality seems to be leading more to unhappiness than to happiness. The sexual contact promises intimacy and in practice generates it; however this is broken by the end of the brief sexual encounter, leaving behind only the feeling of unfulfillment. As Luhmann (1986:160) observes, “the tragedy is no longer that the lovers fail to find each other, but rather in the fact that sexual relationships produce love and that one can neither live in keeping with it nor free oneself of it.”

The family institution also became a subject of discussion in the women’s and students’ movements in the late 1960s and early 1970s, which – in criticizing the family tradition, denouncing it as an ideology and prison and as a space of violence and repression – brought significant changes in marriage and the family (Beck-Gernsheim 1998:53). Aiming to make power relations explicit, feminists have been attempting to unravel the web of implicit meanings in which power hides and aestheticizes itself (Illouz 2012:186). Many traditional examples of gentlemanly conduct, like a man holding a door for a woman, were reinterpreted by feminists as expressions of male symbolic dominance, and consequently began to be rejected by women. The increasing feminist critique of traditional gender behavior started to leave women and men unsure about how to act. The essentialist and complementary two-sex model in which *romantic love* was based began to be harshly questioned by feminists, who accused *romantic love* of being a subterfuge to mask and sustain the inequality between the sexes (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 1995:27; Bourdieu 2001:109; Burkart 1998:23; Cancian 1986:706; Giddens 1992a:54; Illouz and Wiff 2009:121; Illouz 2012:4-5).¹⁴

As traditional social identities gradually fade, the antagonisms between men and women over gender roles emerge in the very heart of the private sphere. In a whole range of trivial and important questions, ranging from who does the dishes to sex and fidelity and the attitudes which these reveal, these antagonisms are beginning to change society in obvious and less obvious ways. (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 1995:2)

Strongly promoting the ideal of equal rights, the feminist discourses furthered the individualization process (Heilborn 2004:20). The principle of equality became expressed in the rejection of distinctions of status between the sexes (Heilborn 2004:111). Men and women engaged in a war to defend their individuality, a war that extended itself from the privacy of

¹⁴ Although feminists have accused *romantic love* of being a symbolic instrument of male social domination, many scholars contradict this by affirming that the rise of *romantic love* in modernity has been related to the decline of patriarchy and the rise of more equal relations between the sexes (Giddens 1992; Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 1995; Burkart 1998) – as pointed out in the previous subchapter. According to Illouz (2012:5), empirical evidence suggests that love is as primary as power, being also a powerful and invisible operator in social relationships that affects men as well as women and enables the subversion of inequalities between the sexes.

the home to the offices of marriage counsellors and divorce lawyers (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 1995:12). In order to repair the unhappy amorous relationships, a huge machinery arose, consisting of clients, psychotherapists, mentors, writers, scholars, priests and so on (Costa 1998:12). Nevertheless, the attempts to remediate the increasing conflicts between the emerging individual ideals and the romantic ones were never successful and many ended in divorce lawyers' offices. If in the late 19th century, for example, the German Code of Civil Law established marriage as an institution justified in and of itself and that prevailed above the principle of individual freedom (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 1990:12), with the intensification of liberal democracy through the 20th century, and the increasing conflicts between the sexes, the rules changed. Marriage and its continuance became a matter of individual choice and the dissolution of the bonds of matrimony a legitimate option.

Rising divorce figures led to a loss of faith in the institution of marriage and consequently to a decrease in marriage rates and an increase in informal marriages, i.e. people establishing a long-term relationship without any legal and/or religious acknowledgement of it (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 1995:15). People began to speak no longer of marriage, but of relationships, i.e. close and continuous emotional ties to others (Giddens 1992b:58).

Although the romantic ideal of "everlasting love" may seem to be declining with the rise of divorce and the fall of the institution of marriage (Luhmann 1986:151), the belief in love for some does not seem to be affected by it. As empirical studies show, although the increasing conflicts between men and women may lead to the dissolution of relationships, they seem to make this choice motivated by romantic ideals, i.e. with the expectation of finding an ideal partner and the bliss promised by *romantic love* (Berger and Kellner 1964:23; Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 1995:11, 94; Féres-Carneiro 1996:80; Giddens 1992a:58).

Because of the main role of amorous relationships in structuring reality (Berger and Kellner 1964:1), conflicts in such relationships are experienced with great distress by individuals, since it threatens the stability of the private and intimate world the partners share (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 1990:10). The increasing split-ups, separations and divorces in late modernity leave broken hearts, and the disappointment in love grows, as do discourses about love being overrated, unattainable or utopian (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 1995:11).

As Beck and Beck-Gernsheim (1995:170) observe, a modern form of archaic anarchy arises, proclaiming personal freedom and immediate satisfaction in the name of love – which leads to serial relationships, divorces and remarriages, but also to hatred, loneliness and desperation. This love-hate romanticism, as Beck and Beck-Gernsheim (1995:170) describe, has become popular in recent decades and is expressed in different cultural productions, from therapists' textbooks and pop songs to divorce laws.¹⁵

¹⁵ A recent example of this can be found in the song "True Love" sung by the American pop-artist Pink on her album "The Truth about Love". Released in 2012, the song proclaims that only true love can engender so much hate and be so hurtful. As the lyric says: "Sometimes I hate every single stupid word you say... I wanna slap you in your whole face... At the same time, I wanna hug you... You're an asshole, but I love you... But I hate you, I really hate you, So much I think it must be, true love... Nothing else can break my heart like, true love..."

As can be seen, social changes in the realms of intimacy in late modernity have been leading to changes in romantic love. As scholars suggest, romantic ideals such as “postponement of satisfaction”, “gallantry”, “everlasting love”, “one and only sexual partner” and “the great love” started to fade in late modernity in the face of ascending values such as “sexual experience”, “autonomy”, “friendship” and “freedom”. Nevertheless, the emerging social values have also been furthering the individualization process, intensifying the dilemma between intimacy and individuality and increasing the significance of love in late modernity, as the following subchapter shows.

2.5. The intensification of the dilemma between intimacy and individuality in late modernity

As observed previously, the individualization process in modernity has developed in two forms (Simmel 1971:222-224). On the one hand there is a “quantitative individualism” through which people become acknowledged as individuals and therefore equal in their singleness, and on the other hand there is a “qualitative individualism” through which people pursue uniqueness and individuals attempt to differentiate themselves from one another (Simmel 1971:222-224).

The decline of tradition through modernity – such as the deterioration of gender roles, the emancipation of sexuality and the weakening of the marriage institution – has been freeing the formation of one’s self from social control. Deprived of general moral orders to orient their action and thoughts, individuals are left alone to decide the best way to proceed based on their emotions (Illouz 2012:11).

Biographies are removed from the traditional precepts and certainties, from external control and general moral laws, becoming open and dependent on decision-making, and are assigned as a task for each individual. The proportion of possibilities in life that do not involve decision-making is diminishing and the proportion of biography open to decision-making and individual initiative is increasing. Standard biography is transformed into “choice biography” (Ley 1984), with all the compulsions and “shivers of freedom” (von Wysocki 1980) that are received in exchange. (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 1995:5)

In late modernity the life-span becomes internally referential and self-identity turns into a reflexively organized endeavor (Giddens 1992a:174, 193). Individuals want and are required to define themselves constantly, to negotiate continually options of lifestyles (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 1990:6, 13; Giddens 1992a:41, 87).

Increasingly, the individuals who want to live together are, or more precisely are becoming, the legislators of their own way of life, the judges of their own transgressions, the priests who absolve their own sins and the therapists who loosen the bonds of their own past. They are also becoming, however, the avengers who retaliate for injuries sustained. (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 1995:5)

Nevertheless, the decline of traditions does not mean that individuals no longer share a symbolic world, nor that they are completely free from social control. As Heilborn (2004:128) observes, “strictly speaking, what exist are sociologically ordered behaviors to be perceived as idiosyncratic.” Feeling helpless and disoriented, people look for advice and the cultural industry responds with patent recipes on how to run one’s life (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim

1995:97). Individuals are bombarded with different cultural resources, from diverse self-help manuals to scientific theories, from pop songs to advertisements, which offer them a “whole kaleidoscope of possible interpretations of what ‘man’ or ‘woman’, ‘love’ or ‘relationship’, ‘motherhood’ or ‘fatherhood’ still might or should mean” (Wehrspaun 1988:165 apud Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 1995:90). The multiple cultural prescriptions are diverse and often incompatible, engendering ambivalence, tension and contradictions in the individual and consequently leading him/her to suffer. As Illouz (2012:13) asserts, “this Western cultural form of modernity has brought about its own forms of emotional misery and destruction of traditional life-worlds, has made ontological insecurity a chronic feature of modern lives”.

In such a context of impairment of traditional gender identities and consequently conflict between the sexes, amorous relationships can no longer be taken for granted; they need to be “worked”. At the same time, the dissolution of relationships not only introduces new players in the dating market, such as divorcees, divorced parents and single parents, but also gives birth to new forms of relationships – such as hooking up, living apart together, polyamory – and families – such as remarriages, couples with children, my children, your children and our children. The complexity of amorous relationships increases with the complexity of the situation of the players, as well as the demands for dialogue, mutual understanding and willingness to compromise.

A great number of psychological and theoretical literatures have emerged since the 1960s focusing particularly on the dynamics of love. Proclaiming “openness” and “honesty”, these literatures suggest that partners admit their feelings and not hide them behind taboos and conventions (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 1995:92). In the 1980s, however, self-help books emerged preaching self-assertion, authenticity, separation and dialogue as the answer to the problem (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 1995:53; 97), as Beck and Beck-Gernsheim (1995:54) observe:

Where they used to call for adaptation they now recommend conscious separation. What they teach is constructive disagreement: “saying no in love” (Schellenbaum 1984). Therapy tries to encourage the view that “it is not at all desirable for two people who love each other to be *one* heart and *one* soul” (Preuss 1985; emphasis in the original). And they recommend “laying down as many aspects of daily life together as possible in a marriage contract”, from the right to “personal freedom” all the way to “arrangements in case of separation.” (Partner 1984)

In the same decade women’s magazines also began promoting utilitarian and therapeutic ethics that suggested women should embrace traditional masculine values such as rationality, control and assertiveness, and pushed them to value autonomy and instrumental reason, to adopt a contractual view of relationships, and to apply rational self-criticism and the capacity to know, control and modify one’s emotions (Illouz 1997:205-206).

According to Illouz (1997:206), the adoption of masculine values helped women to achieve more equality in the private and public spheres; however it also led to a rationalization of the amorous relationship. Masculine values push for a utilitarian and contractual form of thinking that encourages discourses of equality between partners and the idea that a relationship relies on communicative rationality through which they negotiate their rights and obligations (Illouz 1997:205). The emerging amorous ethos defended by self-help and feminist literature

furthered the individualization process by pushing individuals to focus on their own interests, to live separated lives together and to negotiate the relationship rationally.

The emancipation of sexuality, the decline of gender roles, the instability of marriage and the ascending amorous ethos in modernity furthered two new individual aims: autonomy and self-realization. No longer able to rely on gender roles and the stability of the family, i.e. the continuance of their relationship and the everlasting support of their partners, individuals are forced to build up a life of their own, to become autonomous. In order to ensure their own survival, individuals are forced to enter the labor market; and to succeed in it they must adopt its values. The individual's biography starts to be planned around the job market (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 1995:8).

As Beck and Beck-Gernsheim (1990:14) observe, the individualization process that happens in wealthy Western industrialized societies is marked by a kind of labor market individualism, which demands training and mobility for the construction of a labor biography in the global world, and which tends to conflict with the individual's commitments to family, relations and friends, i.e. to hinder the establishment and maintenance of intimate relationships. Under the demands of autonomy, amorous relationships became the stage of conflicts:

Quarrels start between married (and unmarried) couples when they realize there are other options – taking a job elsewhere, dividing up the chores differently, revising one's family planning, making love to someone else. Deciding on these matters forces us to realize how different the consequences are for men and women and that the two sexes are in different camps. Deciding on who looks after the children, for instance, determines whose career has priority and therefore lays down who in future will be economically dependent on whom, with all the consequences involved. (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 1995:25)

These quarrels are not the only thing that strains a relationship. As Beck and Beck-Gernsheim (1995:96) observe, a relationship is not only about housework, but also about emotional work. If both partners are busy with their struggles for autonomy they are not able to offer the emotional support that they expect from each other, and consequently the relationship loses its meaning.

Concomitant to the demands for autonomy come the appeals for self-realization. In welfare, democratic, technological and consumerist societies, the push to focus on one's own interests is intensified. As Beck and Beck-Gernsheim (1990:9, 16-17; 1995:47) observe, the contradictions between the sexes increase, especially in those societies where prosperity and social security have reached a high level, where peace and democratic rights are beginning to be taken for granted. Freed from the daily struggle against misery and oppression, individuals have more free time to invest in their own interests and became more concerned with the contradictions between personal freedom and relationship demands.

Industrialization and technological advances have also been freeing individuals from ordinary housework – such as cooking and cleaning – granting them more spare time to dedicate to their own interests. Time that the consumer market tries to grab by offering a bright range of leisure activities – movies, trips, shopping and so on – and furthering the devotion to pleasure as a way of life – i.e. hedonism.

In late modernity, individuals not only have at their disposal from more free time, prosperity and social security to focus on themselves, but they are also encouraged to do so by the increasing discourses of consumerism, sexual experience and autonomy. Such trends towards self-realization make difficult the development of any intimate relationship (Luhmann 1986:155). As Beck and Beck-Gernsheim (1995:43) suggest, unlike many scholars who regard this tendency as the expression of an “age of narcissism”, it must be understood as the consequence of social changes that together lead individuals to a phase of exploration.

Largely involuntarily and driven by social changes, individuals are entering a searching and explorative phase. They want to try out and “experience” (in the active sense of the word) new ways of living to counteract the dominance of roles (man, woman, family, career) which are becoming increasingly irrelevant. They want to express themselves freely and give in to impulses they used to suppress. They allow themselves to enjoy life here and now and not just in the distant future, and to cultivate a conscious delight in the good things in life. They are coming to regard their needs as rights to be defended if necessary against official dictates and obligations. They are developing a feeling for freedom, are highly aware of having to protect their lives against encroachment from outside and ready to become socially and politically active whenever their private territory is endangered, often ignoring the established forms and forums for articulating and organizing political action. (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 1995:43)

Like Beck and Beck-Gernsheim above, Illouz (2012:59) also observes how freedom has become, in late modernity, the pure expression of expanding democracy. Oriented toward modern values of democracy and freedom, individuals in modernity have been defining themselves through their political and consumerist choices. As Illouz (2012:19) highlights, to choose becomes a right as well as an individual competence that allows one to exercise two other modern values: rationality and autonomy.

According to Beck and Beck-Gernsheim (1995:43), this individualistic era is generating a new ethic, one based on one’s duty to oneself. Rather than in a solipsistic way, this new ethic aims to integrate the individual with the social accounting for altering projective social identities. “Instead of the old fixed images there is a new picture of mankind which specifically includes the possibility of metamorphosis, of personal development and growth” (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 1995:43).

As Beck and Beck-Gernsheim (1995:82-83) observe, rapid social changes, the erosion of traditional ties and the new social and geographical mobility provide individuals in late modernity with a huge number of often complex and contradictory options. In such a context, the establishment and maintenance of relationships is not easy. Since one’s every act affects directly or indirectly the life of others in a relationship – from a television program to a job offer – in order to sustain their relationship individuals must negotiate, comprise and agree on their decisions. The more complex the decision, observe Beck and Beck-Gernsheim (1995:52), the more likely it is to lead to conflicts.

In an era of openness and multiple possibilities, of rapid social changes and technological advances, the push for autonomy and self-realization has been accompanied by a discourse of improvement: the best job, the best education, the best woman or the best man, the most beautiful, the most intelligent, the most successful and so on. As Beck and Beck-Gernsheim

(1995:93) suggest, with the fall of traditions individuals always crave more, and this idea seems to extend also to amorous relationships.

Research has shown that the standards set on living together today are considerably higher than they used to be. It is no longer enough to just get along with each other. People want more, they are in search of “happiness and fulfillment”, the American dream, “the pursuit of happiness” in their own little home. (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 1995:93)

As can be observed, the decline of traditions, the transformations in the realms of intimacy, the increase in individual freedom, and the push for autonomy and self-realization seem to intensify the modern dilemma between individuality and intimacy. As Luhmann (1986:165) states, in an increasing traditionless context, self-identity becomes contingent on and in more need of validation. In late modernity amorous relationships become more important than ever to the self in its odyssey for self-validation. As many scholars have already pointed out: “in seeking an exchange on many levels with our partner we are also seeking ourselves”; the partner help us to answer the question “who am I and who are you?” (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 1995:51).

The decline of tradition during modernity may free individuals from social constraints and obligations, granting them the possibility to be whatever they want; however, this freedom does not come without a cost, taking away from them the support and security present in close-knit societies (Beck e Beck-Gernsheim 1995:46). As Beck and Beck-Gernsheim (1995:46) observe, as a result of the individualization process “each of us is increasingly both expected and forced to lead our own life outside the bounds of any specific community or group”. Deprived of common beliefs and customs, individuals are forced to rely more than ever on themselves.

Progressive secularization erases the references that provided individuals with meaning, orientation and a sense of place in the large frame of the universe. The consequence is a profound loss of inner stability. “With the “disenchantment of the world” (Weber 1985) comes a new state of “inner homelessness”, of being all alone in the vastness of the cosmos (Berger, Berger and Kellner 1973)”. (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 1995:46-47)

In a world of fading references and increasing self-referentiality, the longing increases for an understandable, intimate and close reality. The more traditional reference points slip away, the more we crave to give our lives meaning and to find security in those we love, the more we tend to pin our hopes on another person, a person who “... is supposed to hold us upright and steady in a world whirling round faster and faster” (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 1995:50). As Beck and Beck-Gernsheim (1995:49) suggest, in such a context amorous relationships became a “safe harbour”; in a strange and inhospitable social world, they grant a person stability.

As more old-fashioned bonds lose their meaning, those in the immediate vicinity become indispensable in helping us to find our place, subconsciously and consciously, in the world, and to maintain our physical and mental well-being. (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 1995:49)

In other words, in such a context of disenchantment and loss of traditions, close relationships became more than ever central in the social design of an understandable, intimate and close

reality (Berger and Kellner 1964:6-7, Luhmann 1986:16, 140; Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 1995:50).

In living together a man and a woman build up a universe of shared attitudes, opinions and expectations covering everything from trivial day-to-day matters to the great events in world politics. This develops in verbal or non-verbal dialogue, in shared habits and experiences, in a continuous interplay between one's other half and oneself. The shared image of the world is continuously being negotiated, shifted, replaced, questioned and reaffirmed. (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 1995:50)

But the importance of amorous relationships in modernity is not restricted to the construction of a meaningful reality. As already observed, the increasing individualization process encourages individuals to cultivate singular personalities. At the same time that the cultural industry acknowledges this by offering diverse cultural products to fulfill the individual demand of idiosyncrasy, it also pushes the process of self-differentiation further. However, in a broad social world characterized by traditionless and impersonal relationships, one's singularity cannot be acknowledged and individual lives are marked by a sense of ordinary invisibility. Beyond that, as Illouz (2012:112-115) observes, the decline of a common moral order and references has made it hard for individuals to achieve a sense of self-worth. No longer related to economic or social status, social worth has become in modernity performative and achieved through social relations (Illouz 2012:119). Amorous relationships have become more important than ever in late modernity, since it is in the close and meaningful reality shared by partners, where an individual's singular identity can be acknowledged, that he/she is granted with distinction, with a sense of singularity and an increased sense of self-worth.

Because of those special features of amorous relationships – construction of a meaningful reality, acknowledgment of one's singular personality, provision of a sense of self-worth – individuals tend to speak often about their lives as a romantic narrative. By summarizing their lives in terms of their amorous relationships, individuals account for the meaningful moments of their existence.¹⁶

As Beck and Beck-Gernsheim (1995:24) observe, the more that individualization drives men and women apart, the more they are pushed back into each other's arms. In a world that has lost traditions, the longing for a comprehensible world grows, and close relationships become

¹⁶ Robert J. Sternberg (1995) was the first to speak about love as a story. However, the psychologist regarded love as just another subject of interest in the life of a person, like work or family, and suggested that individuals create stories about such subjects, based on previous experiences, present interactions and cultural orientations, in order to generate scripts for their lives, to give them orientation.

Eva Illouz and Wiff (2009) also mention the idea of love as a narrative. However the sociologists regard love as an emotion, an emotion that has the capacity to provide an overall narrative of identity to the self.

As mentioned in the previous chapter, love is regarded here as a cultural system of meanings that offer prescriptions of practices, emotions and so on. As the system of meaning that people use to signify their experience and to establish and maintain an intimate relationship, love enables couples to construct a common, understandable, intimate and close reality, and because those are the most meaningful moments of their lives, individuals would tend to describe their lives according to their amorous trajectories.

more attractive as does what is regarded as the drive behind them: love.¹⁷ Nevertheless, although love becomes increasingly necessary in late modernity, it also became harder to achieve, as Beck and Beck-Gernsheim (1990:9) observe:

Weighed down by hopes, love seems to slip away because it is idolized by a society focused on the growth of the individual. And it is laden with more hopes the quicker it seems to vanish into thin air, bereft of any social ties. (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 1995:2)

The increase in individualization leads to a context dominated by impersonal relationships (Luhmann 1986:164), in which love seems to dissolve around us into lesser loves – flirting, one-night stands, companionship and so on (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 1995:190) – and this raises the question of whether it is possible to find the point at which one can experience oneself as a unity and function as a unity (Luhmann 1986:164). Real love, i.e. as a strong lasting intimate bond, becomes rare, and according to Beck and Beck-Gernsheim (1995:190), the search for a holistic “grand love” arises in each individual.

The value of love lies in the intense and special experience it offers (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 1995:178). In a context where social ties seem to fade – where politics seems irrelevant and the organization of working hours hinders gatherings – and life around us becomes more impersonal, observe Beck and Beck-Gernsheim (1995:178), an amorous relationship “is the only place where you can really get in touch with yourself and someone else”.

The scarcity of love in late modernity enhances its power of attraction, its fascination, and seems to turn it into a precious commodity (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 1990:9; 1995:190). The decline of traditions, the increasing longing for salvation and affection and the hope of transcendence in everyday life turn love in late modernity into an effective subjective cultural force (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 1990:9, 12; 1995:177). It becomes for many the one main source of satisfaction and meaning in life (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 1995:169).

Love assumes in late modernity the role that belonged previously to religion and class; it provides an anchor in a context of shifting principles and horizons (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 1995:182). In contemporary society, when “life seems to be falling apart individuals do not seek the protection of the church or God or their classes but someone they can trust who shares their world and promises support and understanding” (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 1995:182).

The more prosperous the individuals’ lives become, the less restricted they become by class considerations or established authorities and the more they tend to focus their attention on a search for emotional satisfaction (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 1995:182). Love has become in late modernity a utopia based on the power and persistence of sexual drives and deep

¹⁷ The increasing importance attributed to love in modernity is explained here through the assumption of the social construction of reality (Berger and Kellner 1964, Berger and Luckmann 1966) and the advancing individualization process (Luhmann 1986; Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 1995). Illouz (2012:120) differs from this perspective of individualization. According to her, the importance of love in modernity is related to its role in the institutionalization of the self in modernity (Illouz 2012:6,11) and to the “fact that love provides a strong anchor for recognition, the perception and constitution of one’s worth, in an era where social worth is both uncertain and ongoingly negotiated” (Illouz 2012:120).

personal wishes (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 1995:177). As Beck and Beck-Gernsheim (1990:9, 12; 1995:177, 184) describe it, love has become in late modernity an earthly religion, not only because it becomes a necessity in a context of increasing individualization, but also because the freedom it seems to offer from old middle-class moral restrictions fascinates any individual in a time of social revolution (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 1995:187).

Like a religion, love promises perfect happiness, the possibility to transcend mundane life, to provide a new meaning to life (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 1995:174-175). However, if in a religion the energy is oriented towards what comes after death, in love the energy is oriented to the present, to sensual experiences and to the perception of oneself and the world in life before death (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 1995:174-175).

The understanding of love as a force against social conventions can be traced back to the middle ages and the *minne* tradition; however, as Beck and Beck-Gernsheim (1995:178) observe, love, localized now in the individual, becomes a kind of private rebellion. According to the scholars (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 1995:178) love becomes the answer to a social world that assaults us constantly with innumerable abstractions – statistics, figures, formulas – which we do not always understand and that indicate how imperiled we are.

Love “as an archetypal act of defiance” (Alberoni): that is what modern love seems to promise, a chance of being authentic in a world which otherwise runs on pragmatic solutions and convenient lies. Love is a search for oneself, a craving to really get in contact with me and you, sharing bodies, sharing thoughts, encountering one another with nothing held back, making confessions and being forgiven, understanding, confirming and supporting what was and what is, longing for a home and trust to counteract the doubts and anxieties modern life generates. If nothing seems certain or safe, if even breathing is risky in a polluted world, then people chase after the misleading dreams of love until they suddenly turn into nightmares. (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 1995:175-176)

As an open religion, free from traditions and external meanings, love demands no conversion. Its value lies in the depth of the attraction of lovers to each other and their subjective and mutual commitment (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 1995:177). As “a way of getting in touch with forces to counteract the intangible and unintelligible existence we find ourselves in”, love has become, in late modernity, an object of worship (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 1995:178).

As Beck and Beck-Gernsheim (1995:195-196) observe, in a context where the state and the church have abdicated from their role as regulators of marriage and close relationships, leaving love to develop into a radical self-administrated search for intimacy; where the higher equality between the sexes in the professional field has prevented the economic dependence of women on men; where the increasing dedication of individuals to their careers hinders them from sharing more experiences that may bind them together; where the increasing dependence on training, mobility and commitment to the labor market and impersonal regulations turns love into the answer to loneliness, since it holds out the promise of a meaningful and satisfying physical and emotional experience; and where instances of exogamy increase and partners are the only ones responsible for overcoming different backgrounds and sustaining the relationship, love becomes the main bond between partners.

In these modern times our addiction to love is the fundamentalist belief to which almost everyone has succumbed, especially those who are against fundamentalist creeds. Love is

religion after religion, the ultimate belief after the end of all faith... The meaning of existence has not been lost; life is not hollow, at least under the lure and pressure of daily life. Some powerful force has pushed its way in and filled up the gap where, according to previous generations, God, country, class, politics or family were supposed to hold sway. I am what matters: I, and You as my assistant; and if not You then some other You. (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 1995:12)

Love in late modernity promises fusion with another, while still preserving the singularity and autonomy of each partner; a promise that in a fragmented and uncertain world may turn realists into believers (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 1995:191). Nourished by the hopes for a safe and comfortable reality, love furthers cohesion and therefore, as the Beck and Beck-Gernsheim (1995:181, 191) argue, is contra-individual.

For these very reasons, however, love is the best ideology to counteract the perils of individualization. It lays stress on being different, yet promises togetherness to all those lone individuals; it does not rely on outdated status symbols or money or legal considerations, but solely on true and immediate feelings, on faith in their validity and on the person they are directed towards. The law-givers are the lovers themselves, phrasing their statutes with their delight in each other. (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 1995:181)

In the face of the social changes and emerging amorous meanings in late modernity observed in the last two sub-chapters, scholars have been suggesting that a new form of love has been arising in late modernity, as the following chapter will show.

2.6. An emerging form of love: partnership

The conflict between individuality and intimacy has intensified in late modernity and the establishment and maintenance of a relationship has become a difficult task. The meanings espoused by *romantic love*, such as intense and gratuitous emotions and the idealization of the other, are incompatible with the modern demands for a successful relationship, such as sharing daily life, coping with inequalities and imperfect partners, integrating love with the demands of family and work, and so on. Confirming the endurance of amorous relationships, some scholars argue that a new form of love has risen in contemporary society: *partnership* (Burkart 1998:36; Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 1990:15) – *companionship love* (Luhmann 1986:151), *real love* (Swidler 2001:114; 131), *confluent love* (Giddens 1992a:68), *realist love* (Illouz 1997:160, 196).

According to Luhmann (1986:151), the individual's search for a foundation for enduring intimate relationships has led in late modernity to the rebirth of the old notion of "life's companion" in the guise of companionship. Marriage based on *partnership* is not expected to provide one with a completely unrealistic ideal world and a perpetual affirmation of passionate feelings, but rather with a basis for communication and common action with regard to everything which is of importance to the partners involved (Luhmann 1986:151). It becomes a sheltered, private place for emotional companionship and leisure (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 1995:86).

Localized in the individual, *partnership love* does not go against family or society, and therefore no longer requires the aspect of uncontrolled passion to justify itself (Luhmann

1986:165). Love must now be spontaneous; it must be provoked by the other but emerge in the individual (Luhmann 1986:165). *Partnership love* is not reactive, but proactive, since that is the only form which enables the lover to preserve his/her own freedom and self-determination and to react to the beloved's inner experience, actions and view of the world (Luhmann 1986:166).

In a context increasingly dominated by ephemeral and impersonal relationships due to the disentanglement of individuals from the group, a closed space to share their subjective perceptions and to present their identities becomes harder to achieve. Consequently, observes Luhmann (1986:153), the expectations of intimacy have increased in amorous relationships in late modernity, which has led to the intensification of communication. Expecting to be able to share entirely their most private thoughts and experiences, so that what one acknowledges as relevant is also considered relevant by the other (Luhmann 1982:159-160), individuals have been demanding honest and open communication.

On the other hand, in a context of increasing individualization, an amorous relationship must be able to accommodate the individual demands of both partners for sexual experience, equality, autonomy, self-realization, freedom, and so on. The growing dilemma between self-interest and relationship demands in a context of increasing self-referentiality – where individuals define for themselves what family, marriage, parenthood, sexuality or even love mean (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 1990:13; 1995:5, 91) – increases the conflicts between partners and break-ups becomes a common outcome. Lovers suffering from the threat to their close and understandable reality, people looking for advice in the face of the decline of tradition and scholars concerned with the fragmentation of the family, have been furthering the public discussion on how to sustain amorous relationships and have led to an increasing amount of cultural resources advising couples how to overcome individual conflicts and sustain a relationship. As Illouz (1997) observes in her study, expressing the legacy of the Enlightenment and of modernity, i.e. the values of self-knowledge, autonomy, equality, and tolerance of difference (Illouz 1997:292), these cultural discourses have produced a communication-therapeutic ethos that orients contemporary amorous relationships.

Grounded on the belief of a “redemptive value of language, its capacity to represent the person, to know the world, to act on it, to steer emotions, and to bind people in their mutual openness” (Illouz 1997:236), the communication-therapeutic ethos has established communication as the answer to how to prevent and resolve conflicts, improve knowledge of oneself and others, bind two people emotionally, and enable true intimacy (Illouz 1997:234). Suggesting that communication, self-expression, self-disclosure and verbal intimacy are indispensable to love, to sustaining romantic feelings and to a successful relationship (Illouz 1997:234), cultural productions such as soap operas, self-help books and magazines, only further this ideal of self-disclosure as a form of self-knowledge, mutual understanding and ultimately emotional fulfillment (Illouz 1997:234-235).

Therefore, communication has become a key feature for the establishment and maintenance of any amorous relationship in late modernity (Luhmann 1982:159-160; Beck and Beck-

Gernsheim 1990:15). Love has become a constant negotiation (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 1995:99).

The modern discovery is that when love changes and what used to be a community of two helpmates has become a community of two lovers, the emotions themselves become hard work. Love under modern conditions is not an event which takes place once but is a state to be fought for anew every day, not just in good and bad times but all the time against the insecurities and upsets modern society forces on it.

To do this one needs patience and tolerance; such a relationship involves tenacious negotiations, often accompanied by skirmishing and a series of mini summit conferences, with no end in sight and the aggravating difficulty that the participants after years of practice are experts in each other's weaknesses and no-go areas. (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 1995:99)

If the art of conversation during *amour passion* was a sophisticated seduction game in which the self was as often concealed as it was disclosed, in romantic communication it means to expose and express, as authentically as possible, one's inner thoughts and self (Illouz 1997:234). Intimacy in late modernity does not mean to be absorbed by the other, but to open oneself to the other, to trust the other to the point of becoming vulnerable, to reveal one's own weaknesses, fears, wishes and strengths (Giddens 1992a:72-73, 106). It "is above all a matter of emotional communication, with others and with the self, in a context of interpersonal equality" (Giddens 1992b:130).

In this intense and authentic communication, disappointments from observing that the other is different from oneself, or different than one would wish him/her to be, are common – leading, according to Luhmann (1986:167-168), to the development of love into a program of understanding. Nevertheless, he observes (Luhmann 1986:168) that understanding is an ideal entity and cannot be fully achieved, i.e. misunderstandings and conflicts will always be part of an amorous relationship.

The main advocate of the *partnership* form of love is Giddens (1992a). Focused on the generic restructuring of intimacy in late modernity and oriented by the feminist writings on equality, he contends that in the emerging *confluent love* (*partnership*) lies the future of amorous relationships (Giddens 1992a:72). According to Giddens (1992a:73), as the successor of *romantic love*, *partnership* differs from it by having eroticism in the center of the relationship; the achievement of reciprocal sexual pleasure is a key element in the maintenance or dissolution of the relationship. It is not necessarily androgynous, but it assumes that the knowledge of the other's peculiarities is fundamental and that sexuality is just another factor that has to be negotiated in the relationship (Giddens 1992a:74). Active and contingent, *partnership* goes against the romantic ideas of "forever" and "unique" (Giddens 1992a:72). Not necessarily monogamous, it implies that the individual sustains the relationship only when it is interesting for him/her (Giddens 1992a:74). In other words, the permanence in the relationship depends on what the relationship can offer. Unlike *romantic love*, *partnership* involves issues of power (Giddens 1992a:73). It presumes equality in the emotional give and take between individuals, and therefore this love depends on the development of intimacy (Giddens 1992a:73). Only when partners express their worries and necessities, show themselves vulnerable to each other, can this confluent form of love arise.

According to Giddens, *partnership* brings with it a new form of amorous interaction: “pure relationships”, i.e. relationships based on sexual and emotional equality (Giddens 1992a:10), which for Illouz (2012:177) have their origin in the psychological and feminist discourses. As Giddens (1992b:58) describes it, a “pure relationship”

... refers to a situation where a social relation is entered into for its own sake, for what can be derived by each person from a sustained association with another; and which is continued only in so far as it is thought by both parties to deliver enough satisfactions for each individual to stay within it. (Giddens 1992b:58)

The emergence of *partnership* in late modernity can be observed, according to Giddens (1992a:72) in the increasing rate of divorce, which has been leading to the replacement of the romantic ideal of “a special person” with the ideal of “a special relationship”.

The affirmation of the rise of *partnership* in late modernity does not mean that *romantic love* automatically ceases to exist. Since social changes can present a different time of progress in each society and social group, traditional references tend to coexist with modern ones, leading romantic and partnership meanings to coexist in contemporary societies. Such contradictions are further promoted by the cultural industry, which disseminates everything from fairytales with “happily ever after” endings to divorce manuals, from courtship hints to broken-heart songs, from romantic films about love beyond death to self-help books on how to overcome the conflicts in a relationship, from scientific reports about self-interested love to the biochemical process of passion.

Illouz (1997) and Swidler (2001), for example, observed in their studies how individuals apply different romantic and partnership meanings to their lives. In her investigation on the relationship between love and the market in the USA, Illouz (1997:161, 166) observed that individuals simultaneously present two different and systematically opposed perspectives on love, a “romantic” and a “realist” one. The romantic perspective derives from the physical experience of sexual arousal and is embodied in the cultural scenario of an intense sexual interaction on the margins of social control, which displays dramatic and intense emotions (Illouz 1997:181). It is the “fantasy-based” one, “the Hollywood-tale”; it encompasses the intense, spontaneous and exceptional feelings typical of genuine romantic sentiment, and it regards love as resulting from an immediate, intense, effortless and organic bond (Illouz 1997:161-163). It is described by interviewees as “true romantic”, “passionate”, “fun”, “interesting”, “unconventional”, “spice and adventures”, “spontaneous”, “enchanted”, “enthralled”, “magical”, “pure fantasy”, and at the same time as “stereotypical” and “unrealistic” (Illouz 1997:164).

The realist form of love (*partnership*), on the other side, consists in the idea that an amorous relationship to be successful has to evolve within time and increase mutual knowledge; it is characterized by metaphors such as “partnership”, “hard work”, “foundations”, “building”, “growth” and “working at love” (Illouz 1997:160-161). *Partnership* enacts the phenomenological categories of everyday life experience, being grounded in common sense, the experience of everyday life, a relationship based on compatibility of the partners and friendship, a concept of love as progress and as work (Illouz 1997:161-164). Illouz (1997:196-

197) suggests that this realist form of love arises from the tension that results from a structural contradiction between marriage as an institution of social reproduction and marriage as a unit for the expression of the individual's emotions. In order to overcome this conflict, observes Illouz (1997:197), individuals have been applying the purposive and utilitarian rationality of the market to their amorous relationships.

Illouz (1997:166) observed in her investigation that individuals alternated between a romantic and a *partnership* perspective on love. When asked to describe their "most memorable love stories", the interviewees narrated real-life events based more on the romantic perspective than the realist one, suggesting that the romantic model of love is cognitively and emotionally more salient than the realistic one (Illouz 1997:166). According to Illouz (1997:166), *romantic love* dominates the "memorable love stories" because it is related to the experience of liminality in late modernity, i.e. it enables individuals to separate themselves from the environment through symbolic behavior and to become detached from "an earlier fixed point in the social structure or from an established set of cultural conditions" (Illouz 1997:142).

Swidler (2001:112-116) distinguished two forms of love in the discourses of her interviewees in her investigation on the culture of love with middle-class adults in California (USA): a "mythical love", i.e. *romantic love*, and an emerging vision of love based on a dominant, self-conscious realism that she calls "real love", i.e. *partnership*. In this "prosaic-realism" perspective – or down-to-earth perspective – love grows slowly and is often ambivalent and confused, rather than sudden and certain as *romantic love*; it does not require a dramatic choice, but may result from circumstance, accident or inertia (Swidler 2001:114). *Partnership* is not monogamous, there is no "one true love", and one can love more than one person and one can love in different ways (Swidler 2001:114). Therefore, this real form of love is not everlasting and taken for granted, it demands continuing hard work, compromise and change; and the individual's identity or social destiny does not rely on marriage and love (Swidler 2001:114). Compatibility and practical traits are what make people good life partners and are the grounds for marriage based on *partnership*, and not irrational feeling in defiance of social conventions. As Swidler (2001:114) observes, *partnership* is not about the overcoming of obstacles, but rather the shortage of them.

According to Swidler (2001:117), the interviewees alternate in their discourses between the mythical and the real descriptions of love. At the same time that they presented discourses that vehemently rejected romantic elements, regarding "infatuation" as negative or describing *romantic love* as "movie-star love", observes the researcher (Swidler 2001:117), they periodically invoked romantic ideas of love like "all-or-nothing", "certain", "enduring". For the scholar (2001:118), both discourses on love coexist because they answer different sets of questions: while *real love* helps couples to get along together, understand each other and work out their difficulties, *romantic love* helps them to justify decisive amorous choices about whether or not to marry, or to stay married.

Although it seems that there is a consensus among many scholars that *partnership* is the solution found by individuals in late modernity to sustain an amorous relationship despite

increasing personal conflicts, some of them consider it neither the successor of *romantic love* nor an adequate foundation for an amorous relationship.

Partnership as proposed by Giddens (1992a) assumes that love is possible only between free and equal partners, but as Beck and Beck-Gernsheim (1995:56) observe, empirical data shows the contrary, that “freedom plus freedom does not equal love, but more likely means a threat to it or even its end” (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 1995:11). As they (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 1995) note, freedom and equality in wealthy Western industrialized countries have led men and women to lives centered around the labor market and provided them with many possibilities of self-realization, however both things tend to conflict with the demands of close relationships.

As Illouz (1997:205-206) observed in her analysis of feminist texts in the 1980s, the adoption of traditional masculine values by women introduced to the amorous semantic the rational vocabulary of rights, obligations and needs typical to the contractual form of relationship sustained by *partnership*. As she notes (Illouz 1997:206), this rational and contractual discourse undermines the emotional bond it is meant to strengthen. While the romantic vision of love regards the bond as the merging of bodies and souls, the contractual view of love assumes that each partner has a distinct set of needs that must be bargained for in the relationship (Illouz 1997:194). *Partnership* furthers what Illouz calls a discourse of “utilitarian individualism”, which stipulates that one must evaluate relationships by weighing their costs against the extent to which they satisfy one’s needs (Illouz 1997:194). She also observed in her empirical study (Illouz 1997:288-289) that liberated sexuality and the idea that a slow and progressive knowledge of the other is regarded as the only reliable way to build amorous attachments present in *partnership* has been leading to the decline of the idea of love as an intense and spontaneous feeling.

Burkart (1998) also speaks against the rational and contractual character of *partnership*. He argues (Burkart 1998:38) that *partnership* is above all discursive and not practical; it is a satisfactory ideology and goal for negotiation in modern and individualist milieus, but it is unsuitable for the regulation of the practical order. Burkart (1998:37) explains that while *romantic love* is grounded on paradoxes – such as subjugation and willing surrender – and is irrational, biased, unconditional and self-referential – i.e. for its own sake – *partnership*, on the other hand, is based on reciprocity, equality and justice, implies the negotiation of the conditions for the division of work and for working together and the possibility of complaining about violations of the agreement. Concerned with matters of power in the relationship, Burkart observes (1998:37), *partnership* is individualistic, rational, equitable and purposeful.

According to Burkart (1998:38), *partnership* lacks what is necessary to establish and sustain an amorous relationship: it does not offer, like *romantic love*, an affective-sexual basis – sexuality and eroticism – for the maintenance of an amorous relationship; and it does not help, like *romantic love*, to suppress injustices and consequently evade conflicts in the amorous interaction; rather, it brings conflicts to the relationship in its attempt to achieve justice, making it harder to establish and maintain an amorous relationship.

Koppetsch et al. (1997 apud Burkart 1998:39), like Burkart (1998), also conclude in their empirical study that *partnership* is not an adequate substitute for *romantic love*. They observe that the inequality, injustice and asymmetry present in *romantic love* are still necessary to sustain an amorous relationship, and that *partnership* becomes useful particularly in amorous relationships based on less traditional gender relations.

Although scholars are not unanimous as to whether *partnership* is the future form of love, they all seem to agree about love's secularization in late modernity, which is regarded in the next section.

2.7. The secularization of love

As Beck and Beck-Gernsheim (1995:141) affirm, the secular religion of love is losing its mythology in late modernity and turning into a rational system. For them, love is becoming "a social hybrid of market forces and personal impulses, an ideal of love (or marriage or parenthood) which is sage, calculable and medically optimized".

In contrast to Weber and other scholars who understand rationalization to be opposed to and countered by emotions, Illouz (2012:159) suggests that rationality and rationalization work precisely in conjunction with emotional life. In her words (Illouz 2012:159), "rationality is an institutionalized cultural force of its own which has come to restructure emotional life from within: that is, it has changed the basic cultural scripts through which emotions are understood and negotiated". According to Illouz (2012:162), science, political contractualism and technologies of choice in the modern world have been furthering the rationalization of love.

As Charles Taylor (1989) observes in his book *Sources of the Self*, since ancient times scholars have been promoting a discourse of the supremacy of the mind over the body by pointing to reason as a sufficient means of reaching the Good [in ancient Greece], God [in Christendom] and knowledge [in the modern era].

Like Plato, Augustine understood the universe as an external realization of a rational order. Things were an external expression of the Good and should be understood as an expression of the Good; or in Augustine's terms, things were an expression of God's thoughts and should be understood as God's signs (Taylor 1989:128). Nevertheless, Augustine changed the way one achieved knowledge by claiming that the way to God was not through the object domain but "in" us (Taylor 1989:129). For him, the light of God was not just "out there" illuminating the cosmic order, as it was for Plato; it was also within us. The introduction of the inwardness of radical reflexivity by Augustine, later revisited by Descartes and Locke, was an important step in the Western tradition of thought (Taylor 1989:131). As Taylor (1989:133) argues, it was Augustine and not Descartes who invented the argument known as the "cogito", since he was the first to make the first-person standpoint fundamental to our search for the truth, as previously noted in this chapter. By arguing about the superiority of the inner over the outer, i.e. of the spirit over the body, of reason over senses, and emphasizing the inner as the way

to God, Augustine furthered the idea that reason enables us to determine which of our sensory experiences are truly trustworthy (Taylor 1989:133).

In the Renaissance, Descartes adopted many of Augustine's ideas, such as the emphasis on radical reflexivity, the importance of the cogito and the central role of a proof of God's existence which starts from "within" (Taylor 1989:143); however, he gave inwardness a radical twist that led to a significant change in social life: Descartes situated the source of morality within us and led to the internalization of this important power.

Influenced by the scientific revolution of his time, Descartes proposed that the cosmos should be understood mechanically and rejected the theological mode of thinking, abandoning any theory of ontic logos (Taylor 1989:144). If previously knowledge was regarded as a self-revealing reality, now it became a representational one, something that needed to be constructed by humans in their minds (Taylor 1989:144).

The change of scientific paradigm in the Renaissance transformed anthropological understanding (Taylor 1989:144). According to Descartes, the order of representation needs to be constructed through a chain of clear and distinct perceptions in order to achieve certainty (Taylor 1989:144). Representation attains the status of knowledge by being correct and by being well-grounded on evidence (Taylor 1989:144). If previously knowledge was achieved by turning towards God, after Descartes it became unconditional and self-generated (Taylor 1989:157). As Taylor (1989:157) observes,

The Cartesian proof is no longer a search for an encounter with God within. It is no longer the way to an experience of everything in God. Rather what I now meet is myself: I achieve a clarity and a fullness of self-presence that was lacking before... The road to Deism is already open.

The dualism of mind and body was also revisited and intensified by Descartes with his assertion that in order to achieve knowledge we need to "objectify the world, including our own bodies, and that means to come to see them mechanically and functionally, in the same way that an uninvolved external observer would" (Taylor 1989:145). Reason was once again highlighted as a human asset and an adequate means to achieve knowledge, and the bodily senses were once again regarded as untrustworthy.

According to Taylor (1989:148-149), Descartes's works furthered what Weber described as the "disenchantment of the world". The exaltation of reason and the perception of the world as a mechanism leads to a neutralization of the cosmos, since the cosmos is no longer seen as the embodiment of a meaningful order which can define the good for us. By grasping the world mechanistically and functionally as a domain of possible means, we demystify the cosmos as a setter of ends. As Taylor (1989:149) observes further,

... gaining insight into the world as mechanism is inseparable from seeing it as a domain of potential instrumental control... Similarly, to free oneself from passions and obey reason is to get the passions under instrumental direction. The hegemony of reason is defined no longer as that of a dominant vision but rather in terms of a directing agency subordinating a functional domain.

The inwardness of self-sufficiency, of autonomous powers of ordering by reason promoted by Descartes, in Taylor's opinion (1989:158), prepared the ground for modern unbelief.

Locke went beyond Descartes and rejected any form of the doctrine of innate ideas (Taylor 1989:165). Opposing himself against any view which sees humans as tending naturally towards or attuned to the truth, Locke proposed suspending judgment on these traditional ideas and examining their foundations before accepting them (Taylor 1989:165). Arguing that our conceptions of the world are syntheses of the ideas we originally receive from sensations and reflections, and that under the influence of passion, custom and education, these syntheses are made without awareness and good evidence, Locke observed that we come to believe things and accept notions which seem solid and certain, but have no validity, and since these notions are based on our thoughts, we have difficulty calling them into question (Taylor 1989:165). In order to achieve knowledge, he proposed a radical disengagement through a radically reflexive procedure, i.e. one must separate oneself from one's own spontaneous beliefs and syntheses, in order to submit them to scrutiny (Taylor 1989:168). Locke calls us not to contemplate order, but to construct pictures of things following the canons of rational thinking; the aim is to get to the way things really are (Taylor 1989:168). As Taylor (1989:168) observes, with Descartes and Locke rationality came to be understood in modernity as a property of the process of thinking and no longer as the substantive content of thought.¹⁸

The establishment of reason as an "adequate" method of attaining knowledge made disenchantment into "a fundamental cultural, cognitive, and institutional process of modernity, by which beliefs becomes organized by knowledge systems, conducts become determined by systematic and abstract rules" (Illouz 2012:162). As Illouz (2012:162) observes, rational action is consciously regulated, favors systematic rules to approach the object or subject and therefore undermines traditional or intuitive conduct. By defining action as a means-end relationship, rational attitude also undermines transcendence. "Rationalizing belief entails an undermining of the emotional intensity of and belief in love" (Illouz 2012:162).

Throughout the twentieth century, scientific modes of explanations of love widely disseminated through the institutions of the university and the mass media have reduced love, for example, to "sex drive", "hormones", "species survival" or "brain chemistry" (Illouz 2012:163). The scientific modes of explanation have impaired the romantic view of love as "an ineffable, unique, quasi-mystical experience and selfless sentiment" (Illouz 2012:163) and reduced "the capacity to turn love into a mythology, a transcendent force of its own" (Illouz 2012:170).

According to Illouz (2012:163), "psy sciences" (Illouz 2012:163) have a special role in the secularization of love. By furthering self-knowledge and the scrutiny of emotions as a suitable method for achieving it, the psy sciences have turned love into an object of endless investigation, self-knowledge, and self-scrutiny (Illouz 2012:163).

The self becomes the object of an ongoing process of self-understanding and careful self-monitoring of the psyche, which leads to an intellectualization of romantic relationships through

¹⁸ The first-person perspective introduced by Augustine and the self-objectification introduced by Descartes were significant pushes to the individualization process. As Taylor (1989:175) observes, they generated a reflexive stance that led us to describe ourselves with reflexive expressions as the "self".

the systematic labelling of emotions and through their monitoring by techniques of self-awareness and self-transformation. (Illouz 2012:163)

The increasing psychological discourses defending autonomy at the center of the idea of selfhood has mitigated the romantic idea of emotional fusion, i.e. “meeting of souls”, “symbioses”, and turned it into a pathology (Illouz 2012:164). Defending negotiation, communication and reciprocity as the suitable forms of interactions between “two autonomous wills”, psy sciences, observed Illouz (2012:164), have liquidated the old association of love with transcendence, a force beyond the individual’s particular needs and will. “Love became ‘intimacy’, and intimacy meant that emotional life could be submitted to rules of conduct, the purpose of which was to preserve and carve maximum individual autonomy within the romantic bond” (Illouz 2012:164).

Regarding romantic suffering as “an unacceptable and unjustifiable symptom, emanating from insufficiently mature psyches” (Illouz 2012:164), according to Illouz, psy sciences have attributed to it a negative connotation and localized its responsibility in the sufferer him/herself. Romantic suffering started to be regarded no longer as “a sign of selfless devotion or of an elevated soul” – as it was in courtly love – but rather as “a symptom of an incomplete emotional development” (Illouz 2012:164). According to Illouz (2012:164-165), the model of mental health sustained by psy sciences has promoted definitions of wellbeing and happiness in intimate relationships that ultimately reject suffering and command one to maximize one’s utilities.

This model of health puts knowledge and defense of one’s self-interest squarely at the center of the emotionally mature self. To love well means to love according to one’s self-interest. The emotional experience of love increasingly contains and displays a utilitarian project of the self, in which one has to secure maximum pleasure and well-being. (Illouz 2012:164-165)

Although Illouz (2012) does not regard social sciences in the process of the secularization of love, it must be mentioned that they have also played an important role in the process. Social scientists have not only been discussing the true motivations of love, i.e. whether love is altruistic or egotistical, since the first decades of the 20th century, but by favoring quantitative methodology and applying measurable variables, such as remuneration and level of education, many scholars have furthered the understanding of love as selfish and/or consisting of the compatibility of social status. Based on such variables, social research has pointed out the social tendency towards endogamy, i.e. the marriage between individuals of the same social group, and have claimed that individuals tend to marry those who are socially and economically compatible with them, thereby suggesting that love and marriage follow rational and economic actions [e.g. Scanzoni 1970].

In her study on the relations between love and the market, Illouz (1997) also contributes to this trend by suggesting that love has become a commodity. She (Illouz 1997:293) may have a point that the very triumph of *romantic love* in the mass media and consumer culture in modernity leads to disenchantment with it, since the ubiquitous use of romance to sell commodities leads individuals to regard it as a cliché. Nevertheless, her assumption that love has been colonized by the market, and her consideration that romance is experienced in modernity above all through consumption (Illouz 1997:76), and that it is a restricted

commodity, a luxury for those who have the economic and cultural capitals to consume the romantic utopia sold by the market (Illouz 1997:292), not only deprives romance of any form of enchantment, but also assumes that outside forces, such as “the market” may engender love or romance in the individual.

Assuming that love has become a commodity in late modernity, Illouz (1997:294) suggests that the capacity to live an authentic meaning of love is reserved for those who have the income, leisure time and education – i.e. the middle- and upper-middle classes – to access the “romantic dream” suggested by the cultural industry. For her (Illouz 1997:286), they have the educational level that guarantees them a high “romantic competence”, i.e. more skills to manage the conflicts in the relationship and the ability to recognize the social prescriptions of romantic forms, which allow them to escape from clichés, produce singular experiences of romance, and affirm their own sense of autonomy and individuality. The working class, on the other hand, observes Illouz (1997:294), lack not only the economic, cultural and temporal resources, but they also do not share with their middle- and upper-middle class counterparts the focus on self-knowledge and on expressive and interpersonal skills that mitigate gender differences and help relationships live by the romantic standards promoted by the media.

In her reduction of romance to a commodity, Illouz not only suggests a positive correlation between love and economic capital which helps to perpetuate the sociological assumption of love as self-interested, but also seems to forget that the symbolic capacity of humans, which enables them to turn ordinary situations such as prayer, dinner, and watching the sunset, into liminal rituals, does not depend on one’s economic and cultural capitals. It is the human ability to re-signify their experience that grants individuals the experience of romance and not the simple consumption of romantic commodities. As Costa (2005:116) points out, Illouz’s analysis of love and the market (1997) ignores what since Weber has been known to be extremely important to sociology: the consideration of the phenomenon in its micro-social scope, which means, in the case of love, the need to consider how lovers build and signify their amorous interactions. Costa highlights the importance of considering the distinctive symbolic use that lovers make of romantic products, which enables all romantic rituals to be experienced as unique and singular in each relationship. He (Costa 2005:116) agrees that the market can facilitate and intensify loving interactions, offering the basis for love to be acted out and also providing the means for love to be experienced as sacred; however, he defends the idea that the market cannot generate love, that it is not able to engender feelings in people. As Costa (2005:116) states, “even the richest and most expressive of temples cannot make the agnostic feel close to God”.

Social scientists have also been the main authors behind the analysis of power relations in society. Grounded in liberal democratic discourses, they have furthered individual autonomy and social movements, such as feminist ones, that have led to the secularization of love. Regarding amorous relations as relations of power, feminist discourses have deployed norms of equality, consensuality and reciprocity in the interaction between the sexes. On the one side, feminist discourses have argued that *romantic love* is symbolic violence against women, since it helps to sustain social male domination by exalting “self-sacrifice, self-abandonment,

and the capacity of love with no expectations of reciprocity” especially by women (Illouz 2012:170). On the other hand, feminist discourses have encouraged women to adhere to traditional masculine values and to adopt a contractual form of relationship, further placing amorous relationships and feelings under the neutral and dispassionate gaze of reason (Illouz 2012:170; 1997:205-207).

According to Illouz (2012:170), the feminist discourse of “power symmetry” has led to the rationalization of social bonds in different ways. It invites men and women to reflect on the “natural” rules that organize sexual attraction and to reflexively monitor their emotions, language and conduct. It calls on women [and men] to evaluate and measure each other’s contributions to the relationship. It places professional status and values of fairness in the workplace and the polity before an individual’s private desires. It promotes neutral procedural rules of speech and conduct in erotic relations, which disembods them from their particularity and concreteness.

The disseminated concept of “sexual harassment” and the increasing numbers of conduct manuals that suggest gestures and languages free of sexual and gender connotation based on the discourses of “power symmetry”, have been eliminating, according to Illouz (2012:171-175) the tacit ambivalence and spontaneity that normally attend sexual transactions. As she (Illouz 2012:175) suggests, spontaneity is nothing but an effect of the force and invisibility of social scripts; however, the scrutiny of power in sexual and gender relations by feminists has revealed, criticized and questioned these scripts. According to Illouz (2012:187), by generating procedures of politically correct speech and dress codes, feminists have eliminated the ambiguity that traditionally characterizes eroticism in amorous relationships.

The fourfold concern for neutral language, symmetrical power relationships, procedural fairness, and explicit consent interferes with and disrupts the rules of implicitness and ambiguity at the cultural heart of libido, understood here *not* as a universal invariant, but as a historically specific way to organize sexual desire: because femininity is defined, by and large, by displays of dependence, power differentials are at the heart of women’s and men’s desires and erotics [...] That is, the institutional procedures to implement symmetrical displays of power are questioning a very long cultural tradition in which what was eroticized was precisely men’s power and women’s lack of it, with these power differentials producing richly textured meanings [...] In other words, equality demands a redefinition of eroticism and romantic desire that has yet to be accomplished. (Illouz 2012:192)

The technologies of choice embodied in the Internet era, according to Illouz (2012:177), are another cultural force that has been contributing to the secularization of love. Conjoining psychological knowledge and modes of partner selection derived from the market, the new technologies of choice have been leading to the rationalization of the choice of a mate (Illouz 2012:177).

Amorous choice in pre-modernity was also a rational one, based on such socio-economic criteria as dowry size, personal or family wealth and reputation, education and family politics (Illouz 2012:180). However, as Illouz (2012:180) observes, given the limited options, individuals made very few demands of prospective partners, and tended to settle for “the first available satisfactory good-enough marriage prospect” (Illouz 2012:180). This mode of choice constitutes, in her opinion (Illouz 2012:180), a pragmatic rationality and did not involve strong

or intense emotions. In late modernity, however, observes Illouz (2012:180), individuals develop an elaborate set of criteria for the selection of a mate, such as social, educational, physical, sexual and emotional ones, and very sophisticated means to reach their goals.

The conjunction of psychology, Internet technology and the logic of the capitalist market, according to Illouz (2012:180), has generated a self with refined and multiple tastes and a capacity for discernment and choice. Psychology contributes to the multiplication of criteria for the selection of a mate by disseminating a definition of “persons as sets of psychological and emotional attributes and intimacy as the sharing of two personalities whose attributes and tastes must be finely matched and attuned” (Illouz 2012:180). The cultural expectation that love provides authentic, unmediated emotional and sexual experiences seems to have found expression, according to Illouz (2012:180), in the hypercognized, rational method of selecting a mate, which is particularly salient in the realm of online dating.

Online dating is the most significant trend in modern courtship, aiming to facilitate the search for a mate “based on a twin ideal of physical attractiveness and emotional compatibility” (Illouz 2012:180). Online dating has turned the search of someone “who pleases you” into “finding someone who will satisfy highly elaborate and intense emotional aspirations, supposed to be the outcome of a fine dynamic of sharing of tastes” (Illouz 2012:180).

The cultural mechanisms involved in online partner selection have been furthering rational methods of choice, according to Illouz (2012:180-181). The generation of profiles that describe individuals through a great number of attributes furthers a central feature of rationalization, i.e. intellectualization, which “refers to the ways in which implicit features of our experience are brought to our consciousness, named, and subjected to reflexive reasoning” (Illouz 2012:181). Involving many more interactions than real dating, online dating encourages individuals to “develop standard [rational] techniques to manage the ongoing flow of interested people more easily and efficiently” (Illouz 2012:181). The previous visualization of prospective partners through online dating turns appearance into a primary objective criterion of selection that determines the chances of a conversation or a real encounter (Illouz 2012:181). The combination of psychological and market ideologies and the Internet have led to a commensuration process, i.e. individuals’ attributes become commensurable, measurable in order to enable their comparability and seek a match. By enabling individuals to establish a set of attributes through which candidates are evaluated along multiple scales and compared to one another, online dating institutionalizes a formal, conscious and systematic form of rationality that generates rankings and encourages competitiveness (Illouz 2012:181). Consistent with the logic of consumer culture, technology has been enabling and encouraging an increasing specification and refinement of tastes and the comparison among alternative possibilities. Internet dating has given birth to “a pervasive calculating, market-based, and highly sophisticated rationality that is motivated by the desire to maximize and refine its utilities” (Illouz 2012:181).

Regarding the uncertainty experienced by individuals in the face of the plural discourses on love and the increasing secularization of it, Illouz (2012:195) suggests that irony has become the rhetorical device for discussing love in late modernity. An ironic or disenchanting condition

of love, i.e. the “difficulty in believing in love”, can be found in Western culture already in *Don Quixote* (1605-1615) and according to Illouz (2012:195) seems to have become intensified in modernity with the process of rationalization. As she (2012:195) observes, late modernity is saturated with disenchanted knowledge of love, which makes it difficult for people to subscribe to romantic ideals such as passionate and self-sacrificing commitment or eternal and total love. Therefore, as Illouz (1997:164) observes in her empirical study, at the same time that individuals apply romantic meanings to describe the experience of immediate and intense emotions, they tend to vehemently reject romantic descriptions of love. According to Illouz (1997:193), the rejection of romantic descriptions is a consequence of the communication-therapeutic ethos that has emerged in late modernity, which stresses that the true meanings and experience of love are beyond its ready-made images, furthering an ironic self-suspicion of the romantic model and a suspicion that one does not work hard enough to reveal the true essence of love beyond its dull appearances.

The emergence of *partnership*, the secularization of love and the increasing doubts about it, however, are not the only outcomes of the social changes in late modernity. The progress of globalization and its related geographic mobility, the advent of the Internet, and new technologies have generated significant changes in amorous relationships and left many open questions about the future of love, as will be observed next.

2.8. The future of love: an open question

Able to move more easily between regions and to communicate across vast distances, individuals are no longer spatially restricted in the choice of a mate or unable to sustain a relationship at distance. Consequently, the number of relationships between individuals of different social, national or ethnical backgrounds increases (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 2013:33).

The use of electronic devices in choosing a partner began in the 1960s and has become, in contemporary society, the main trend. With the expansion of the Internet in the 1990s the first online-dating platforms emerged. If at that time to search for a partner online was regarded as odd or a “desperate” act, today it is a socially acceptable mainstream leisure activity; and has expanded not only for the search for a partner, but also for friendship, affairs and sexual encounters.¹⁹

In recent years, with the advent of smartphones, communication exchanges have become faster. Individuals can be online the entire time and are able to send messages 24/7. The apps offered by online-dating platforms have changed the online courtship process by allowing the continuous exchange of flirtatious messages between users, by allowing them to establish contact with more than one person at the same time, i.e. to conduct parallel courtship

¹⁹ <http://www.singleboersen-experten.de/dating-trendreport>.

attempts, and by enabling more rapid communication, leading consequently to the acceleration of the online courtship process.²⁰

As Beck and Beck-Gernsheim (2013:33) observe, the advance of the Internet into the realms of love has not only introduced pragmatic criteria for a rational evaluation of a mate, but has also changed the social quality of amorous relationships by separating intimacy from body and intimacy from person (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 2013:33).

Beyond that, as scholars observe, the weakening of tradition and the emergence of a plurality of cultural discourses – sexuality, equality, autonomy, self-realization, negotiation/contractualism, rational choice, utilitarianism and so on – have left individuals unsure about how to act in amorous interactions. If on the one hand individuals are supplied with a multiplicity of orientations, on the other hand those orientations are often contradictory and generate in the individual ambivalence and suffering.

As observed previously, emerging social discourses have been intensifying the modern dilemma between individuality and intimacy and making it difficult for individuals to establish and sustain intimate relationships. As Beck and Beck-Gernsheim (1995:8, 14), observe, the modern value of autonomy is marked by the insertion of individuals into the job market, which demands training and mobility for the construction of a labor biography, which tends to conflict with the individuals' commitments to intimate relationships. Beyond that, the modern ideals of freedom, self-realization and autonomy, as Illouz (2012:67, 99, 135-136) observes, demand that individuals keep themselves open to what the future may bring, which goes against the idea of commitment, leading individuals to avoid the establishment of relationships. In other words, as emphasized previously, at the same time that individuals are driven to establish a close relationship in order to construct a meaningful reality and corroborate their identity and self-worth, on the other hand modern values drive individuals apart.

Cultural contradictions can also be found within the realms of love itself, such as that observed between the amorous interactions furthered by feminist discourses and those encouraged by capitalist market culture. As Illouz (2012:184) notes, while feminism, aiming at the creation of dialogueical equal relationships, creates techniques of control that enable the self to monitor power inequalities, the market, on the other hand, by creating techniques for ranking others and for reifying one's needs and preferences, reproduces and justifies inequalities (Illouz 2012:184). Moreover, while the feminist culture aims for the acknowledgement of the person in its singularity and therefore opposes any instrumentalization of bodies and persons, the capitalist market culture embodied in internet dating, on the other hand, promotes instrumentalization by encouraging individuals to define themselves through attributes and enabling them to evaluate each other according to these attributes (Illouz 2012:184).

The two concomitant cultural concepts of love in late modernity, i.e. *romantic love* and *partnership love*, are also a source of contradiction and suffering. The romantic perspective of

²⁰ <http://www.singleboersen-vergleich.de/studien.htm>.

love has been fantasized and disseminated by the cultural industry, which encourages the individual wish for an enchanted and phenomenological experience of love that holds the object of love as sacred, unique and immeasurable; that establishes no distinction between subject and object of love; and that overwhelms the experiential reality of the lovers, i.e. an experience in which love is impossible to justify or explain and in which lovers are oblivious to their own self-interest as a criterion for loving another person (Illouz 2012:159-161; 202-203).

Such a version of “enchanted” love is simultaneously spontaneous and unconditional, overwhelming and eternal, unique and total. This ideal-type of romantic love affirms the radical uniqueness of the object of love, the incommensurability of its object, the refusal (or impossibility) to submit feelings to calculation and to rational knowledge, the total surrender of the self to the loved person, and the possibility (at least the potentiality) of self-destruction and self-sacrifice for the sake of another. This quasi-religious view of love [...] has known several variations but its basic components – sacredness, uniqueness, experiential force, irrationality, giving up one’s self-interest, lack of autonomy – have remained in the literary models that took over with the spread of literacy and of the romance novel. (Illouz 2012:161)

At the same time, however, individuals are encouraged in late modernity by the increasing scientific and political discourses and new technologies to adopt rational models of conduct that are based on emotional self-regulation and optimal choice, and which undermine the cultural resources of *romantic love*, as observed previously (Illouz 2012:159). Since both discourses – the *romantic* and the *partnership* – orient the amorous life of individuals, ambivalence, unfilled amorous expectations, disillusionments, contradictions and misunderstandings have become recurrent in their amorous experiences, leading them to suffer and complicating the establishment and maintenance of relationships. As Illouz (2012:194) observes in her study, individuals still regard traditional romantic practices as attractive; however, as modern individuals they reprove themselves for desiring them and have feelings of guilt.

The rising contractual form of relationship in contemporary society – i.e. *partnership* – is also a source of suffering in itself. Based on free will, equality, and symmetry, *partnership* entails semiotic uncertainty, i.e. “an ongoing preoccupation with the adequacy of one’s own conduct and the difficulty to grasp the right rules of conduct in a given interaction” (Illouz 2012:193). In a context of collapsing traditions and constant negotiation, individuals are confronted with the difficulty of knowing the rules that organize interactions. This uncertainty about how to proceed is painful, inhibits sexual desire and entails anxiety, since it demands that individuals focus on and question themselves on the rules of interaction instead of following the “spontaneity” that has been historically produced and embodied in the traditional scripts of femininity and masculinity (Illouz 2012:193, 195).

It seems that, in the face of so many social changes, increasing individualization processes, and contradictory prescriptions of love, the future of love is unknown. The present investigation attempts to shed some light on the matter by investigating love in Germany and in Brazil.

3. The research: epistemological and methodological standpoints

My entire scientific enterprise is indeed based on the belief that the deepest logic of the social world can be grasped only if one plunges into the particularity of an empirical reality, historically located and dated, but with the objective of constructing it as a "special case of what is possible", as Bachelard puts it, that is, as an exemplary case in a finite world of possible configurations.

Bourdieu 1998:2

Grounded in the scientific assumptions diffused throughout the social sciences after the cultural turn at the end of the 20th century, the present study adopts the interpretivist ontological-epistemological approach that assumes that the physical world can only be apprehended through subjective meanings (della Porta and Keating 2008:23-25). This ontological epistemology has its grounds especially in symbolic interactionism (Lamnek 2010:76; Taylor and Bogdan 1998:10-11), a scientific approach that leans heavily on pragmatism.

Symbolic interactionism is a continuation of the Chicago School of sociology that since 1910 has fostered this tradition of thought. As a scientific approach, it is the result of the work of many authors;²¹ however, it was Herbert Blumer who coined the term "symbolic interactionism" and established its canon. This scientific approach is based on three theoretical premises. First, it assumes that "human beings act toward things on the basis of the meanings that the things have for them" (Blumer 1969:2). In other words, it emphasizes the active character of humans in the construction of the social world, since it is the meanings they create that will orient their actions.

Second, it considers that "the meaning of such thing is derived from, or arises out of, the social interaction that one has with one's fellows" (Blumer 1969:2). This assertion points out that the source of meaning is the social interaction, and not something that emanates from the thing or a product of the psyche. The assumption that meanings are socially produced suggests two things: first, that meanings may be acquired through socialization – as when a child learns that a spherical body is called a ball – and second, that concepts may be defined in the interaction – as the fact that a "good friend" can only be understood in the context of the conversation (Keller 2009:63-64).

Third, it conceives that "the meanings are handled in, and modified through, an interpretative process used by the person in dealing with the things he encounters" (Blumer 1969:2). This premise stresses the major role of the intersubjective contexts. The process of interpretation, according to Blumer (1969:5) follows two steps: first, by engaging in a process of communication with the self, the actor indicates him/herself the thing toward which he/she is acting; and second, by handling meanings the actor selects, checks, suspends, regroupes and transforms the meanings according to context and defines the line of action. The

²¹ Like George Hebert Mead, William Isaac Thomas, John Dewey, Charles Horton Cooley, William James and Robert Park.

interpretative process has a strong capacity of creation, which enables the person to deal with disturbances, irritations and other contradictions that may emerge in social reality (Keller 2009:64).

The premises of symbolic interactionism suggest that human group formation exists only in action, that it is a complex of an ongoing activity (Blumer 1969:7). In the interaction, the meanings that guide the line of action are produced taking into account the world of objects and the actions of others (Blumer 1969:8). Therefore, the relation between the individual and the world of objects is bilateral. At the same time that, in interaction, the individual creates, affirms, transforms and casts aside objects, changes in the world of objects will also lead to changes in the line of action of the individual (Blumer 1969:12). Since the meanings of objects can only be defined in interaction, which will lead to the line of action adopted by the individuals, it is not always possible to speak about fixed means and ends (Joas et al. 2009:135).

A particular conception of “self” is related to the premises of symbolic interactionism, one that emphasizes that human beings are also the objects of their own action. At the same time that the individual can engage in self-interaction, regarding oneself as an object and defining its meanings, one’s actions are also reflected back through the reactions of others, enabling one to deal with oneself as an object (Blumer 1969:12). This conception of self affirms the individual as one who has the ability to think about and reflect upon oneself, and denies the conception of the individual as a medium through which given goals, desires, intentions and utility calculations – as in the case of neo-utilitarianism – and of fixed and unchanging norms and values – as in the case of functionalism – are converted into action (Joas et al. 2009:134).

The same view of human action can be applied to collective action, affirming it as an outcome of a process of interpretative interaction (Blumer 1969:17). As Blumer (1969:17) describes, joint action is “a societal organization of conduct of different acts of diverse participants”, which has the singular character of interlinking those separate acts. On the interlinkage of lines of actions, however, observes the author, three points must be considered. First, repetitive and stable joint actions lead to patterns of behavior, i.e. a firm understanding of how to act and react based on shared and pre-established meanings. Patterns are common in social groups and although they provide some stability, they remain a product of social interaction and should not be understood as the essence of human groups, values, norms or social rules (Blumer 1969:17).

Second, institutions are extended connections of actions common in human groups that are usually not seen in their elementary parts – the participants’ actions – but as an autonomous whole, which may lead to the false comprehension of an institution as a system (Blumer 1969:19).

Third, all joint action derives from the participants’ background of previous actions. Therefore, to understand human action it is fundamental to regarding the historical linkages behind it (Blumer 1969:20).

Considering that each ontological-epistemological approach has methodological implications, since the way we conceive reality orients the possibilities and means by which we can acquire knowledge from it, different methodological approaches have been developed in the social sciences in the last few years in order to attend to the demands of this new interpretivist approach. Although it is not possible to talk about a uniform methodology, some similarities allow one to sketch an outline of what has been acknowledged as qualitative social research (Hesse-Biber and Levy 2006:14; Taylor and Bogdan 1998:3; Keller 2009:118; della Porta and Keating 2008:23-25), which served as an orientation for this study.

3.1. Qualitative social research

With regard to the main assumptions of the symbolic interactionism adopted in the interpretivist ontological-epistemological approach, i.e. that there is an empirical world available for observation and that this world is realized through human perception (Blumer 1969:21), the main concern of qualitative social research is to reconstruct the process that engenders the structure of meanings constitutive of social reality (Lamnek 2010:30; Taylor and Bogdan 1998:7; della Porta and Keating 2008:26).

The three premises of the symbolic interactionism adopted by the interpretivist ontological-epistemological approach have further methodological implications. The first one demands that the researchers see the objects that comprise the empirical world under investigation as its members see it (Blumer 1969:50; Lamnek 2010:76). In order to achieve this, the researchers must place themselves in the position of the other. Only through a body of relevant observation will the researchers be able to identify the objects of central concern to the reality of the sampled population and will they be able to understand the actions of its members (Blumer 1969:51).

Since the researchers are outsiders in their worlds of inquiry, it is important that they be aware of their beliefs, stereotypes and previous knowledge about the world of inquiry, in order to control for possible influences on their interpretations and conclusions (Blumer 1969:41). Therefore, reflexivity must be present throughout the entire empirical quest, from the definition of the object to the analysis process (Lamnek 2010:25). Since the research is the result of the interaction and communication between the researchers and the sampled population, reflexivity is fundamental to the research process. The researchers must not only reflect on their participation in the communication and interaction processes that constitute the investigation, but they must also treat all meanings identified in the research in a reflexive form with the social reality under study (Lamnek 2010:22).

The second premise requires that the researchers understand the sphere of life under study as a dynamic process in which the participants fit together their lines of action. The object of study must be considered a phenomenon that results from the process of reproduction, modification and expression of a model of action (Lamnek 2010:21-22). The conduct and discourses of the sampled population are comprehended as constitutive to the constant and dynamic process of social construction of reality, and not as stable and immutable chains of

cause and effect. Therefore, the researchers must look for the type of interaction that is taking place in the world of inquiry (Blumer 1969:53), in order to document and reconstruct the reproduction of the models of action of the sampled population, enabling them to understand how the subjects construct their reality (Lamnek 2010:21-22).

However, not only the object of study, but also the empirical research itself, must be understood as a process. Empirical research is communication. It is a report about the social reality constructed by researchers and the sampled population through the communication emerging in their interaction (Lamnek 2010:20-21). Thus, it is important that researchers be aware of the communication process, so that they can reflect about the impact of this on their analysis, and they must keep in mind that their empirical research provides one of the many possible perspectives of the object under investigation.

The third premise claims that in order to treat and analyze social action the researchers must observe the process by which it is constructed; they must trace the formation of the action in the way it is actually formed (Blumer 1969:56). Large societal organizations, which are seen as arrangements of interlinked lines of action, must be studied and explained considering the process of interpretation carried out by the participants as they handle the situations at their respective positions in the organization, not neglecting the historical context (Blumer 1969:58; della Porta and Keating 2008:26-27).

Blumer (1969:21) presented symbolic interactionism as a perspective in the empirical social sciences, i.e. as an approach which yields verifiable knowledge from the investigation of the empirical world. Therefore qualitative social research is empirical research, i.e. the researchers start the investigation with a broad view of the empirical world and then focus on problems that emerge from it during the development of the field research (Lamnek 2010:23; Miles and Huberman 1994:5). Thus, the definition of the problem, the course of investigation, the data collection, the analytical relations and the interpretations must be based on the information collected during the field work. The entire empirical quest must be grounded on the empirical world (Blumer 1969:23).

Openness is a posture demanded from the researchers, especially in their relation to the situation under investigation and with the sampled population, and in their decisions about the instruments and methods for collection and analysis of data (Lamnek 2010:24). The posture of openness also enables the researchers to gain a holistic view over the phenomenon or subject, i.e. only through a broad view over the object, considering its context and relations, can the researchers understand its logic, arrangements, explicit and implicit rules (Miles and Huberman 1994:5; Taylor and Bogdan 1998:8; della Porta and Keating 2008:30).

The mode of investigation of the empirical world relies on two fundamental parts: exploration and inspection (Blumer 1969:40). The first is a flexible procedure that enables the researchers to become familiar with the world of inquiry, and that ensures that their problems, the direction of their inquiry, their data, the analytical relations, and their interpretations arise out of, and remain grounded in, the world under study (Blumer 1969:40). Inspection, which is the direct examination of the empirical social world, involves an intensive focused

examination of the empirical content of the analytical elements of the inquiry, as well of the empirical nature of the relations between such elements (Blumer 1969:43).

Qualitative social research is based on the inductive process of theory construction, i.e. concepts, insights and understandings must be developed from patterns in the data; a theory must be derived from the empirical world and not the other way around. Therefore it does not produce previous hypotheses but later ones based on the information collected and the knowledge produced during the research process (Lamnek 2010:19-20; Taylor and Bogdan 1998:7; Hesse-Biber 2006:18; della Porta and Keating 2008:26).

In qualitative social research, flexibility is demanded from the researchers, since only by keeping their minds open to new information, to new problems and situations that may emerge during the field research, to changing the course of the investigation when necessary, and to developing an adequate method and instrument of investigation will they be able to remain grounded in the empirical world (Lamnek 2010:23; Taylor and Bogdan 1998:10; della Porta and Keating 2008:29).

Because of its exploratory character, qualitative social research does not favor standard techniques, but the development of new ones (Lamnek 2010:20; Miles and Huberman 1994:7). Consequently, researchers must be open to the creation and improvement of new methodological techniques and instruments that are able to grasp the form of interaction that occurs in the sample population (Lamnek 2010:76). Beyond that, it is important to note that since the meanings emerge only in the interaction, the theoretical concepts to be applied in an investigation can only be defined during the investigation process (Lamnek 2010:76). As a process of communication, empirical research is always susceptible to changes in its development (Lamnek 2010:25). Therefore the researchers must be prepared for and open to contingencies in the progress of the investigation.

The traditional means of achieving validity – adhering to scientific protocol, engaging in replication, testing hypotheses, and using operational procedure – do not provide the empirical validation necessary for qualitative social sciences, since they cannot access the validity of premises, problems, data, relations, concepts and interpretations (Blumer 1969:21-32). The solution for the validity of qualitative social research lies in grounding the interpretations, decisions and conclusions of the study in the empirical data (Blumer 1969:40-47). Only through the report of the reflections conducted during the investigation process, as well as the detailed and complete explanation of the process of investigation – especially as concerns the interpretation of data – is it possible for the readers to follow the researchers' thoughts and come to the same conclusions as they (Lamnek 2010:23).

Under these ontological-empirical and methodological assumptions, the present study was implemented. The following sub-chapters describe the development of the empirical inquiry in its entirety.

3.2. The exploration of the field

This investigation was initiated with a broad question: “How is love being signified and practiced in Germany and in Brazil, considering the role of cultural capital in this process?” With an interest in conducting the same investigation on love in Germany and in Brazil, in order to generate a discussion through the comparison of regional groups and cultural capital groups, the exploration of the field began in 2009 in Germany.

Taking into consideration the fact that love practices are not restricted to relationships, but that they also belong to courtship, it was decided to investigate interactions between singles. The initial proposal of this line of investigation was to identify the practices of courtship and to establish contact with singles for a more specific data collection on romantic love later. Following the orientations of Carol A. Bailey (1996), Kenneth D. Bailey (1987) and Hesse-Biber and Leavy (2006), participant observations and formal and informal interviews at a singles party in Berlin were conducted.

Difficulties in the field limited the development of this investigation, however. First, the context of a party, such as loud music and dim light, made it difficult to conduct observations. Second, German is a foreign language for the researcher, making it difficult to understand the interviewees’ colloquial language and to carry on conversations with loud music as background noise. Third, in the context of a singles party, many visitors remained skeptical about the researcher’s intentions and showed little interest in holding a conversation with the researcher. Nevertheless, observations were conducted until the end of the field research in 2011, including in Brazil. A similar event to the singles party observed in Germany could not be found in Rio de Janeiro (Brazil) and the observations were made in a night club regarded by many acquaintances as an event for singles. At all 18 observations – 13 in Berlin and 5 in Rio de Janeiro – and some formal and informal interviews were generated during the field work. A report of the observations of events for singles is presented in the following chapter.

The observations at events for singles stimulated questions for the interview script applied in the core investigation of this study, provided data for the discussion on the courtship practices in Germany and in Brazil and led to the conclusion at the beginning of the field research that observations and informal interviews alone would hardly enable sufficient access to verbal exchange between the singles and the meanings behind their practices. Under these considerations, the use of in-depth interviews with personal reports of courtship experience seemed a better method to investigate practice and its meanings according to the subjects’ points of view (Geertz 1974).

In March 2010, a high-school teacher offered the researcher a small questionnaire on the subject of romantic love given during that year to two groups of students from the 11th and 12th grades at a public high-school located in Berlin. The analysis of all 26 questionnaires revealed, however, that the answers of the respondents were usually short, like notes, limiting the value of the analysis and the discussion of the data. Nevertheless, the few observations derived from the analysis of the questionnaires and the contact with the teacher motivated a second line of research: an investigation of the amorous practices of high-school students in Germany and in Brazil. A more elaborate investigation was designed to be applied in the following months. However, during the development of the field research, the negotiation

with the German and Brazilian schools for access to the students was unsuccessful. The institutions showed no interest in the research and established certain bureaucratic procedures that would not enable the implementation of the study in the period established for the field research. Therefore this line of investigation was discontinued.

Nonetheless, the content analysis (Mayring 2008) of the 26 questionnaires of the German high-school students regarding the five dimensions of love proposed by Costa (2005)²² provided important considerations for this study: First, the fact that the majority of the respondents consider romantic love as self-evident suggests that they do not reflect about their romantic praxis, they just do it or feel it, which makes the subject under study even more difficult to grasp. Second, it could be observed that the discourse of the German high-school student about love does not diverge from that which can be found in the mass media (e.g. romantic films or romances). However some comments called for attention: a letter written by oneself has more value than a printed one (respondent 12); a gift must be creative (respondent 15); a compliment must be profound (respondent 22); the partner must be able to speak about everything, to have profound conversations (respondents 16, 18, 21, 23). These comments suggest critical and creative demanding individuals, for whom a love demonstration must involve “effort”; it must transmit the intensity of their feelings. This observation revealed that the differences in amorous practices between individuals lie in subtle, symbolic meanings and that further investigations on the subject would be more successful through the application of an instrument that enables these to be captured, such as an in-depth interview. Third, this analysis showed that the five dimensions attributed to the initial concept of love adopted in this project – love as a historical-cultural model that branches into, at least, five dimensions: emotion, cultural praxis, ideal, model of relationship and social interaction (Costa 2005:113) – could not be easily distinguished from one another, which led to the formulation of a broader definition of love as a system of meanings, presented in the previous chapter.

The experience collected during the implementation of those two lines of investigation revealed that although love is a common and attractive subject – since every approached person showed interest in the research – its investigation is not an easy task. Love is usually considered an intimate theme and therefore it is not easily discussed with strangers. For the same reason, love practices are normally restricted to the private space and are not usually accessible to free observation. But the main restriction on the study of love relies on the fact that love practices are naturalized by people, being understood as normal, natural and self-evident, and scarcely described or questioned by individuals.

In the face of the difficulties of accessing the object of study, and in light of the easy and excited reports of foreigners in the acquaintances and friends group of the researcher with reference to differences between their amorous experiences with countrymen and individuals in Germany, it was decided to initiate a third line of investigation: love and binational

²² The short analysis and discussion of these questionnaires can be found in the appendix under “Romantic love for high-school students in Germany”.

relationships. Assuming that the interaction with another regional culture may confront individuals with other understandings and practices of love, enabling them to reflect on their own, it was decided to use the reports of individuals with experience in binational relationships, from Germany and Brazil, to identify the nuances of love in both regions.²³ This line of investigation developed successfully and became the main source of data for this study.

3.3. Love and binational relationships

As Bourdieu (1998:83; Wacquant 2008:269) points out, a social space results from a constellation of fields – i.e. socio-historical structures – which engender specific lines of action. Those intrinsic rules are internalized during socialization, in the form of practical and discursive knowledge, constituting part of the cultural capital of the individual (Bourdieu 1997:50, 2008a:53-54; Setton 2005:79). These practical and discursive knowledge have the status of beliefs and enable native members to play “instinctively” by the rules (Bourdieu 1990:66-68, 2006:77). Therefore, individuals tend to naturalize their amorous conduct and take it as evident – as observed in the field exploration. Outsiders, however, have difficulty comprehending the game if they have not started a process of acculturation, i.e. a slow process of co-option and initiation which proves the individual’s “undisputed, pre-reflexive, naive, native compliance with the fundamental presuppositions of the field” (Bourdieu 1990:68, 66-68; 2006:77).

Assuming that individuals in a relationship with a foreigner are confronted with different sorts of amorous conduct and therefore become more conscious about their own regional amorous conduct and the regional amorous conduct of their partner,²⁴ it was decided to hear the personal reports of individuals who are or were in a binational relationship (Brazil - Germany) in order to identify the amorous practices and the meanings applied by the different regional groups and cultural capital groups under investigation.²⁵

Five criteria were chosen for the selection of the sample. The first criterion was the relationship experience of the respondents. Since it was expected that those who have a binational relationship experience are more able to describe their own amorous praxis and that of their foreigner partner, it was considered important that the respondents are or were in a binational relationship (Brazil/Germany) and that they have or had a relationship with a fellow national that would enable them to establish comparisons. It was also considered

²³ This methodological approach is referred to by Manning (1987) as “existential field work”, which emphasizes the relationship between researcher and object and allows the former to apply his/her own knowledge and from his/her circle of discussions to establish hypothesis and allegations about the object.

²⁴ A more detailed explanation on how mental structures and social structures are interlinked by a twofold relationship of mutual constitution and correspondence is presented in the chapter *Love and regional differences: the formation of regional amorous codes*.

²⁵ All research implies choices to focus on certain aspects of a phenomenon and to ignore others. Since respondents could better highlight the differences between regional contexts, I chose to focus on those instead of what they have in common.

important that the binational relationship have or had mainly a presential character; therefore individuals were preferred who were not in a long-distance relationship.

The second criterion was the sexual orientation of the respondents. It was decided to focus on individuals with heterosexual orientation.²⁶ As a direct consequence of this, sex was established as the third criterion in order to control for a gender bias; the sample should thus contain a balanced distribution between men and women.

The fourth criterion concerns one of the aims of this study, the investigation of regional differences with regard to amorous praxis; thus it was considered important that both regional groups under investigation, Brazilian and Germans, should be equally represented by individuals who were born and spent the majority of their lives in the respective region and who did not have a recent immigration background in their families, i.e. whose parents and grandparents were also born and raised in the same region as they.

The aim of investigating the impact of cultural capital on amorous praxis determined the fifth criterion. According to Bourdieu (2008a:13) the educational qualification is an unequally adequate indicator of cultural capital, therefore it was important to acquire respondents with different levels of education.

3.4. Methods and instruments

Regarding the intimate and subtle character of the information to be collected, it was decided to work with questionnaires and in-depth interviews. The former would account for descriptive information and for the evaluation of the cultural capital of the respondents, while the latter would account for subjective information on amorous praxis and binational relationships.

The “Questionnaire on socio-demographic and cultural information” was formulated to collect descriptive information on the respondents, on their binational relationships and on their partners; and to enable the measurement of their cultural capital and other important variables that could serve for the description of the sample.

The first sections of the questionnaire, based on the *Fragenbogen zum Mikrozensus*²⁷ and the *Allgemeine Bevölkerungsumfrage der Sozialwissenschaften*,²⁸ were elaborated to collect the following information: personal data (sex; age; place of birth; length of residence in Germany/Brazil; immigration background in the family); marital status (length of marital status; parenthood; actual love relationship; number of love relationships; experience of cohabitation); religion (own religion; family religion); education (higher educational

²⁶ Since a systematic comparison between heterosexual and homosexual groups in this study would exceed its aims, preference was given to heterosexual individuals. An introduction on love and homosexuality can be found in Maier 2009.

²⁷ SÄBL 2010.

²⁸ GESIS 2006.

certificate; apprenticeship; actual study; language skills); occupation (main activity; paid work; paid work of the parents); social status (remuneration; social class; source of income).

The last sections of the questionnaire – which aimed to collect information on the media behavior and cultural activities of the respondents (reading, internet and television behaviors; leisure activities; cinema attendance, museums, music concerts, art expositions and galleries; money expended per month on leisure activities; tourism; experiences of residence abroad; regular participation in groups); and information on the partner (educational certificates, language skills, paid work) – were elaborated based on Pierre Bourdieu’s study “Distinction” (2008a), Eva Illouz’s study “Consuming the romantic utopia” (1997) and on studies of cultural capital (Brandão 2010, Setton 2005).

Since the field research began in Germany, the questionnaire was originally written in German. For the field research in Brazil the questionnaire was translated into Portuguese and adapted to the Brazilian socioeconomic context based on the *Pesquisa de Orçamentos Familiares*.²⁹

The questionnaire was applied in pilot interviews. However it was the suggestions of respondents during the beginning of the field research that brought the best contributions to the improvement of the questionnaire. The reformulation of questions or answers during the beginning of the field research did not disturb the comparability between the questionnaires, since the few respondents who answered an old version of the questionnaire were contacted to provide answers for the reformulated questions.

At the end of the field research it was considered important to obtain more information on the partners mentioned by the respondents in their interview. Therefore the section “information about the partner” was expanded and also duplicated to account for data on the foreigner partner and on the same-country partner. The respondents selected for the sample who had not answered the new questions were contacted when possible to provide the missing answers. The last version of the questionnaire presents 55 main questions divided into nine sections.³⁰

With the aim of ascertaining possible differences in the meanings attributed to romantic love by German and Brazilian respondents, a semi-structured interview script was constructed. It consists of two sections: the first section, “Relationship experience”, presents closed-ended questions on the amorous experience of the respondents with German and Brazilian partners, the length of their relationship and whether the respondent had already lived in the country of their foreigner partner.

Since amorous practices are usually conceived as self-evident, it was considered that by asking the respondents to compare their amorous experiences with a foreigner partner and with a same-country partner, they would be stimulated to reflect about the subject and to regard

²⁹ IBGE 2010.

³⁰ More detailed information on the questionnaire can be found in Appendix C. The questionnaire

possible differences in the expression of romantic love. Thus, the second section of the interview script, "Cultural differences", focuses on the comparison of the relationships with the foreigner partner and the same-country partner, or of the amorous experiences of the respondents in Germany and in Brazil.

Based on the literature review and the preliminary observations in the field, twenty themes were chosen to be investigated in the second section of the interview script. During the pilot interviews and the initial phase of the field research some themes revealed themselves to be superfluous to the study and were therefore discarded. The changes in the interview script did not disturb the comparability of data, since the themes did not change, but only decreased in number. The final version of the interview script consists of nine themes: verbal amorous expressions (love statements, nicknames, complements), gestural amorous expressions (body contact, kissing, sex, affection, desire), amorous expressions in public and private spaces, romantic love (experiences, jealousy, relationship values), gender relations (partnership, gender roles, courtesy), individuality and collectivity (division of free time, joint activities, friendships, family relations, autonomy), planning and spontaneity, critical conduct (critical conduct, opinion, sincerity), flirtation and social interaction (experiences, eye contact, conversation themes, openness, evaluation). For each theme closed and open-ended questions were formulated to obtain information; however, those questions served only as an orientation for the researcher, being applied only when the respondents were too succinct or found it difficult to answer.

3.5. The sampling process and data collection

The sampling progressed in particular through the snowball process. First the circles of colleagues and friends of the researcher were approached, the investigation was explained to them and they were asked to participate in an interview and/or suggest another candidate. Two other sampling procedures were also applied, but offered very little in the way of results: an e-mail explaining the study and asking for respondents was sent to German and Brazilian institutions, such as universities, embassies, language courses, cultural centers, etc., which were requested to forward the e-mail to their members or to post an advertisement of the study attached to the e-mail in their institutions; and service providers, such as waxing studios, beauticians, restaurant and bar staff, sport and language teachers, dancers, etc., related to Brazil and to Germany in the corresponding countries (Germany and Brazil) were personally approached and asked to participate in interviews and/or suggest other candidates.

The data collection of this line of investigation took place between April 2010 and January 2011. It occurred first in Germany, where it lasted seven months, and later in Brazil, where it lasted three months. While the interviews in Germany were conducted in Berlin, the interviews in Brazil took place in both Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo. The same procedures were adopted in both countries.

The respondents were approached personally or by e-mail or telephone, the investigation was explained and they were asked if they could take part in an interview that lasted around one

hour. After an interview was agreed upon, a date and place was arranged. The respondent could choose where the interview would take place. In Germany, the researcher offered a room in the university or her home as possible interview locations, but the majority of respondents chose their own home or a public space, such a park or a café. In Brazil, it was not possible to offer a room in a university or at home, for which reason the meetings usually took place at the respondent's home or in a public space. The candidates were also offered the possibility of being interviewed by Skype. However only two respondents accepted this; all the other interviews occurred in person.

The interviews were individual and before they began, the research was once again explained and the respondents were asked for their permission for the interview to be recorded. With the permission of the respondent the interview began. The interviews lasted on average more than ninety minutes.

After the interviewee responded to the initial objective questions of the interview, it was explained that certain themes would be mentioned, and the interviewee was asked to comment as to whether he/she had observed differences in the behavior of the same-country partner and foreigner partner with regard to those themes. When the comments of the respondents about the mentioned theme were confused or too succinct, then the subthemes presented in the interview script were mentioned.

Certain procedures were adopted during the interviews to guarantee an adequate quantity of data collection. To provide a fluent character to the interview, the order of themes presented in the interview script was not strictly adhered to; rather, when respondents brought up a theme that was part of the interview script this was directly approached. When the researcher noticed that the respondent was shy or felt uncomfortable with the questions, she made short comments about her own personal experience in order to engender a confidential context. During some interviews it was necessary to reformulate a question, to enable a better understanding of it. This happened especially with respondents with low educational capital, who were not familiar with some of the concepts applied in the interview script, such as gender relations, for example. And when the reformulation of the question was not enough to provide an explanation, examples of what other respondents said were mentioned and the opinion of the respondent was asked. To control for misunderstanding, since the first language of the researcher is not German, some answers of the respondents were recapitulated by her in her own words, so that they could confirm or correct her understanding of them. Respondents were also confronted with statements of other respondents or with observations made by the researcher during the field research in order to investigate those further. This procedure brought important contributions to the study, especially by the German respondents, who provided the researcher with a perception based on a cultural background that the researcher does not share.

At the end of the interview the respondents were asked to fill in the "Questionnaire on socio-demographic and cultural information", which usually lasted twenty minutes. Since the interview was long, some respondents could not stay longer, at which point the researcher asked them the questions and filled it in herself; or the respondent took the questionnaire to

answer at home and it was later collected by the researcher in person or by email. When the respondent was unable to master the language of the questionnaire, the researcher conducted the questionnaire, translating it and filling it in for the respondent.

At the end of the meeting, respondents were asked if they could recommend someone else for the study. Because of the difficulty in obtaining the desired sample number, all possible interviews were conducted with the expectation that respondents could provide contact information for others that would help to constitute a balanced sample.

3.6. The definition of the sample

What exists is a social space, a space of differences, in which classes exist in some sense in a state of virtuality, not as something given but as something to be done.

Bourdieu 1998:12

More than 200 persons were personally approached through direct contact, e-mail or telephone during the field research and 73 interviews were conducted, of which 52 took place in Germany and 21 in Brazil.

As already mentioned, all possible interviews were conducted in order to achieve a balanced sample. Of the 73 interviews, 20 of them were discarded for various reasons: the respondent did not finish the interview or did not answer the questionnaire; the binational relationship was a long-distance relationship; the respondent had had no relationship with someone from the same country; the respondent or his/her partner had an immigration background; or the quality of the recorded interview was not good.

Aiming at a balanced representation of region, sex and cultural capital, a further selection of interviews was conducted based on the following decision. First, considering the different numbers of respondents in the regional groups, i.e. 21 Germans to 32 Brazilians, and the minority of male respondents in those groups, i.e. 9 German and 8 Brazilian men, it was decided to compose the sample with the same number of respondents in the regional groups and the same number of sexes in each regional group. Therefore, the sample would consist of 32 respondents, half of them Germans and the other half Brazilians, and each regional group would be composed of 8 men and 8 women.

While the 8 Brazilian male respondents could be directly included in the sample, the German male respondents (N=9) and the German and Brazilian female respondents (N=36) needed to be chosen. Considering the balance between the cultural capital groups, it was decided to select the remaining respondents according to their educational capital, i.e. educational level, which was applied in this study as a reference for their cultural capital. The International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED 1997) was applied to identify the educational level of the respondents and to classify them according to a common benchmark.³¹ Four groups of educational capital could be identified in the sample: holders of an upper secondary education

³¹ For more details on the evaluation of the cultural capital of the respondents see Appendix C. The questionnaire

certificate (3rd level of education); holders of a post-secondary non tertiary education certificate (4th level of education); holders of a first stage of tertiary education certificate (5th level of education); and holders of a second stage of tertiary education certificate (6th level of education).

To facilitate the analysis, it was decided to combine the four educational capital groups into two groups of cultural capital. Therefore the respondents with the highest levels of education (5th and 6th level), i.e. the respondents who had concluded at least one degree course in an higher education institution and therefore had the higher educational capital in the sample, were assigned to group A, and the respondents with the lowest educational (4th and 3rd level), i.e. the respondents who had not studied in a higher education institution or had not concluded a degree course in a higher education institution and therefore presented the lower educational capital in the sample, were assigned to group B.

Under this initial classification, the 5 respondents who were studying at the time of the field research and striving for their first higher educational certificate were assigned to cultural capital group B. However, during the analysis of the interviews, it became evident that those students who had almost concluded their academic study presented a discourse much more similar to the respondents in cultural capital group A than those from cultural capital group B. Considering this observation it was decided to reassign them to cultural capital group A. Therefore cultural capital group A became composed of 23 respondents and cultural capital group B of 9. The constitution of cultural capital groups according to sex and regional group can be seen in the following table.

Tabele 1. The sample

Cultural capital group	Brazilian		German		Sample
	male	female	male	female	
A	6	4	6	7	23
	10		13		
B	2	4	2	1	9
	6		3		
Total	8	8	8	8	32
	16		16		

The difficulty in finding respondents with a low educational level during the field research led at the end to an unequal composition of cultural capital groups, with group A comprising 72% of the sample and group B only 28%. With regard to the representation of cultural capital groups in the regional groups, 81% of the German respondents and 63% of the Brazilian respondents belonged to cultural capital group A, while 19% of the German respondents and 38% of the Brazilian respondents belonged to cultural capital group B.

3.7. The collected material and its treatment³²

The first data to be analyzed were those collected with the questionnaire.³³ After the analysis of each question and the identification of the most pertinent indicators in each case, it was decided, in order to avoid an overflow of information, to exclude from the final analysis the questions that proved to be inaccurately or inappropriately formulated, less classifying, or with a high percentage of missing answers (more than 20%). The remaining data applied in the analysis include: level of education; educational status; aspired level of education; major area of knowledge; sex; age; place of birth; immigration background; marital status; relationship status; cohabitation; parenthood; religious orientation; religious orientation in the parental home; main activity; type of paid work; romances; love on television; love on the internet; length of binational relationship; residence in Germany/Brazil; length of residence in Germany/Brazil. This information contributed to the definition and description of the sample and to the discussion on romance and cultural capital.

The analysis of the interview consisted first in the transcription of the recording in its entirety in the original language. Software for qualitative analysis (MAXQDA) was applied to conduct the content analysis (Mayring 2008) of the transcripts.³⁴ The interviews were rich and presented a great diversity of subjects, many of them intertwined with one another. Nevertheless, in order to enable the conclusion of this study, two main subjects were chosen for further content analysis and the discussions on regional differences and cultural capital, i.e. courtship and romance experiences respectively.

The anonymity of the respondents was guaranteed through the change or omission of information. The names of the respondents were changed but with respect to sex, i.e. female names were changed to other female names and not to male names. For the jobs performed by the respondents, the descriptions offered by the ISCO-08 were applied in order to avoid overly specific definitions. Descriptive information present in the discourse of the respondents, such as dates, names of persons or places that could lead to their identification were also changed or omitted. The description of the sample is presented next.

3.8. The description of the sample

In contrast to random sampling, snowballing has the tendency of making any sample more homogeneous. As observed above, the sample of this study is composed primarily of individuals with high cultural capital who come above all from the social sciences. They are “cultural specialists”, such as researchers, journalists, university professors and artists or “cultural intermediates”, such as school and special education teachers. More oriented

³² Further considerations on the methodological process are presented in Appendix E.

³³ More detailed information on the questionnaire can be found in Appendix C. The questionnaire

³⁴ More detailed information on the analysis of the interviews can be found in Appendix D. The interview

toward intellectual work, they tend to deal with signs and language, and to value verbal communication (Illouz 1997:236).

Although some respondents may not have been born in the cities where the field study took place, i.e. Berlin, Rio de Janeiro or São Paulo, they had been living in those cities for years and therefore composed an urban sample.

Because of the limited character of this study and the particularities of its sample, it must be kept in mind that this study cannot claim to represent the majority of the courtship and romance experiences to be found even in the urban environments under investigation. Nevertheless, their reports on the subject may provide us insight into meaning in context and in action, into how love has been *in part* signified and practiced in Germany and in Brazil. A more detailed description of the regional groups is presented below.

3.8.1. German group

The German group is composed of sixteen respondents, equally distributed between sexes. All respondents come from families in which the parents and the grandparents were also born and raised in Germany, i.e. no respondent has a recent history of immigration in their families.

The ages of the German respondents vary from twenty-four to forty-eight years old. Ten respondents come from cities located in the former state of the German Democratic Republic,³⁵ and the remaining six respondents come from the former state of the Federal Republic of Germany.³⁶ At the time of the interview they were living in Berlin, Rio de Janeiro or São Paulo.

Five respondents of the German group are religious and practice a religion based on Christianity (Catholicism, Protestantism). Among the eleven agnostics of the German group, three of them come from a parental home also oriented to Christianity.

The area of knowledge best represented in the German group is the Social and Human Sciences (e.g. Law, Music, Tourism, Language and Literature, Educational and Linguistic Sciences, Political and Social Sciences, Communication Sciences), where ten respondents concluded or aspired to vocational or higher education study. Among the six remaining respondents, four of them were involved in Applied and Management Sciences (e.g. Engineering, Physics, Economy and Administration), and two in Biological and Health Sciences (e.g. Biology, Occupational Therapy).

Fourteen respondents in the German group are engaged in a binational relationship (Brazil - Germany) and reported about it. The remaining two respondents reported about past binational relationships (Brazil - Germany) that were discontinued a few weeks before the interview. Most of the relationships described by the German group last/lasted more than three years. Ten respondents cohabit/cohabited with the foreign partner, and of the

³⁵ Berlin, Brandenburg, Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, Sachsen, Sachsen-Anhalt, Thüringen.

³⁶ Baden-Württemberg, Bayern, Bremen, Hamburg, Hessen, Niedersachsen, Nordrhein-Westfalen, Rheinland-Pfalz, Saarland, Schleswig-Holstein.

remaining respondents, four of them had a face-to-face relationship, i.e. they lived in the same city, and two of them reported a long-distance relationship that was characterized by an intense exchange between partners through internet and telephone and frequent meetings in which they cohabited together.

A short description of each German respondent at the time of the interview can be found below. In the high-cultural capital group are the respondents who were striving for a *Diplom* or *Magister* degree,³⁷ and those who already had the certificate at the time of the interview. In the lower-cultural capital group are the respondents who do not possess a higher educational certificate and were taking part in an apprenticeship or had concluded one, i.e. *Ausbildung*, at the time of the interview. The highest degree of the respondents is written between parentheses.

DR: Duration of the binational relationship LTA: Length of time abroad (Brazil)

German respondents with high cultural capital

Anika: 31 years old; special education teacher (Masters degree) and apprentice in special education; married to a Brazilian; DR: eight years; LTA: weeks.

Beate: 27 years old; language teacher (Masters degree) and PhD student in Linguistics; single, but engaged in a relationship with a Brazilian; DR: ten months; LTA: two years.

Detlev: 37 years old; higher-education teacher (PhD degree); divorced, but engaged in a relationship with a Brazilian; DR: four years; LTA: four years.

Heiner: 31 years old; engineer (Masters degree) and MBA student; married to a Brazilian; DR: four years; LTA: two years.

Jens: 28 years old; Masters student in Sociology (high-school degree); single, but engaged in a relationship with a Brazilian; DR: ten months; LTA: one year.

Karl: 27 years old; Masters student in Political Sciences (high-school degree); single, but engaged in a relationship with a Brazilian; DR: ten months; LTA one year.

Lina: 25 years old; Bachelors student in music (high-school degree); single, but engaged in a relationship with a Brazilian; DR: two years and three months; LTA: two years and three months.

Ruth: 31 years old; research assistant (Masters degree) and PhD student in Linguistics; married to a Brazilian; DR: six and half years; LTA: weeks.

Sybille: 25 years old; Masters student in Law (high-school degree); single, but engaged in a relationship with a Brazilian; DR: one year; LTA: weeks.

Ulla: 25 years old; Masters student in Literary and Cultural Studies (high-school degree); married to a Brazilian; DR: two years; LTA: one years and three months.

Ursel: 29 years old; conference and event planner (Masters degree); married to a Brazilian; DR: four years; LTA: weeks.

³⁷ Diplom and Magister are German academic degrees that correspond to the first stage of tertiary education, being equivalent to a Masters degree.

Volker: 46 years old; manager of research and development (PhD degree); single, but was engaged in a relationship with a Brazilian; DR: nine years; LTA: eight years.

Wulf: 47 years old; medical computer scientist (PhD degree); divorced, but engaged in a relationship with a Brazilian; DR: seven months; LTA: weeks.

German respondents with low cultural capital

Elke: 24 years old; apprentice in occupational therapy (high-school degree); married to a Brazilian; DR: eight months; LTA: none.

Max: 43 years old; bank financial manager (*Ausbildung* degree); married to a Brazilian; DR: four years; LTA: weeks.

Thorsten: 48 years old; Electrician (*Ausbildung* degree); married to a Brazilian; DR: four years; LTA: none.

3.8.2. Brazilian group

The Brazilian group is composed of sixteen respondents, equally distributed between the sexes. All respondents come from families where the parents and the grandparents were also born and raised in Brazil, i.e. no respondent has a recent history of immigration in their families.

The age of the Brazilian respondents varies between twenty-seven and forty-seven years old. The majority of the Brazilian respondents come from the southeastern³⁸ and southern³⁹ regions of Brazil, the three remaining respondents come from the northeastern region.⁴⁰ However, at the time of the interview they were living in Berlin, Rio de Janeiro or São Paulo.

Half of the Brazilian group is religious and among them, except for one respondent, all others practice a religion based on Christianity (Catholicism, Protestantism, Mormonism, *Cardecismo*⁴¹). The exception is a respondent who alleged to “believe in everything” and mentioned that in his parental home Umbanda, Candomblé⁴² and Protestantism were practiced. Among the eight agnostic Brazilian respondents, seven of them come from a parental home with Christian religious orientation.

The area of knowledge exclusively represented in the Brazilian group is the Social and Human Sciences (e.g. History, Art, Political and Social Sciences, Communication Sciences, Educational and Linguistic Sciences, Tourism). The remaining five respondents from the Brazilian group could not be classified in one of the areas of knowledge, since their formal education (upper secondary education) was not oriented to a specific field.

³⁸ Espirito Santo, Minas Gerais, Rio de Janeiro, São Paulo.

³⁹ Paraná, Rio Grande do Sul, Santa Catarina.

⁴⁰ Ceará, Pernambuco, Bahia.

⁴¹ Cardecismo is a form of spiritualism founded by Allen Kardec, which is based on the Christian doctrine and the belief on spirits and their rebirth as a moral development process of the soul.

⁴² Umbanda and Candomblé are religions developed in Brazilian based on African religions, indigenous lore, and Catholicism.

Fourteen respondents are engaged in a binational relationship (Brazil - Germany), while the two remaining respondents are single or engaged in a relationship with someone from the same country. Those two respondents were not the only ones who reported about a past binational relationship (Brazil - Germany), since two other respondents, although engaged in a binational relationship, opted to do the same.

The binational relationships described by the Brazilian group last/lasted longer than three years. The majority of the sample cohabit or cohabited with their foreigner partner. Among the three respondents who do or did not cohabit with their partner, two of them had a face-to-face relationship, i.e. they lived in the same city, and one respondent reported a long-distance relationship that was characterized by an intense exchange between partners through internet and telephone and frequent meetings in which they cohabited together.

A short description of each Brazilian respondent can be found below. In the high-cultural capital group are the respondents who already possess a higher educational certificate. In the lower-cultural capital group are the respondents who do not possess a higher educational certificate or had concluded an apprenticeship, i.e. *Ausbildung*, at the time of the interview. The highest degree of the respondents is written between parentheses.

DR: Duration of the binational relationship LTA: Length of time abroad (Germany)

Brazilian respondents with high cultural capital

João: 30 years old; journalist (Bachelors degree); married to a German; DR: four years; LTA: three years and six months.

Julho: 29 years old; Masters student in Journalism (Bachelors degree); single, but engaged in a relationship with a German; DR: one years and three months; LTA: four years.

Juliana: 31 years old; PhD student in Sociology (Masters degree); single, but was engaged in a relationship with German; DR: six months; LTA: two years and six months.

Lucia: 47 years old; English teacher (Bachelors degree) and MBA student; divorced, but engaged in a relationship with a German; DR: 6 months; LTA: none.

Patrícia: 30 years old; primary school teacher (Bachelors degree); married to a German; DR: six years; LTA: five years.

Paulo: 27 years old; Masters student in German Studies (Bachelors degree); single, but engaged in a relationship with a German; DR: one years and four months; LTA: eight months.

Pedro: 35 years old; PhD student in History (Masters degree); single, but was engaged in a relationship with a German; DR: four months; LTA: six years.

Rodrigo: 41 years old; journalist (Bachelors degree); married to a German; DR: five years; LTA: none.

Rosa: 38 years old; Masters student in Art History (Bachelors degree); single, but engaged in a relationship with a German; DR: five years; LTA: six years.

Tiago: 39 years old; visual artist (Masters degree); married to a German; DR: fifteen years; LTA: fifteen years.

Brazilian respondents with low cultural capital

Flávia: 32 years old; beautician (high-school degree); married to a German; DR: eleven years; LTA: four years and six months.

Guilherme: 41 years old; fight tutor (high-school degree); married to a German; DR: four years; LTA: four years.

Joana: 44 years old; manager of a beauty parlor (*Ausbildung* degree); divorced, but was engaged in a relationship with a German; DR: three years; LTA: twenty years.

Marcelo: 31 years old; dance tutor (high-school degree); married to a German; DR: four years; LTA: one year.

Maria: 45 years old; beautician (high-school degree); married to a German; DR: seven years; LTA: ten years.

Vanessa: 40 years old; housewife (high-school degree); married to a German; DR: ten years; LTA: two years.

4. Courtship: observing the formation of intimate relationships

Taking into consideration that love, as a system of meanings, orients not only established amorous relationships but also courtship, it was decided to start the exploration of the field by investigating the interaction between singles.

As the initial phase of the establishment of an amorous relationship, courtship has been described by many scholars exclusively as a phase of “mate selection”. However, to regard courtship strictly as the process of choosing a partner considerably limits its scope. In recent decades, with the emancipation of sexuality and the expansion of the leisure market, courtship has also become a means of self-realization.

As observed in the theoretical chapter on love, sexuality has separated itself from romantic love in late modernity and turned into a sphere in itself (Luhmann 1986; Giddens 1992; Illouz 2012). The great cultural production of sexuality has not only furthered its experience but also placed it in a central position in the life of individuals. The increasing legitimation of sexual pleasure for its own sake has turned romantic encounters, according to Illouz (1997:289), into primarily sexual ones, justifying sexual experimentation in terms of “self-realization”, with the “affair” as its pure form. As a legitimate form of [sexual] encounter without the goal of commitment, courtship can take the form either of short-lived affairs undertaken for their own sake or of a search for the right mate through successive partners (Illouz 1997:289).

The increasing consumerist ideology disseminated by the market, states Illouz (1997:53-54), seems to prevail in the realms of courtship. Unlike historians who usually explain the emergence of dating in the late 19th century as the result of changing sexual mores, Illouz (1997:54) suggests that dating was a solution that individuals found to negotiate the complex interaction between the increasing culture and economy of leisure and the new definitions of privacy and sexual intimacy. The increasing association of courtship with leisure activity freed romantic encounters from the familiar confines of the home and led it to public and anonymous spaces, turning consumption into an integral part of it (Illouz 1997:54). Individuals started to go out to dances, pubs and parties to meet others, to realize their consumerist desires and at the same time to experience the commoditized form of romance, giving birth to a ritual-consumerist experience of love (Illouz 1997:289). The practice of dating – i.e. courtship – turned into a pursuit of pleasure and a gathering of information about potential mates, frequently taking place in the anonymous and pleasure-driven sphere of leisure consumption (Illouz 1997:289).

As can be observed, courtship in contemporary society involves at least three motivations, which are often intertwined with each other: mate selection, sexual realization and the ritual-consumerist experience of romance. The different motivations behind courtship seem to sustain different criteria for the evaluation of candidates during the process, from which at least three can be pointed out: subjective compatibility, sexiness (Illouz 2012:42) and educational and economic compatibility (Illouz 1997:292-294).

In a context of increasing individualization and a world dominated by ephemeral and impersonal relationships, singles increasingly seek to find someone who shares elements of their subjective world, at least in part, and who will acknowledge and corroborate their unique personality. The evaluation of subjective compatibility between the parties during courtship thus becomes an important criterion for the choice of a mate.⁴³

As observed in the theoretical chapter on love, with the emancipation of sexuality in late modernity, sexiness has become a cultural category detached from a moral world of values (Illouz 2012:45). Sexiness regards the “sex appeal” or “sexual desirability” of individuals (Illouz 2012:42) and becomes a new mode of evaluating oneself and others, especially in sexual interactions such as courtship (Illouz 2012:46).

Since courtship and romance seem to have been appropriated by the market (Illouz 1997:53-54; 292-294), the education and economic means accumulated by individuals determines their chances in engaging in and experiencing it. The individual’s cultural and economic capital thus become significant references for the choice of a mate.

Nevertheless, independent of the motives for engaging in courtship, when two individuals take part in it, they interact in order to establish an intimate relationship – i.e. a singular relationship that may have a sexual and/or affectional character and that may last from a few minutes until death do them part. During their encounter, individuals rely on amorous codes to interact and therefore they know if previous eye contact is necessary before approaching someone verbally or not; if people should shake hands or exchange kisses on the cheeks when introducing themselves; which subjects are adequate for a first encounter and which should be avoided. These are examples of the shared knowledge that enables a “natural” and partially successful amorous interaction between individuals of the same group.

As Bailey (1987:246) observes, the aim of a field study is to understand and describe a particular culture as completely as possible. As a less structured form of observation, a field study tends to take place in natural settings and makes use of participant observation (Bailey 1987:245). The main aim of the researcher in many ethnographic studies is to resocialize in the culture he/she attempts to describe (Bailey 1987:246).

Observation is a primary technique of data collection (Bailey 1987:239). It is an appropriate technique to investigate in detail an interaction in a specific setting (Bailey 1987:239). Observations make use of fewer concepts or suppositions in their investigation of the object than other more structured techniques of inquiry, such as questionnaires or interviews (Bailey 1987:243). Although the observations in this study were relatively unstructured, a script for observation⁴⁴ was elaborated, based on the suggestions of Carol A. Bailey (1996), Kenneth D. Bailey (1987) and Hesse-Biber and Leavy (2006), which served as a reference for the observations and the report upon them.

⁴³ Illouz (2012) describes a similar criterion under the name of “emotional intimacy”, which according to her regards the compatibility between “two unique, highly differentiated, and intricate psychological makeups” (2012:42). Nevertheless, the scholar did not develop the concept further in her work.

⁴⁴ The script can be found in Appendix A. A. The observation of events for singles.

The natural settings chosen for the observations in Germany and in Brazil were events described by local informants and public information as oriented towards singles: the singles party *Fisch sucht Fahrrad* in Berlin (Germany), and the *Pampa Night* in Rio de Janeiro (Brazil).

Participant observation was regarded as the most appropriate form for conducting the field study. This means that while in the field, the researcher's identity was not openly revealed to the guests of the event until they engaged in a conversation. The researcher then identified herself and explained her intentions in the place and tried to conduct informal interviews. To avoid misunderstandings about the researcher's intentions at the events, a business card was produced by the university describing her position at the institution and her contact information.

Although the events were oriented towards singles, people seldom go alone to such locations. To avoid being conspicuous, the researcher invited friends and colleges to accompany her to the parties. Although at first many of them seemed excited at the idea, only a few actually ended up participating. Many of them seemed to regard the idea of visiting a singles party with disdain, as if only a desperate person would attend such events.⁴⁵ Therefore, in some visits to the German setting the researcher was alone. Since the field research in Brazil would be short and none of her acquaintances agreed to accompany her, it was decided to pay a female student to accompany her during the observations.

Many difficulties were encountered in the field. The dim light in both locations made it difficult to conduct observations. Beyond that, considering that the events were oriented towards courtship, all conduct was easily interpreted as flirtation, both the researcher's observations of guests and her approach to them being understood as such. This situation made observation difficult, since it was not always possible to follow what was happening in a specific part of the room without giving the impression of flirting. Although the business card was proof of the researcher's intentions, many people remained skeptical or showed little interest in speaking with the researcher, since they were there for other reasons [the guests' disbelief of the researcher's intentions can be clearly seen in the two informal interviews described below].

Language was also a barrier in the field study in Germany. Since German is not the researcher's mother language, it was not always possible to understand the guests' colloquial language beneath the loud music of the event. In Rio de Janeiro (Brazil) there were no language problems, but during the time of the field research a conflict between the police and a criminal gang monopolized the city.⁴⁶ This was marked by many episodes of violence in different points of the city, engendering fear in the population and disturbing their routine, which led to the postponement of observations.

At all 18 observations – 13 in Berlin and 5 in Rio de Janeiro – and informal and formal interviews were generated during the field work and public information on the events was

⁴⁵ The report of a PhD colleague met accidentally at the party in Germany corroborates this observation.

⁴⁶ http://pt.wikipedia.org/wiki/Atos_de_viol%C3%Aancia_organizada_no_Rio_de_Janeiro_em_2010.

collected – magazines, webpages of the events and flyers. Each observation lasted between 3 and 6 hours. Notes were written secretly in the field, and the reports were written up the next day. A more detailed description of the settings in Berlin (Germany) and in Rio de Janeiro (Brazil) is presented next.

4.1. The German setting

The selected setting in Germany was *Fisch sucht Fahrrad* (fish searches for bicycle), a singles party that has been taking place in Berlin for more than 15 years every other Friday. It is promoted by tip-Berlin, a local magazine. The organization of the party involves many persons, from an editorial team to the cloakroom staff. Among them are those who take part in almost all parties and are in direct contact with the guests, such as the organizer and contact person at the party, the photographer and the DJs.

Noticing the large number of personal ads in the 1990s⁴⁷ and the absence of a place that would enable full-time workers to expand their social networks,⁴⁸ the editorial team of tip-Berlin, inspired by the successful singles party *Fisch sucht Fahrrad* that was already being organized in Frankfurt am Main, decided to offer the same platform for the “lonely hearts” of Berlin to meet. Therefore on 2nd October 1994 the first *Fisch sucht Fahrrad* party took place in Berlin,⁴⁹ attracting at that time more than 1500 guests per evening.⁵⁰

The name of the party alludes to the feminist saying from the 1980s that “a woman without a man is like a fish without a bicycle”, and the initial concern of the organizers to distribute tickets equally between male and female guests⁵¹ suggests that the event emerged also as a reaction to the feminist movements at that time and the increasing divorce rates.

The uniqueness of this party lies in the possibility for the guests to write an anonymous personal ad that is published in the edition of the magazine issued before the party. At the initial years of the event, the personal ads were printed and displayed at the party.⁵² Today, the personal ads are available on the webpage of the magazine. The ads are free for those who buy a ticket in advance. Some designs, such as color or bold text, may be added to the announcement for a supplemental fee. Each announcement receives the indicator “FsF” and a number. Those who post an ad for the party receive a ticket for it and a number in the form of a sticker, to be used openly on the day of the party as an ID.

People who have not posted ads are also allowed to join the party. A tip-Berlin information stand at the party distributes the latest edition of the magazine – enabling the guests to read the personal ads – and offers numbers in the form of stickers for those who did not post an ad themselves, in order that they may also be identified. During the party, at the tip-Berlin

⁴⁷ Brzoska 2009.

⁴⁸ According to interview with the organizer and contact person at the party on 23.07.2010.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ tip-Redaktion 2010.

⁵¹ According to interview with the organizer and contact person at the party on 23.07.2010.

⁵² Ibid.

information stand, the guests have the opportunity to post messages to guests who have identified themselves with a number. The many television screens spread throughout the venue display the ID-numbers that have a message waiting for them at the stand.

Although some guests still write personal ads, most of them do not – as could be observed during the field study and as was corroborated by the organizer of the event. According to the organizer and contact person at the party, people find it difficult to translate into a few words who they are and what they are looking for. The number of ads and messages at the party has decreased over time; nevertheless, guests continue to use their ID-numbers as a way to communicate their availability and willingness to be courted.

As well-described by the slogan of the party, “it is all about love”.⁵³ If at the beginning an equal distribution of guests between male and female was important, today this is no longer a concern. The party has become open to all sexual orientations and types of relationships, as could be observed on site and also in the personal ads in the magazine under the section “Lonely Hearts”, with subsections like “Woman – Man”, “Man – Woman”, “Man – Man”, “Woman – Woman” and “Others”. Different desires are expressed in the notices, from the search for a stable love relationship to summer or illicit affairs and experimental sexual encounters. An examination of the numbers of notices in each subsection during the field study and the observations at the party delivered the conclusion that heterosexual orientation is the most common at the event.

The target group is composed of individuals aged from the late twenties to the mid-fifties.⁵⁴ Individuals younger than 25 years old are not allowed into the party, according to the organizer and contact person at the party, because young adults have another dynamic, take up too much space and are not necessarily interested in finding a partner. As the organizer observed, while the younger people more easily get together just for the evening, the older people come to the party more with the intention of meeting someone and exchanging contacts for further meetings.

Nevertheless, the guests of the party are diverse, from students to dental assistants, but also some wealthy “lonely hearts”.⁵⁵ Although in the first years of the party it was possible to distinguish the guests from the former East Berlin and former West Berlin through their clothes and behavior, today that is no longer possible.⁵⁶

The ticket costs eight euros and can be bought at the party, or in advance from the customer service of the magazine, by telephone or on the webpage of the magazine (in the latter two cases with additional reservation and post fees). Those who buy tickets in advance are rewarded with a free drink at the party. The event starts at 9 p.m. and ends at 5 a.m.

Although the color of the tickets changes from party to party, the general terms and conditions of the organizer (tip-Berlin) remain the same. Among other things, any recording of videos or

⁵³ According to a banner hanging in the building of the event.

⁵⁴ According to interview with the organizer and contact person at the party on 23.07.2010.; Brzoska 2009.

⁵⁵ Brzoska 2009.

⁵⁶ According to interview with the organizer and contact person at the party on 23.07.2010.

photos by the guests at the party is forbidden, but the organizers are allowed to publish photos of the guests in audio-visual print media. Photos of the party are always available on the webpage of the party and are published in the magazine.

Different sponsors use the party as a platform: radios, dating services, candy manufacturers and so on. Free samples or raffles of prizes,⁵⁷ such as party tickets, trips and chocolates, are a marketing tool frequently used at the party. Since its inception, the party has changed its location four times, also as a marketing strategy. The party initially took place at the *Berliner Kabarett-Anstalt – Zelt in Mitte*, where the tickets cost at the time 15 Deutsche Mark. Then it moved to the Metropole in *Schöneberg*, the Kalkscheune in *Mitte* and finally the Postbahnhof in *Friedrichshain*, attracting approximately 1000 guests per evening.⁵⁸ However, the increasing number of singles parties in the city, such as the “over-30s party”, has been cutting into the number of customers.⁵⁹

Another marketing strategy used by the organizers of *Fisch sucht Fahrrad* is the use of thematic parties, such as *Oktoberfest* or *Fasching* [Carnival]. Parties dedicated to gays and lesbians have also been organized, although – as the organizer and contact person at the party observe – since those groups are strongly related to social and political movements, they usually produce their own events.

The research at the singles parties began on June 2009 and continued until September 2010. The field research took place at the last two venues of the party, *Kalkscheune* and *Postbahnhof*. The visits to the party were made on an irregular basis and engendered 13 observations, several informal interviews at the party and 3 formal interviews, two with guests outside the party, and one with the founder of the party at the event.

4.2. The Brazilian setting

No event similar to *Fisch sucht Fahrrad*, nor any party specifically for singles, could be found in Rio de Janeiro, as confirmed in searches on the World Wide Web and in conversations with residents from different social groups (cleaners, lawyers, engineers, students, clerks, etc.) and also with people informally interviewed during the observations in Brazil.

Following the recommendations of the informants for events related to flirting and dating, three settings in Rio de Janeiro were visited and one of them was selected. The selection was made taking into account certain similarities with the singles party investigated in Germany, which were: the music and the ambience, i.e. that the venue is a discotheque, meaning the use of electronic music rather than live music, with sophisticated sound systems, elaborate lighting, and other effects; the central location, i.e. that the location is easily accessible to workers and with plenty of transport, enabling different groups to attend; the favorable price of the ticket, which enables persons from different socioeconomic groups to attend; and the

⁵⁷ tip-Redaktion 2010.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ According to interview with the organizer and contact person at the party on 23.07.2010; Brzoska 2009.

day of the week i.e. that the event takes place on Fridays, attracting many people who come directly from work.

The event selected was *Pampa Night*, which takes place in one of the locations of Pampa Grill in downtown in Rio de Janeiro, a neighborhood that concentrates many offices, firms, and governmental and educational institutions, and has different subway and bus stations, as well as other alternative transportation. During the day the location functions as a restaurant and at night it becomes a discotheque. The Friday event is characterized as a happy hour, as a space for people to meet and celebrate the end of the workweek, and – as previously noted – is described by local informants as an event visited by singles.

The gastronomic group Pampa Grill has existed for more than 30 years in the city.⁶⁰ The downtown building has 990m² and was opened in 1996.⁶¹ Since its opening it has worked as a grill and a kilo restaurant⁶² by day and as a night club in the evening.⁶³ The locale attracts 25,000 people per month, and for more than 12 years *Pampa Night* has been the only well-known happy hour in the city.⁶⁴ Although the event is organized by Pampa Grill, it also works with sponsors, such as a local radio station, a cosmetics firm and a vodka producer.

Under the slogan “*sexta party*” (Friday’s party), *Pampa Night* invites people “to forget the stress of work, enjoy flirting and beautiful people”.⁶⁵ Individuals younger than 18 years old are not allowed entry, nor are individuals wearing shorts, t-shirts, football fan articles or flip-flops. Although no data could be found to indicate the sexual orientation of the guests, no encounter between individuals of the same sex could be observed during the visits to the party.

Admission to *Pampa Night* costs 20 reais for women and 25 reais for men [approximately 8 euros for women and 10 euros for men at the time of the observation], but with a flyer [a form that can be printed from their webpage and must be filled out with name, email, telephone number and date of birth] it is possible to receive a 5 reais discount. The price of the admission includes a buffet of finger food, such as pizza, fries, sandwiches and grilled meat. The discotheque also has an agreement with various firms and institutions, from language courses to a semi-governmental energy company, which grant their members discounts at the event. As a marketing strategy the venue also offers free admission for guests who have a birthday on the day of their visit or in the week of the event. The location also offers free valet service for customers and the possibility to reserve tables. The event starts at 6 p.m. and ends when the last customer leaves.

At the entrance each person receives a *comanda*, i.e. a paper form with his/her name, on which everything that is consumed at the bar is recorded. The *comanda* must be paid before leaving the premises. There are no general terms and conditions described anywhere. Photos

⁶⁰ Cezar 2011.

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² Kilo restaurants employ the concept of a buffet, but charge not per person but rather by the weight of food on the plate. The customer is thus free to enjoy different dishes and pay only for what he/she chooses.

⁶³ Cezar 2011.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ Information available on the event’s webpage.

of the guests can be found on the webpage of the event, but no registration is needed to access it.

The field study in Brazil took place from November 2010 until January 2011 and included five observations and two informal interviews with guests. The main observations made during the field studies can be seen below.

4.3. Main observations

With regard to the reports on the field study in Germany and in Brazil, the following main observations can be outlined:

Environment

Germany:

- The event usually offered four environments: three dance floors and one open area. Tables, chairs and sofas were distributed throughout the rooms.
- The light on the dance floors was dim and the music was loud, but it was possible to hold conversations without coming too close. Guests always had the possibility to retreat into the open area to speak, where the music was not loud.
- People could move in the space without touching each other.

Brazil:

- The event offered two environments, both with dance floors. Tables and chairs were distributed throughout the rooms.
- The light was very dim and the music was very loud in all spaces. People were obliged to lean in quite close to hold a conversation, usually having to talk into each other's ears.
- The location was always full, so that people usually touched each other when moving around.

Guests

Germany:

- The number of men and women appeared to be similar.
- People were usually between 25 and 50 years old.
- Men usually wore untucked shirts with rolled-up sleeves and jeans.
- Women usually wore dresses or skirts, tight jeans and tops showing cleavage, make-up and boots.

Brazil:

- The number of men and women appeared to be similar.
- People were usually between 25 and 50 years old.
- Men usually wore t-shirts or untucked shirts with rolled-up sleeves and jeans.
- Women usually wore dresses or skirts with tops, jewelry, make-up and high heels.

Arrival

Germany:

- The party started at 9 p.m., but the majority of guests usually arrived at 11 p.m.
- Guests usually arrived in groups of two. Women were always in groups; only a few men came alone.
- Guests usually needed 30 minutes to acclimatize and their first act was usually to get a drink and then to look for a place to sit and talk with their friends.

Brazil:

- The party started at 6 p.m., and the majority of guests arrived by 9 p.m.
- Guests usually arrived in groups bigger than two and no individuals were observed arriving alone.
- Guests tended to look first for a table to sit with their friends and leave their bags while dancing. Then they would look for something to eat and drink.

Dancing

Germany:

- Guests took a long time to start dancing after the DJ started to play.
- Women were usually the ones who started to dance. Men usually positioned themselves at the extremity of the dance floor or at the bars observing others or talking with friends.
- The dance floors were never too full. People danced exclusively on the dance floors.

Brazil:

- Men and women started to dance usually shortly after the DJ started to play.
- More women than men could be seen on the dance floor. Many men remained at the extremity of the dance floor or at the bars observing others or talking with friends.
- The dance floors seemed too small for the number of people who wanted to dance. People did not restrict themselves to the dance floor and also danced between tables and in the halls.
- People also sang along when dancing.

Alcohol

Germany:

- Men and women were usually holding alcoholic drinks, also when dancing.
- The consumption of alcohol was high and it was possible to observe increasing numbers of drunken people during the evening.

Brazil:

- It was possible to observe many guests who did not carry drinks.

- While dancing women usually did not hold drinks, but men often did. Most people preferred to drink at the tables or standing near them.
- The consumption of alcohol was high and it was possible to observe increasing numbers of drunken people during the evening.

Gender Behavior

Germany:

- Usually men initiated conversations, although women could also be observed doing so.

Brazil:

- Usually men approached women, although women could be observed provoking men into courtship, by touching them when they passed by, for example.

Visual contact

Germany:

- Individuals held eye contact only for brief moments and looked away.
- They repeated these exchanges over a long period of time, before one of them attempted to come closer.
- The eye contact was very subtle, and seemed to be a shy expression of interest.

Brazil:

- Individuals stared at each other, i.e. they held eye contact. These exchange were brief and if the women did not break eye contact, men came directly closer to speak.
- Eye contact was direct and clearly expressed attraction.

Approach

Germany:

- After exchanging eye contact for an extended time, couples tended to meet at the dance floor, at the bar or in the smoking area, but it was less common to see them approaching the other person directly after initial eye contact.
- When individuals came closer, they tended to remain beside each other for several minutes without verbally approaching each other. They continued to talk or dance with their group of friends until the attempt to initiate a conversation.

Brazil:

- Men came closer to women, also without previous eye contact, and approached them in a straightforward fashion.

Verbal and physical communication

Germany:

- Men usually initiated the approach.

- Individuals held long conversations – at least 20 minutes – before they attempted any physical contact.
- The first physical contacts were subtle, such as touching the arm when talking, and women were often the ones to initiate it.
- It could be observed that many women initiated physical contact, and although women took the first step, the men still waited before attempting to come closer or to kiss them.
- It was possible to observe many couples on the dance floor caressing each other and putting their hands on all parts of each other's bodies; however many of them never kissed and separated themselves after a while.

Brazil:

- Men usually initiated the approach.
- Men usually approached women verbally and physically at the same time. They touched or held them when talking to them.
- The first physical contacts were assertive, such as holding the hand or arm or embracing the waist, and were often conducted by men.
- The conversations were usually short. If the women did not go away, men tried to come closer in order to kiss them.
- It was possible to observe couples dancing outside the dance floor kissing each other and caressing each other; however those interactions were short and did not last a whole song. A kiss happened always first before they started to touch each other's bodies more extensively.

Kissing

Germany:

- Kissing usually occurred after a long interaction – conversation or dancing.
- Couples often interspersed conversation with kissing.
- The number of people approaching each other increased during the evening; however the number of couples kissing remained limited.
- The first couples kissing were usually seen after 1 a.m. (the fourth hour of the party) and their number increased over time, but it was necessary to pay attention to find them among other guests.

Brazil:

- Kissing usually occurred after a short interaction.
- Couples scarcely spoke after they began kissing.
- The number of people approaching one another increased during the evening and number of couples kissing also increased significantly.
- Since couples also attended the event, it was possible to see people kissing from the beginning on; however, the number of couples increased rapidly during the evening, and were easily observed among the other guests.

Development

Germany:

- While most of the couples remained together during the evening and some left the party together, others separated after a short period of time.
- It was possible to observe individuals who attempted to kiss more than one person at the party.

Brazil:

- While most of the couples remained together during the evening, others separated after a short period of time.
- It was possible to observe individuals who kissed more than one person during the evening.

4.4. Illustration of a courtship encounter

Although the notes above summarize the most objective observations made in both settings, subtle differences in courtship behavior were also evident during the interaction with guests. The following texts attempt to illustrate the subtle differences observed in the courtship behavior of individuals in Germany and in Brazil. These texts are reconstructed from informal interviews that took place in the field studies in Germany and in Brazil at the events for singles. The texts were written to guarantee the anonymity of the participants.

Seductive words (Germany)

I was leaving the singles party, walking in the courtyard on my way to the street when someone called me. I looked back. A tall blond man around 35 years old came in my direction.

"Do you want a number?" he asked me in a friendly way.

I noticed that he had one on his shirt. *"No, thank you."* I answered amiably.

"Are you trying to meet someone?" He asked me straightforwardly.

"I am not, but you are probably." I answered with a smile pointing at the number in his shirt.

He laughed. *"I am not having much luck. Nobody left me a message and the woman I approached was married. Are you seeing someone?"*

OK. He is straightforward. *"Yes, I am."*

He sighed but asked me further *"Where do you come from?"*

"I come from Brazil."

He looked surprised. *"What are you doing here?"*

"I am doing my PhD. And you? Where do you come from and what do you do?"

"I am from Ostsee and I work in finances."

"Oh, my boyfriend also works in finances. Maybe you know him." I said my friend's name and the firm where he works, but he did not know him nor the firm.

We exchanged some words about the financial market and its crises, and then he drove the conversation again to the start. *"But what are you doing at a singles party?"*

"I am doing research on love and I was observing how individuals who are searching for a relationship interact."

He said with a smile in his face *"So, I am a part of your experiment"*.

I laugh. *"No. I am at the beginning of my research and I am not completely sure how I am going to conduct it further."* But since we were talking, I exploited the situation to ask some questions. *"Have you been to this party before?"*

"No. It is my first time."

"Why this party?"

"I think the idea with the numbers is nice, since you know who is interested and can avoid being turned down. Women are usually nice and say they are already seeing someone, but with the numbers you can avoid this situation. Don't you have a friend to introduce me to?"

I was surprised. I never expected such a question. *"Maybe. One of my Brazilian friends is single. But before I consider it, I must know what your intentions are."*

"I want a stable relationship and I am looking for a lovely woman."

The party was loud and I could not understand him *"You are looking for love?"*

"No. We cannot look for love. I am looking for a lovely woman."

"But what does a 'lovely woman' mean?"

"A lovely woman is someone you can talk to. Someone like me, who does not like fighting."

"But my friend is also a PhD student like me and maybe she has to return to Brazil at the end of it." I said, looking him in the eyes.

"I may also go with her to Brazil then." He smiled. "Were you already leaving?"

"Yes."

"I will walk with you then. I wanted to get some chewing-gum from my car." And he pointed to his car.

"Ok." We started to walk beside each other.

"I decided to talk to you because I noticed that you were alone. I usually do not go to night clubs. I do not like it. People flirt too offensively in those places."

"Is it hard to find a partner?"

"It is hard to find an uncomplicated person."

"But what is an 'uncomplicated person'?"

"Someone who does not disagree and complain about everything, who is not bitchy."

"OK." I kept walking in the direction of the train station, which was opposite to where his car was parked and he kept walking with me.

"You seem to be an uncomplicated person."

I looked at him. He smiled. I laughed and said *"I believe I am."*

"I never had much success by approaching someone. All my ex-girlfriends were friends of friends of mine that considered me interesting and approached me. How is it in Brazil?"

"Well, I can only talk about my experience, but as long as I remember it is men that usually approach women."

"But how are relationships in Brazil? Brazilians are warmer than Germans."

"It is different. In Brazil touch belongs to common interaction, people tend to exchange kisses on cheeks or embrace each other at greetings or farewells. People touch each other when talking. And in Germany touch does not seem to belong to common interaction or in the public space."

"It must be hard for you then here in Germany. Your partner is probably not so loving and affectionate. He probably does not give you as many compliments as you deserve. I also praise affection, caressing. I always give my girlfriends compliments. It is important."

I smiled. "I am pretty lucky. My partner is really affectionate and is always giving me compliments."

"Are you going to introduce me to your friend?"

"I need to talk to her first."

"Then let us change contact information."

"OK." Only then did we introduce ourselves. He gave me his telephone number and his email, and I gave him only my email. I could ask him for an interview later.

We were already in the train station. When the train arrived, he followed me to the door. I turned to him to say goodbye and he made his last move. Smiling he said *"So, should we embrace each other as Brazilians do?"*

I laughed and answered *"When in Germany, do as the Germans do."* I gave him my hand and said goodbye. That was the only moment when we touched each other. Our conversation lasted around 30 minutes.

I contacted him later to ask for an interview. He accepted. When we met for the second time he laughed when I took out the recorder and the interview script from my purse. He confessed then that he had not believed that I was conducting research.

Coming closer (Brazil)

My few acquaintances in Rio de Janeiro are in relationships. None of them agreed to accompany me to this event, suggesting that their partners would not understand why they were going out to an event for singles. Therefore I decided to contract a female student to come with me.

Maria and I were seated at a table for four, observing the dance floor before us. Two men came. While one stood beside the table, the other sat before Maria and declared that he was in love with her. We both laughed at his confession and Maria answered that she was surprised how it had happened so fast. He declared his love again and asked her name. She introduced herself and he introduced himself as João and kissed her hands. From the beginning on he stared at her with such intensity, as if there was nobody else in the room.

João asked her if she had a boyfriend and Maria said yes, that he was standing there nearby [Maria's boyfriend did not agree to leave her alone at the event; therefore he also came with her, but kept some distance between us, letting us do our job]. João opened his eyes in surprise and asked her if it was the truth. Maria confirmed it. I interrupted them by presenting myself to him. I explained that we were there because of my research and then I asked if he could answer some questions. He accepted my invitation, but before we could start with the informal interview he called his friend to sit with us and explained what was going on. His friend introduced himself as Miguel. He expressed interest in my research and explained that his brother was doing a Masters study.

Both men were amiable and communicative. They answered my questions and provided further information. They said that they frequent all night clubs in Rio de Janeiro, from the rich southern neighborhoods to the poor northern ones.

João is a 25-year-old geographer who works as bank clerk. He told me that he was there tonight to meet with work colleagues and to *pegar alguém* ["catch someone" means to have a short sexual encounter with someone, which usually includes kissing and petting but not necessarily sex]. I asked him if he knew any place in Rio de Janeiro where people go looking to find a partner for a stable relationship and he said he does not believe in it, that night clubs are places for "catching someone" and that he never met one of his girlfriends in a night club.

Miguel is a 29-year-old historian and also works as a bank clerk. He also stated that he did not know any night club in Rio de Janeiro where people go looking for a partner. However, he observed that there is a church in the northern region that promotes a meeting on weekends as couple's therapy and that many people go there looking for a partner.

According to Miguel, the conduct of women changes according to the neighborhood they come from: while women from the northern region are less demanding than women from the southern region, the former are also more active at flirting than the latter, and they have no shame at hitting on men and inviting them for sex. According to him, every man, independent of region, wants only one thing: "to catch women". Men from the southern region tend to go to the northern region to "catch women", because those are easily impressed by the fact that they live in the southern region. When a man goes out in the southern region, if he has not previously arranged a meeting with a woman, there is a good chance that he will end the night alone. According to him, the neighborhood where we were, downtown, is the more balanced location, where it is possible to find people from all regions. He suggested I listen to *funk*,⁶⁶ which according to him is the voice of the philosophers from Rio de Janeiro. He told me to hear the song "pretend that you have" and to look for the video from Mr. Catra "90 days" on YouTube.

Both men suggested that symbols of status help men obtain kisses and sex from women [I asked Maria and her boyfriend later about this, and they agreed with the observation that if a man invites a woman for a drink and she accepts it, he will expect her to exchange kisses in the evening, and if he invites her for dinner, he will expect them to have sex].

Miguel also stated during our conversation that in his work he comes into contact with colleagues from other states during workshops, especially from São Paulo and Minas Gerais, and that many of them are only interested in going to brothels. He believes that cariocas

⁶⁶ Funk is a type of dance music from Rio de Janeiro, derived from hip-hop. It arose in the 1990s and became increasingly popular in Brazil, especially among the lower-middle and working classes.

[those living in Rio de Janeiro] are more “calm”, that they are more interested in going out to have fun with friends, chat with women and attempt to seduce them.

The conversation with them was amiable and after I stated my research intentions João stopped courting Maria. We also talked about other subjects, such as what they were studying or want to study, my life in Germany, my PhD research, that I was engaged to a German and so on. Our conversation lasted approximately 30 minutes, and then Miguel asked me if I wanted a drink and I said no. He asked why not and I explained that I was working, that I wanted to keep my concentration. Both men stood and went to the bar. I thought that they were not coming back, since they were there to “catch someone”. However, Miguel returned and sat beside me. I considered it strange, but also thought that I had been in Germany so long that I was no longer used to such proximity.

I decide to observe the dance floor more closely. I explained to him that we were leaving and he came with us. On the way to the other dance floor he tried to hold my hand and I pulled it away. The dance floor was too full and the dim light did not allow us to see much, so we decided to go to the other dance floor in the basement. Miguel followed us again. The space was full, we were in a hallway between the dance floor and a wall, and we made a small circle. I rested against the wall with Maria on one side of me and Miguel on the other. I asked him if he was going to help us with the observations, but he did not answer me. I kept observing the dance floor. Miguel started to move closer and rested one arm on the wall beside me. Since we were in a hallway where people streamed in and out of the room, I thought he was trying to find a stance to avoid being pushed by others. Besides that, I had already told him that I was engaged, that I was there because of my research and I had rejected his attempt to hold my hand. However it seems that it was all not enough for him. When Miguel started to move his other arm to rest against the wall beside me in order to corner me, I moved to the side, told Maria that we were leaving and started to walk toward the stairs. Miguel followed us again and tried again to hold my hand on the way up, and once again I pulled my hand away. When we were back on the first floor, he said he would search for his friend and disappeared.

4.5. Inferences

Based on the observations and formal and informal interviews, a few inferences on the courtship practices in both settings can be drawn:

- The term “singles party” seems to have different meanings in both cities. While informants in Berlin suggested *Fisch sucht Fahrrad* as an event for singles and the guests seems to acknowledge it as a place to meet someone interested in a stable relationship, in Rio de Janeiro the informants suggested *Pampa Night* as an event for singles but the guests seemed to acknowledge it as a place to “catch someone”, i.e. to establish above all a temporary sexual encounter.
- Although both settings were described as events for singles, they were also visited by people already in relationships.
- In both settings it was possible to observe individuals seeking temporary sexual encounters.
- The approach in the German setting seems to take longer than the approach in the Brazilian setting. While in Germany people spend a long time exchanging eye contact

and talking before they attempt a physical contact or a kiss, in the Brazilian setting previous eye contact does not always occur and when it is present it is also short, as is conversation, and people engage rapidly in physical contact, whether by touching during conversation or moving quickly to a kiss. This observation suggests that in the German setting individuals rely more on verbal expression to seduce each other, while in the Brazilian setting they rely more on physical expression.

- The dance floor seems to be regarded differently in the settings. While in the German setting it was common to observe couples caressing each other without kissing, in the Brazilian setting the dance floor was restricted almost exclusively to dancing. However, couples caressing each other and kissing could easily be seen outside the dance floor in the Brazilian setting, while in the German setting this was much less common.
- The kiss seems to have a different meaning in each setting, since while in the German setting people take longer to get to it and may touch each other's body without kissing, in the Brazilian setting people come quickly to kissing and only then they may caress each other.

As can be observed, courtship seems to present certain particularities in Germany and in Brazil. Although some inferences about courtship can be made through the observations of events for singles, a more detailed investigation through interviews showed itself necessary to grasp the meanings behind the courtship practices in each region. Therefore, as previously noted, another line of investigation was conducted in parallel in order to account for the meanings that structure amorous interactions in Germany and in Brazil: interviews with individuals who are or were in a binational relationship (Brazil – Germany). Based on the observations of events for singles and the reports of respondents about their amorous experiences with individuals in Brazil and in Germany, the next chapter provides a more detailed description of the courtship process and highlights particularities observed in it in both regions.

5. The courtship process: grasping the meanings behind courtship

*Schäkern, schmeicheln, bestricken, verlocken, entzücken, umschwärmen, anmachen*⁶⁷ in German and *paquerar, azarar, cantar, xavecar, jogar charme*⁶⁸ in Portuguese are some of the different names attributed to a common interaction: courtship. As the multiplicity of synonyms for this interaction already suggests, courtship can take different forms. Nevertheless, when occurring in the specific context of an encounter between strangers⁶⁹ on-site⁷⁰ it seems to follow three phases, as the observations conducted at the events for singles and the reports of respondents indicated.⁷¹

5.1. The prelude phase

The first phase in courtship, as Davis (1973 apud Lenz 2009:205) also describes, relies on visual information and refers to the moment the persons became aware of each other, establish eye contact and provide nonverbal signs of their willingness to interact.

The initial step for engaging in courtship with someone in a real encounter is to become aware of the others around us; only then is it possible to attempt to establish contact with someone or to respond to the other's attempts at contact. According to observations and the reports of respondents, it seems that here lies the first difference between the courtship behavior of individuals in Germany and in Brazil. While in Germany individuals tend more to avoid contact with strangers in public spaces by secluding themselves from others or avoiding eye contact, in Brazil individuals tend more to seek out contact with strangers in public spaces by joining

⁶⁷ <http://synonyme.woxikon.de/synonyme/flirten.php>.

⁶⁸ <http://www.dicionarioinformal.com.br/sinonimos/paquera/>.

⁶⁹ Considering that the common knowledge and shared experiences among colleges, acquaintances and friends engender different degrees of intimacy, which may affect the courtship process in different ways, it was decided to account for a courtship process between strangers, who are required to construct intimacy from the beginning on.

⁷⁰ The persons involved in an encounter are not the only ones who play a role in a courtship situation; the context they are in also influences their behavior. In the modern world, courtship can happen in real or virtual spaces. Encounters in real spaces, like a pub or a night club, involve the presence of the persons in the same location, all interaction happens in real time, and the main instruments of seduction are physical appearance, body and verbal language. Virtual encounters, on the other hand, are mediated through media and therefore enable the persons to interact also when they are not in the same location – like in a chat room – or not communicating in real-time – as with e-mail exchanges. The communication carried out through media also enables the persons to conceal their own physical appearance and their body language, and in this case, promotes verbal language as the main instrument of seduction. Considering that a real encounter seems to be more tangible than a virtual one, and it also minimizes the chances of simulation, it was decided to delineate here a courtship process in a real encounter.

⁷¹ Because of the different sources of empirical information – observations of events for singles and interviews with individuals who are or were in binational relationships – and the fact that although individuals were observed and interviewed in Berlin, Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo they spoke about courtship situations with individuals coming from different states and social groups, it was decided to address in the following text the regions under investigation (Germany and Brazil) and their national groups (Germans and Brazilians). Unfortunately, this choice of stylistic form inadvertently suggests generalization; therefore it must be kept in mind that the following descriptions, conclusions and discussions are based on the restricted amount of data of this study and cannot claim to be representative for the whole populations of Germany and Brazil.

others or establishing eye contact. Anika, for example, observed that in Germany people tend to establish less eye contact in public spaces than in Brazil and explained the tendency in Germany as individualism. She argued that eye contact tends to be the first step in engaging in a conversation and, for her, since people in Brazil seem to like more to communicate than in Germany, they would tend more to look around in order to engage in a conversation with someone, while people in Germany would tend to look less around in order to avoid a conversation. She illustrated her point by describing how people act in public transportation in Germany and in Brazil: that while in the former people tend to hide behind a newspaper or to choose a seat in the emptiest space in the vehicle, in the latter people tend to sit near each other.

Anika: *Also, ich kann mir auch vorstellen, dass in Brasilien das der Augenkontakt gesucht wird. Für den ersten Schritt zur Kommunikation. Und da ich auch das Gefühl habe, dass in Brasilien die Menschen sowieso sehr gern und viel kommunizieren. Deswegen meint mein Mann auch ich passe gut nach Brasilien. Denke ich, dass das schon vielleicht auch unbewusst gesucht wird, den Augenkontakt, um dann auch in Kommunikation zu treten. Bei den Deutschen kann ich mir auch vorstellen, dass einige oder viele den Augenkontakt eher meiden. Weil es ja auf eine Kommunikation hinauslaufen könnte. Und, warum sie keine Kommunikation wollen? ((lachend)) Dass weiß ich auch nicht. Aber vielleicht hat das wirklich mit der eigenen Person zu tun. Mit dem Individualen. Man sagt ja immer das Individualismus in Deutschland und in europäischen Ländern sehr, sehr wichtig ist und dass man viel auf sich konzentriert ist und. Ich denke, da gibt es einen Zusammenhang mit dem Individualismus und dem Streben danach. Und dann.. fast der Kontaktablehnung mit Anderen. Also, da kann ich mir einen Zusammenhang vorstellen... Aber ich erlebe es auch öfter in der U- Bahn, dass da wirklich jeder für sich ist. Man die Zeitung vorm Kopf hat und keine Lust hat wirklich mit anderen zu kommunizieren. Auch wenn es nur Nonverbal ist, aber... Ob es keine Lust ist oder sie wissen es nicht, wie man mit Fremden kommuniziert. Dass das eine Unsicherheit auch ist?.. Oder halt man ist so sehr auf sich bedacht. Das könnte es alles sein. [...] Also, ich denke auch das Deutsche sich absichtlich auch woanders hinsetzen. /ehm/ Also, dass wenn ganz hinten frei ist, dann gehen sie auch ganz hinten hin und nicht zu den anderen Leuten setzen. Weil dann vermeiden sie halt den Kontakt, die Kommunikation nonverbal, verbal. Brauchen sie sich keinen Kopf machen, sie sind in Ruhe. Können in Ruhe ihr eigenes, ihre eigenen Sachen machen und.. Ja, in Brasilien hatte ich eher das Gefühl man geht dann in die Masse rein. Und geht nicht wirklich dann in den letzten Platz beim Bus, sondern man ist halt dabei. Das hätte ich jetzt auch so gesehen. [31-year-old German special education teacher (Masters degree)]*

Elke, when confronted with the observation that people in Germany avoid eye contact in public spaces, not only agreed with it but also explained that for Germans eye contact seems to be the first step in approaching someone, in starting a conversation, and in order to prevent it they would tend more to avoid eye contact.

Elke: *Ja, finde ich auch. Also auf jeden Fall. Ich finde U-Bahn ist eigentlich das beste Beispiel. Es guckt sich nie jemand so an oder.. ja. Finde ich auch, ist wenig Blickkontakt.*

Interviewerin: *Weißt du warum? ((lachen))*

Elke: *Hm, keine Ahnung. Vielleicht weil Blickkontakt eine andere Bedeutung hat. Vielleicht ist es das, was du gesagt hast. In Brasilien kann man jemanden auch ansprechen ohne Augenkontakt zu haben. Und vielleicht, wenn jetzt der Schluss daraus ist, dass man in Deutschland Blickkontakt häufig zur Kontaktaufnahme nimmt um dann ein Gespräch anzufangen, dann vermeiden die Deutschen vielleicht eher den Blickkontakt in solchen Situationen, weil es gleich eine Aufforderung darstellt. Vielleicht.*

Interviewerin: *Ja, das habe ich mir auch gedacht. Dass der Augenkontakt hier in Deutschland wie ein Hallo funktioniert oder die Möglichkeit gerne mit dir zu reden.. und dann vielleicht, deswegen, die Deutschen möchten nicht mit anderen reden und dann guckt man nicht.*

Elke: *Ja. Ich glaube, genauso ist es.* [24-year-old German apprentice in occupational therapy (high-school degree)]

Volker, when reporting about eye contact, mentioned how he tends to apply eye contact more often with strangers in Brazil than in Germany, and observed that while in Brazil to establish eye contact with strangers is the usual practice, in Germany it may be perceived as a threat, as a provocation.

Volker: *.... Troca de olhares... ah, sim. Eu brinco muito com olhares. E... aqui, eu comunico bastante com muitas mulheres, muitas brasileiras. Sem rolar uma comunicação... [...] Agora também, nesse momento [nós estamos sentados num restaurante]. Porque eu estou com algumas mulheres, de vez em quando, cruzando os olhos, isso. Mas eles estão... elas estão ao lado do... do marido, tudo, com todo o respeito, e... eu não queria nada com elas. Mas isso faço aqui bem mais frequente que na Alemanha, na Alemanha acho que isso... não está sendo visto tão... [...] Não tão bem visto. E aqui é mais fácil, e lá é sempre uma coisa... é, pode ser uma ameaça também, entre, como... os primatas, lá... porque aí você está provocando algo.* [46-year-old German manager of research and development (PhD degree)]

Pedro, when confronted with the observation that strangers tend to establish less eye contact in public spaces in Germany than in Brazil agreed to it and added an observation of his German ex-girlfriend, who lived for a while in Brazil, that while Germans tend to walk in order to achieve a destination, Brazilians tend to walk looking around. Like Anika, Pedro also explained the different conduct of people in Germany and in Brazil in terms of individualism and collectivism. Pedro also concluded by observing that in Brazil courtship can happen anywhere, implying that the same does not happen in Germany.

Pedro: *Bom, isso é. Isso não é só alemão, eu diria que é norte europeu, é.. A cidade do individualismo, mais que a cidade do coletivo. A Heidi, mãe do meu filho, falava assim, ela morou no Brasil também. Ela falava: o alemão, ele olha para frente, ele caminha olhando para frente, porque é lá que ele quer chegar. O brasileiro olha para os lados, para trás, vê quem está olhando também. ((risos)) Situação de flerte no Brasil é em qualquer lugar! Em qualquer lugar.* [35-year-old Brazilian PhD student in History (Masters degree)]

Juliana also observed the tendency of people in Germany to avoid eye contact with strangers in public spaces. She argues that Brazilians do not repress eye contact as Germans do and do not feel bothered when someone establishes unexpected eye contact with them. She reports the story of another Brazilian who attempted to establish a friendship with someone in a library in Germany but was not successful, since according to Juliana, while a library is for Brazilians a possible place to get to know someone and to flirt, in Germany people regard a library exclusively as a place to study.

Juliana: *[...] E eu não saberia dizer se a gente busca o olhar. Se a gente procura, quando a gente vai num ambiente assim. Mas eu acho que, o fato assim de você simplesmente olhar. Como você entrou num lugar. Bom, eu tenho que ir até ali. E você passa. Claro que você vê as pessoas. Eles também veem! Só que ele finge não ver. Ele se esforça para mostrar que não viu! Mas é claro que você vê! O seu olho enxerga, assim. Não dá para você não ver a pessoa, senão você tromba, né. Tem tudo isso, assim! [...] É o que foi o que a Laura também falou para mim. Ela vai à biblioteca e ela fala que ela fica super chateada, pois ela não consegue fazer amizade na biblioteca. Ela falou assim, ela tem a sensação que as pessoas têm medo. Que se ela olha para a pessoa e tem vontade de dar oi, ela acha que a pessoa tem medo 'Ah meu Deus! Ela vai me dar oi!' 'Ah meu Deus! Eu vou ter que falar com ela!' Tem. Não, tem isso mesmo! Então, eu diria assim, no Brasil não é que a gente procura. É que a gente não se incomoda! [...] Mas o que eu acho só, é assim. Eu viria ao contrário. Ao invés de achar que a gente busca, eu acho que o alemão é que reprime. Por que ele também vê, e o brasileiro vê, só que a gente não reprime que viu. Claro, você só vai reprimir se você não gosta*

da pessoa, se você não está a fim de conversar. Você finge que não vê! ((risos)) Também tem isso. Mas você usa essa expressão. Você finge que não viu, mas você sabe que você viu! Aqui, ele vai dizer que não viu! Ele vai ser cínico ao ponto de dizer que não viu! Né, 'você é tão transparente para mim, que eu não vi!' Assim, eu acho que eles reprimem isso. Porque você percebe que a pessoa viu! Você olha para tentar dar oi para pessoa e reconhecer a pessoa, só que ele olha para o céu, né! Ele disfarça, ele olha para a janela, levanta o livro assim bem alto, que é para não correr o risco de que você fale com ele. Mas assim, eu não diria que a gente busca, mas eu diria que a gente não reprime. Então assim, por isso que um amigo brasileiro meu dizia, que a biblioteca da uni era o maior lugar de paquera da universidade! Você pensa que é café? Que é a festa? Que nada, vai à biblioteca. Aqui? A coitada da Laura não consegue nem fazer amigo na biblioteca! E olhe que a biblioteca é enorme, dava para rolar a maior paquera lá, pois o que não falta é gente lá dentro. Mas eles põem, assim, um cabresto tão enorme, 'estou aqui, só vou falar com amigos conhecidos, e vou trabalhar, não quero fazer amigos novos.' É, não sei, não sei. Mas eu acho que tem sim essa diferença. Isso você tem razão. Que a gente, quero dizer assim, num lugar você olha e vê e no outro você olha e não vê. Ou você não quer ver. Enfim. [31-year-old Brazilian PhD student in Sociology (Masters degree)]

Rosa also noticed that Germans tend to avoid eye contact with strangers in public while Brazilians tend to do the opposite. She observed further, like Volker, that eye contact with strangers in Germany may be taken as an offensive act, and therefore risks being responded to with aggression.

***Rosa:** Ah! Aqui não olha, né. Não. Se você olhar um pouquinho mais para as pessoas, as pessoas ficam embaraçadas, as pessoas ficam envergonhadas, ou elas ficam agressivas, né. O famoso "Was guckst du?", então há de se ter cuidado. Eu acho que é problemático olhar aqui.*

***Entrevistadora:** E no Brasil?*

***Rosa:** Ah, no Brasil não. Eu acho que no Brasil a gente olha, olha, olha, olha de novo. Às vezes mulher para mulher, homem para homem. Às vezes para ver como é a roupa. Não sei. Para criticar, para elogiar. Às vezes para flertar também. Mas eu não vejo essa coisa de não olhar. [3-year-old Brazilian Magister student in Art History (Bachelors degree)]*

Since awareness of others is the premise for starting an interaction, the degree to which each individual pays attention to others in their surroundings influences their chances to engage in courtship. As observed above, the tendency of individuals in Germany to avoid eye contact in public spaces diminishes their chances of engaging in courtship, while the conduct of individuals in Brazil to seek out eye contact increases the chances of engaging in it. Nevertheless, if a person becomes aware of someone whom he/she considers courting, he/she will first try to evaluate if the other person is willing or not to interact (Davis 1973 apud Lenz 2009:205). According to the observations at the events for singles and the reports of respondents, eye contact seems to be the most common initial action in courtship. By looking to the admired person, the admirer expresses his/her interest in courtship, and when the admired responds to the eye contact they start a nonverbal communication based on further nonverbal signals that may or not corroborate the interest in courtship. How the eye contact is performed will communicate if there is common interest or not. The most important nonverbal signals which express a willingness to interact are the ongoing exchange of eye contact and smiles, as Davis (1973 apud Lenz 2009:205) observed, but also other body language, such as the tilt of the head to the side or how one positions one's body towards the other.

Although individuals in Germany and in Brazil apply the above-mentioned nonverbal signals during courtship, there are particular differences in how they perform it, as the observations

and reports of respondents suggest. In regard to eye contact, it seems that while in Germany individuals tend to use alternating eye contact to communicate their interest, in Brazil individuals tend to gaze more steadily at one another. Karl, for example, described how Germans tend more to look down when the other returns the look, while Brazilians tend more to keep looking at the other when he/she returns the look. He explained the difference between the gazes in Germany and in Brazil with astonishment, since for him the steady eye contact of Brazilians would be perceived in Germany as an act of aggression.

Karl: [...] Da gibt's einen riesen Unterschied! Die Kennenlernphase ist also die, die immer total unterschiedlich ist. In Brasilien gucken einen die Mädels alle an. Also, und das ist auch kein Problem, wenn eine Frau einen anguckt und dann auch bemerkt, dass ich merke das sie mich anguckt. Wenn ich hier in Deutschland in Berlin in der U-Bahn bin und ein Mädchel guckt mich an, ich gucke rüber, habe Augenkontakt mit ihr, dann guckt sie weg. Weil sie das nicht will das ich das merke und selbst als Mann will ich das nicht, wenn ich dann ein Mädchel irgendwo sehe und ich gucke sie an und dann guckt sie mich an, dann gucke ich auch weg. Ich will nicht, dass sie das direkt sieht, dass ich sie angucke. In Brasilien da habe ich ja Sachen erlebt! Also, umso weiter man nördlich kommt, da sitzen die Leute ja teilweise so da im Restaurant ((Er starrt der Interviewerin an)) [...] Und gucken einem die ganze Zeit nur in die Augen ((lachen)) und gucken richtig starr, was wir in Deutschland als belastend empfinden. Auch dann teilweise als, wie sagt man, als Aggression. Also, sozusagen, wenn mich jemand so lange anguckt, dann hat der irgendein Problem mit mir. /ehm/.. Die Leute [in Brasilien], generell, haben keine Probleme mit dem Augenkontakt, wenn die Leute (einem?) angucken und so direkt starren. [...] Und in Bars und in Clubs sind die ja so /eh/.. ist das so auffällig mit dem Augenkontakt also das meine... es ist sehr stark mit dem... Auch diese Kommunikation beginnen, auch wenn man mal Interesse bekundet durch Augenkontakt, das ist mir hier in Deutschland, bin ich da noch nie dahinter gestiegen wie das funktioniert mit den Mädels. Bis heute nicht. [27-year-old German Masters student in Political Sciences (high-school degree)]

Although bewildered at the steady eye contact of Brazilians, Karl described further in his interview how this form of eye contact in comparison with the alternating form of eye contact of Germans more clearly conveys the individual's interest in courtship.

Karl: Weil mir dann die deutschen Mädels immer erzählen: "Ja, ich hab ihn so lange angeguckt und er ist gar nicht zu mir rübergekommen". Ich habe das noch nie mitbekommen, dass mich hier in Deutschland ein Mädchel irgendwie so lange angeguckt hätte, wo ich sage die will vielleicht was von mir oder so, weil die das immer verstecken. Also versteckt tun. Und in Brasilien habe ich immer die Erfahrung gemacht, sie gucken einen ziemlich direkt an. [...] Rio zum Beispiel, also Rio ist ja.. wenn man da auch irgendwo am Strand sitzt und so und die Leute gucken. Besonders die Mädels die gucken einen an. Da ist manchmal schon fast eine Aufforderung drin in dem Blick, so "Komm mal rüber" oder so. [...] Ist interessant und ist natürlich sehr ermutigend als Mann. Man ist nicht so unsicher, wenn man dann ein Mädchel anspricht. Wenn die einen die ganze Zeit angeguckt hat dann weiß man, man geht nicht hin und ist der totale Trottel. Die hat schon irgendein Interesse oder so. /eh/ Und über diese Körpersprache sowieso anders, aber Augenkontakt beim Kennenlernen ist auf jeden Fall sehr anders auch. [27-year-old German Masters student in Political Sciences (high-school degree)]

João affirmed like Karl that eye contact in Brazil is more direct, while in Germany it is more discreet. According to him, the eye contact performed in Brazil clearly expresses courtship intentions, while in Germany the eye contact is more shy and tend to leave doubts about the other's intentions.

João: Eu acho que no Brasil é mais direto, e aqui, acho que é uma coisa mais discreta, mais suave. No Brasil, eu acho que é bem mais direto. A brasileira é bem, mostra logo o que ela quer. E aqui, sei lá, muitas vezes um pouco mais tímida, pouco mais recatada. Você não tem certeza o que ela está pensando. Com a brasileira, você já sabe o que é. Ela não deixa dúvida do que ela quer. [30-year-old Brazilian journalist (Bachelors degree)]

Jens, when discussing eye contact, argued that the look in Brazil expresses more “desire” than the look in Germany, which, on the other hand, tends to be “more skeptical, scrutinizing”. According to him, both looks express interest, but the look in Germany sustains “more distance” between the partners. As he explained further, the alternating eye contact performed in Germany is less inviting to approach than the steady eye contact performed in Brazil. Jens described the eye contact of women in Germany as suggesting “to keep your distance”, like they are saying “Not like that! And not so easy!”.

Jens: [...] aber die Blicke drücken etwas Anderes aus. In Brasilien habe ich den Eindruck, ist es mehr.. der Blick drückt mehr Begierde vielleicht auch aus.. Und hier ist der Blick der Frau mir als Mann gegenüber häufig skeptischer, prüfender. .. Nicht weniger interessiert. Vielleicht an irgendwas mehr. Nicht weniger, nicht mehr als in Brasilien, aber der Blick suggeriert gleich immer noch mehr Distanz. [...] Und häufig bewusst, was ich in den letzten Tagen, der letzten Woche erlebt habe, dass schon häufig Frauen dann schauen und dann guckt man.. Oder mir ist einmal in der S-Bahn beim Lesen, geguckt, da fühlte sich eine ertappt und guckte sofort weg. Ich weiß nicht, ob das so in Brasilien, ob die da nicht.. zumindest nicht gleich danach wieder schauen würde. Der war es unangenehm, geschaut zu haben. .. Das ist in Brasilien auch manchmal so, klar. ((lachend)) Aber die Blicke mancher Frauen hier empfinde ich als selbst.. Nein, die sind nicht selbstbewusster. Also in Brasilien empfinde ich die Frau auch als sehr selbstbestimmt. .. Zu sagen: 'Ich bestimme über meine Lust! Heute will ich vielleicht etwas haben, oder auch nicht. Und bestimme und das will ich zeigen.' Also, erst einmal über den Blick. Interesse.. Hier ist auch die Frau, habe ich den Eindruck, in Berlin.. teilt einem auch mit: 'Habe Interesse, aber.. bleibt auf Distanz'. Aber gucken auch stark.. Ich empfinde hier auch starke Blicke. .. Selbstbestimmte, aber die haben immer noch mehrere Schwingungen drin. Sie suggerieren gleich eine Distanz. Irgendwie als ob sie sagen wollten: 'So nicht! Und nicht so einfach!' .. [28-year-old German Masters student in Sociology (high-school degree)]

Some respondents, like Karl in his statement on page 93, also praised the tendency of individuals in Brazil to apply more body language during courtship in order to express their interest in the other. Juliana, when describing a situation of courtship, asserted that Germans tend to provide fewer signs of interest in comparison with Brazilians, and according to her, they tend to rely above all on eye contact to express their interest. To explain her point, Juliana described a situation of courtship in Germany, in which she was on the street with a German female friend, and a man that she had already been flirting with passed them by and looked at her. Juliana observed that for her German friend the man’s look was a great expression of interest and since she did not know their common history she regarded his act as bothersome. According to Juliana, eye contact in Germany has a stronger significance than in Brazil, where people tend to disregard it. For her, men in Brazil tend to accompany eye contact with other physical gestures, using the whole body, while in Germany, she observes, the look must carry everything that the body does not communicate.

Juliana: É. Mas é algo assim, quando ele [o alemão] olha, aquilo tem significado para ele. E para gente [brasileiras] não. A gente nem pensa. Por exemplo, aqui perto da minha casa tem um sapateiro, e eu acho ele muito bonito. Sempre quando eu passo, eu olho ele e ele me olha. Outro dia eu estava com a Anne na rua e o sapateiro passou de bicicleta e ficou me olhando. A Anne reparou e me perguntou quem era, pois chamou a atenção dela. Então, ele olhou, e isso gerou um fato! 'Quem é esse cara da bicicleta que te olhou?' Por que ela se sentiu incomodada com o fato do cara ficar olhando! Então assim, ninguém falou nada. O olhar aqui tem muito peso, né. Ela queria saber quem era e porque ele olhou, porque na verdade, assim, ela se sentiu incomodada. Eu achei tudo muito engraçado. [...] No Brasil é tudo! O cara olha, ele mexe a boca, ele sorri. Ele mexe o corpo. É um exagero de sinais. ((risos)) Eu acho, em comparação com aqui. [...] quando começa uma paquera [no Brasil], ela extrapola o olhar. É tudo assim, é um sorriso. O cara olha, ele sorri. É

um gesto, é um jeito, que mexe como o corpo inteiro da pessoa. É um jeito de olhar, é uma brincadeira com a mão. Quando você passa é um comentário, que é uma deixa para você falar. Então, existe todo um envolvimento maior. Aqui não! É o olhar. E as outras coisas? Tá bom ele olhou! E aí? 'Mas ele olhou.' E aí esse olhar tem que ganhar esse peso inteiro que o corpo não comunica. [31-year-old Brazilian PhD student in Sociology (Masters degree)]

Sybille also praised the greater use of body language by Brazilians during courtship by noticing that while Germans tend to stand stiffly along the edges of the dance floor observing the dancers, Brazilians tend to walk through the place more and to present more body language than Germans.

Sybille: .. /ehm/ Also, die deutschen Männer stehen ja immer so ganz steif am Rand der Tanzfläche oder bewegen sich nicht. Während die Brasilianer ein bisschen mehr durch die Gegend laufen. Und haben dann auch überhaupt Körpersprache. Also, die deutsche Körpersprache existiert ja nicht. [25-year-old German Masters student in Law (high-school degree)]

Tiago observed that German women show less signs of interest during courtship than Brazilian women. According to him, Brazilians present a more spontaneous smile and a sexier look than Germans, who present a tilt of the head to the side as the main expression of interest. He also mentioned that Germans give up on courtship fairly quickly, as if they are ashamed of engaging in it.

Tiago: *Muito menos. [As mulheres na Alemanha] Demonstram muito menos que estão a fim. Assim, elas falam, conversam. Numa situação de paquera, certo? Elas são muito mais discretas para paquerar e.. Quando elas paqueram, elas também desistem bem fácil assim, sabe? Elas meio que se envergonham rápido, assim, de estar fazendo aquilo. Elas meio que desistem fácil. Já a brasileira, na paquera, ela é muito mais clara, na paquera. Ela dá mais sinais, quer dizer, os sinais são mais claros. O tipo de sinal é mais claro. O sorriso mais espontâneo, o olhar é mais sexy, entendeu? Na Alemanha, uma batida de cabeça assim ((inclinou a cabeça uns 45° para a esquerda)) já bastou. Elas fazem muito assim, né. Dão uma caidinha com cabeça. Pronto, já é um sinal. [39-year-old Brazilian visual artist (Masters degree)]*

As the observations above suggest, in order to express their interest in courtship it seems that individuals in Germany tend to use more alternating eye contact and less body language, while individuals in Brazil tend to establish steadier eye contact, to use more body language and to express their sexual desire more openly. And as the reports of the respondents indicate, the subtler nature of the expressions of interest in Germany seems to leave more doubts as to the common attraction between the parties during the prelude phase than the open expression of interest displayed by individuals in Brazil.

Another difference observed and reported by respondents in this phase is that while individuals in Germany would hardly approach someone directly without previous eye contact, individuals in Brazil seem to have no problem in skipping it. Ulla, for example, when questioned if she would approach someone without previous eye contact, observed that in a courtship situation with a fellow German she would not do it:

Interviewerin: Würdest du jemanden ansprechen ohne Augenkontakt vorher zu haben?

Ulla: In einer Flirtsituation?

Interviewerin: Ja.

Ulla: Mit einem Deutschen?

Interviewerin: Ja.

Ulla: *Nein.* [25-year-old German Masters student in Literary and Cultural Studies (high-school degree)]

When asked if it is possible to approach someone without previous eye contact, Karl described it is a question of bravery and said that he would not do it, since for him it is important to have eye contact first, even if he has to force it by placing himself in the field of vision of the person.

Karl: *Wenn man sehr mutig ist. ((lachen)) [...] Kann man das machen. [...] Aber.. also ich von meinem Selbstverständnis (her), würde das nicht machen.. dass ich einfach zu einem Mädels hingehe, wenn ich noch nicht mal Augenkontakt mit ihr hatte. Also ich würde dann zumindest den Augenkontakt suchen und irgendwie gucken und irgendwie das sie mich schon mal gesehen hat. Und dann hingehen. .. Aber einfach ansprechen? Direkt? [...] Aber jetzt direkt mit der Intension, einfach.. sie steht irgendwo, man geht hin und spricht sie einfach an. Das ist denke ich.. nicht so schnell möglich.* [27-year-old German Masters student in Political Sciences (high-school degree)]

Brazilian respondents, on the other hand, stated that they tend to approach people without previous eye contact. Marcelo, for example, reported how in Brazil people tend more to approach the other verbally, while in Germany they tend to establish eye contact first:

Marcelo: *De paquera? De paquera aqui é mais o olhar mesmo... no Brasil é estranho, no Brasil eu acho que... tem aquele negócio de falar, assim, sabe, de chegar mais na pessoa. Aqui é mais para o olhar, assim...* [31-year-old Brazilian dance tutor (high-school degree)]

Julho declared that he prefers to approach someone directly verbally than to establish eye contact. According to him, he “is no Brad Pitt”; if he relied only on his physical appearance to attract someone in Germany, he would stay alone for too long.

Julho: *[...] Eu não espero muito pelo contato ocular não. Se for esperar isso na Alemanha, eu fico muito tempo sozinho. Não sou nenhum Brad Pitt. ((risos))* [29-year-old Brazilian Masters student in Journalism (Bachelors degree)]

The higher tendency among individuals in Brazil to skip the prelude phase, and therefore to approach the admired persons verbally without previous eye contact, was also noticed by German respondents. For example, Lina, when asked whether she had already been approached by someone without previous eye contact, corroborated this and noticed that in Brazil a unilateral flirting situation was much more common than in Germany.

Lina: *Ja, schon. Glaube schon. Kommt einfach jemand an. Also, in Brasilien ist mir das z. B. oft passiert. Ich stand irgendwo rum. Völlig unbedarft und es kommt jemand an auf der Straße so und fragt mich irgendwas. Und den habe ich vorher nicht gesehen oder so. Oder der hat vorher keinen Augenkontakt zu mir aufgenommen. Und ich wollte das auch gar nicht. Das ist mir in Brasilien oft passiert, dass ich angesprochen worden bin in einer Flirtsituation die aber einseitig war. Also, ich habe da mit niemandem geflirtet. Es kam aber einfach jemand zu mir und hat mich angequatscht. Dann war ich halt: ‚Hä? Was willst du denn jetzt?‘ Ja. Also, doch ja. Also, ich meinte nur, wenn er mich dann anspricht, dann guckt er mich ja an. Dann muss man ja miteinander reden. Aber ohne Augenkontakt vorher. [...] [in Deutschland] Passiert auch. Auf Partys. Aber weniger. Also, generell glaube ich [wenig].* [25-year-old German Bachelors student in music (high-school degree)]

Beate, who also stated that it is necessary to have eye contact before approaching someone, when asked if she had been approached in Brazil without previous eye contact confirmed this and reported, like Lina, how she experienced it as an alarming situation.

Interviewerin: *Ist notwendig Augenkontakt zu haben um jemand anzusprechen?*

Beate: *Ja, würde ich schon sagen. Also für mich schon, ja. Und in beiden Ländern.*

Interviewerin: *Ok, dann in Brasilien warst du nicht angesprochen, ohne dass jemand dich vorher in die Augen geguckt hat?*

Beate: *Ja, doch. Ich habe jetzt, gerade als ich gesagt habe es wäre gleich, dacht ich so, ach quatsch, manchmal kommt auch einfach einer an und sagt dir hallo und du denkst 'Häh? Hilfe!'. [27-year-old German language teacher and PhD student in Linguistics (Masters degree)]*

Jens observed that for him it is necessary to exchange eye contact before approaching someone, because he needs to be sure that the woman has some interest in him before coming closer. According to him, eye contact in Germany takes three steps at least, first to observe the persons in the room, second to look at the chosen person, and third to exchange eye contact in order to confirm the common interest in courtship.

Jens: *Ja. ... Ach so! Für mich immer nur. Also ich würde keinen ansprechen, der mich nicht vorher gesehen hat. Von dem ich nicht wüsste, der hat mich gesehen. Und ich brauche zumindest die Gewissheit, dass diese Person Interesse an mir hat und nicht gleich sagen würde: Was willst du? [...] Dass man drei Mal guckt. Drei Mal diese Blicke. Und eine Dauerhaftigkeit. Vielleicht auch ein Lächeln. .. Aber eigentlich sind es immer drei Blicke. Zumindest in Deutschland. Das erste Mal: den Raum prüfen. Das zweite Mal ist: da war doch was. Und das dritte Mal: Mensch jetzt will ich ihm auch was signalisieren. .. Der dritte Blick erfolgt aber nur nach dem Zweiten, wenn der Zweite der Person gezeigt hat: Ah, interessant, kennenlernen. Und dann kommt der dritte Blick: Hallo, ich will dich kennenlernen. Der ist jetzt nicht so der.. Aber der Dritte bedeutet dann: Na, du hast mich doch gesehen. Ich widerstehe deinem Blick, also: Wir sind auf der gleichen Ebene. [28-year-old German Masters student in Sociology (high-school degree)]*

It seems that individuals in Germany not only tend to regard eye contact as more necessary before approaching someone than individuals in Brazil do, they also tend to exchange eye contact for a longer time before approaching someone verbally than individuals in Brazil do. Beate, for example, observed in her interview that in Brazil the courtship process happens faster than in Germany, and that a response to a single eye contact in Brazil is enough for men to come closer and ask for a name and telephone number. As she suggested, in Brazil women receive more advances from men than in Germany. Further in her interview, Beate noted that eye contact in both countries works as an invitation to coming together; however, while Germans exchange eye contact for a longer time before approaching someone verbally, Brazilians may approach someone verbally also after unintentional eye contact, therefore she joked in her interview by stating that she started to walk in Brazil with her hands in front of her eyes in order to avoid unsolicited approaches.

Beate: *Und in Brasilien /ehm/.. geht das glaube ich schon schneller. Also das fängt sicherlich auch damit an, dass du irgendwie Augenkontakt hast. Aber nein, doch, genau, z. B. also, wenn ich abends irgendwie weg war oder so und ich den Fehler gemacht habe, einen Augenkontakt zu erwidern von irgendeinem Kerl, hat er sich gleich gedacht "juhu das war die Einladung, ich kann sie jetzt ansprechen". Und dann kam er gleich an und die erste Frage war, was weiß ich, wie du heißt und die zweite Frage war, kann ich deine Telefonnummer haben. [...] Und /ehm/ das hat manchmal doch ein bisschen.. naja, es war gewöhnungsbedürftig, dass man ein bisschen weniger in Ruhe gelassen wird eigentlich als in Deutschland. [...] Ja, doch, dann z. B. mit dem Augenkontakt eben in Brasilien ist es sozusagen gleich, ja ich bin bereit, du kannst kommen und mit mir reden. Und dann bin ich irgendwann auch nur noch so, mit (der) Hand vor den Augen, sozusagen, rumgelaufen. Bloß nicht mehr irgendjemanden angucken, sonst kommen die gleich alle in Scharen hinterher. [...] Und das ist in Deutschland da, glaube ich, ein bisschen... lockerer. Da kann man öfter gucken ohne dass der Mann gleich denkt "alles klar, ich darf jetzt in den Kampf und los geht's" und ansprechen und.. ja. [27-year-old German language teacher and PhD student in Linguistics (Masters degree)]*

Patrícia noticed that the prelude phase in Germany lasts much longer than in Brazil, and that Germans may also remain at the stage of eye contact only, without approaching the person

verbally, while Brazilians may approach the person verbally even when eye contact was inadvertent.

Patrícia: *[A troca de olhar] Aqui mais longo, né? Aqui às vezes não sai do olhar! De o cara ficar te olhando a noite inteira e não faz nada. Eu acho. [...] Comigo nunca aconteceu [na Alemanha] de alguém chegar em mim sem ter rolado um olhar antes ou überhaupt, assim, acontece muito pouco. Os caras até vêm conversar, mas pouco, bem pouco viu. [...] No Brasil muito mais, nossa! Às vezes você olha até sem querer "Putá que pariu, o cara já está vindo."* [30-year-old Brazilian primary school teacher (Bachelors degree)]

Ruth also observed that in Germany people spend more time observing each other, while in Brazil a single smile may be enough for someone to approach.

Ruth: *Ja. Also, in Deutschland guckt man sich glaube ich länger an bevor man, keine Ahnung, irgendwie da zu irgendwelchen Aktionen startet. Und ich glaube mit Brasilianern ist das glaube ich nicht so. Also, ich glaube da reicht. Sagen wir mal einmal kurz Lächeln und dann könnte es aber auch sein, dass der Mann da schon danebensteht.* [31-year-old German research assistant and PhD student in Linguistics (Masters degree)]

The tendency among Germans to spend more time exchanging eye contact can also be observed in their own descriptions of their courtship behavior. Jens, when describing how he met one of his German ex-girlfriends, described how they exchanged eye contact for two and half hours before they engaged in a conversation.

Jens: */eh/ Meine letzte Deutsche Freundin hat einmal in einer Bar.. Wir kannten uns auch vorher über.. Das ist so ein Club so ein Hausprojekt und ich hatte sie schon einmal ein Jahr vorher gesehen, fand sie niedlich, schön. Und sie hat mich an diesem Abend, glaube ich, 2 1/2 Stunden angeguckt. Ich hatte aber da eine Gruppe, ein Plenum. Hat mir zugelächelt. Da habe ich mich irgendwann neben sie gesetzt. Aber es war sie, die mir.. Die mich angelächelt hat. Und dann, das war ein Zunicken, ein wohlwollendes Zunicken. Und dann nach 1 1/2 Stunden auch enttäuschende Blicke, dass ich lahm bin und mich nicht traue und sie nicht anspreche. Nach 2 1/2 Stunden habe ich es dann aber geschafft ((lachend)). Alle Freunde waren weg etc. und dann konnte ich auch.* [28-year-old German Masters student in Sociology (high-school degree)]

It seems that individuals in Germany tend to attribute more importance to the establishment of eye contact before approaching someone and tend to hold this nonverbal interaction for a longer time than individuals in Brazil, leading consequently to a longer prelude phase among the former than among the latter.

Nevertheless, if the prelude phase is successful in both regions, i.e. both parties manage to identify a common interest in courtship through body language, they tend to approach one another, as will be described next.

5.2. The approach phase

This phase covers the coming together, i.e. how individuals start a conversation, what they talk about, the preliminary physical contact and the definition of the encounter. As the observations of events for singles in Germany and in Brazil and the reports of respondents suggest, it seems that men are the ones who usually initiate the approach by coming closer. In both regions at the singles events women could also be observed taking the initiative and approaching men; however, as the reports of respondents suggests this seemed more likely

to occur in Germany than in Brazil. Ruth, for example, when describing courtship in Germany noticed humorously that the parties tend to exchange eye contact for too long, and that if the woman is not modern, she tends to wait for the man to approach her, and it can happen then that they only exchange eye contact the whole evening and nothing else happens. Although Ruth did not explicitly describe the behavior of women approaching men, she suggested that in Germany there is this possibility. Further in her interview, she stated that in Brazil there is something like an “unwritten law” that says that a woman should not approach men, and those who disregard it are regarded as “suspect” .

***Ruth:** Man guckt, man guckt, man guckt, man guckt. Und dann (hebt man auf?) Und dann guckt man und guckt man und guckt man ((lachend)). Und /ehm/ wenn jetzt, sagen wir mal, es sich nicht um eine deutsche Frau handelt die besonders modern ist. Dann wird die deutsche Frau also warten bis der Mann ankommt. [...] Und nicht hingehen. Und wenn man halt den ganzen Abend geguckt hat und da ist nichts passiert dann ist halt nichts passiert. Dann geht man halt nach Hause. So. Und ich weiß nicht, ob das dann bei Brasilianern ähnlich wäre. Auf jeden Fall läuft das so. Also, als Frau geht man nicht zu einem Mann [in Brasilien]. Das ist glaube ich ungeschriebenes Gesetz. Und wenn Frauen das machen, dann sind die eher als suspekt einzustufen. [31-year-old German research assistant and PhD student in Linguistics (Masters degree)]*

Sybille, like Ruth, also argued that men in Germany are “slightly slow” in approaching women; therefore, she observed, she is usually the one who approaches during courtship.

***Sybille:** Also, in Deutschland bin ich auch meistens die, die den ersten Schritt macht. Die Männer sind ein bisschen langsam. [25-year-old German Masters student in Law (high-school degree)]*

Beate, like Ruth, reported in her interview that in her interactions with Brazilian women she observed that although they may give signs of interest like looking and smiling at men during courtship, she noticed that they expect men to be the ones to approach them.

***Beate:** Also ich finde, in Brasilien ist es ja auch schon so, dass der Mann eigentlich ansprechen muss. Also das habe ich dann so ein bisschen gemerkt, wenn ich auch mit anderen Mädels gesprochen habe und so, die Frau kann zwar gucken und lächeln, aber der Mann der muss schon ankommen und reden. [27-year-old German language teacher and PhD student in Linguistics (Masters degree)]*

After describing the stages of eye contact – in his statement on page 97 – Jens was asked if a person could afterwards be approached. He answered that he could not do it. He observed then, that at the end of his trip in Brazil he attempted to approach women and he may also have attempted it sometimes in Germany, but none of those courtship encounters turned into a relationship, and he observed that in his life only courtship encounters initiated by women, whether in Germany or in Brazil, led to relationships. He admitted at the end of his statement that he was always afraid that the women would feel bothered if he took the initiative to approach them.

***Jens:** Ich kann so etwas nicht. .. Ich traue mich so etwas nicht. ((lachend)) [...] Zum Schluss schon in Brasilien. Oder ich hatte es dann zwischenzeitlich schon so drauf. Aber die großen Beziehungen haben sich bei mir nie so ergeben. Eigentlich hat immer mich die Frau angesprochen. Immer eingeladen. Auch in Brasilien. Immer in meinem Leben. Wenn etwas Längerfristiges daraus wurde. War es immer die Frau. .. Ich hatte immer Angst jemanden zu beleidigen. .. Jemandem zu nahe zu treten, der das eigentlich gar nicht will. [28-year-old German Masters student in Sociology (high-school degree)]*

Rosa, when reporting about the conduct of men during courtship, noticed that every man needs assurance to approach a women and that women provide it by giving signs of interest.

However, according to her, while men in Brazil need just a little bit of assurance to approach a woman, men in Germany need to be certain of her interest. She believes that men in Germany tend to feel more comfortable when women take the initiative to approach them verbally.

Rosa: /ehm/ Eu às vezes acho que.. No Brasil, uma vez um amigo meu me falou isso “O homem não gosta de vir também, não é todo homem também que se atira assim, e depois leva o maior toco na cara.” Ninguém gosta. Então ele gosta de vir já com uma certa segurança. Eu diria que os alemães, eles não querem uma certa segurança. Eles querem saber mesmo no que vai dar. Então, eu acho que eles se sentem até mais confortáveis, se a mulher der o primeiro passo. Eu acho que eles se sentem até mais confortável. [...] Eu não digo nem de tipo, é a mulher quem vai se inclinar para dar o primeiro beijo, não. Mas pelo menos que “oi”, de repente parta da parte feminina. Porque aí já aquele ‘ufa, ela veio falar comigo. Ai, um trabalho a menos. Segurança. Ela veio falar comigo. Então eu posso dar corda, porque ela não veio falar comigo à toa, né.” Ou deu um risinho, alguma coisa. Eu acho que o homem aqui ainda precisa de mais segurança do que no Brasil para chegar em cima.
[38-year-old Brazilian Magister student in Art History (Bachelors degree)]

As could be observed at the events for singles in Germany, after exchanging eye contact for a longer time, people tend more to meet at the dance floor, the bar or the smoking area than to approach the other person directly. In Brazil, on the other hand, individuals at the events for singles tended to approach each other directly.

It seems that the observation in the prelude phase – that individuals in Germany tend to be subtler than individuals in Brazil when expressing their interest in courtship – tends to repeat itself in the approach phase. Indeed, many respondents also described the fact that it is not only a matter of being subtle in the expression of interest in Germany, but it is also necessary to pretend that the approach was a casual encounter in order to disguise one’s interest in courtship. In Brazil, on the other hand, respondents reported how an open expression of interest – by addressing the admired person directly or complimenting their physical appearance – is common. Sybille, for example, when describing courtship in Germany, observed that it starts first with eye contact, which must be subtle, like “looking at the other discreetly from the side”, and the look continues until the other reacts and responds with eye contact. After the parties have exchanged glances about ten times, she observed, they walk “inconspicuously” in the same direction, since it must look like they were going to do something, like going to the bar or the toilet. According to her the first verbal exchange is usually a “dull saying”, like asking for a cigarette.

Sybille: ../ehm/ Also Flirten auf jeden Fall erstmal über Augenkontakt, auch. .. Und dann /ehm/ /ehm/, na ja man guckt den anderen immer so unauffällig von der Seite an bis der irgendwann reagiert und auch mal zurückguckt. So, und dann guckt man sich ungefähr zehn Mal an und dann geht man unauffällig in die Richtung, weil man so tut als würde man da jetzt irgendwas machen wollen. So, in einer Bar zum Beispiel. Wenn man. Dann geht man auf das Klo, wenn er in Richtung Klo steht, oder so. Und /ehm/ so der erste Kontakt kommt dann meistens über irgendeinen blöden Spruch. Die Zigarette ist meistens noch ein guter. Hast du eine Zigarette für mich. So. [25-year-old German Masters student in Law (high-school degree)]

Later in her interview, when asked if Germans must conceal their interest during courtship, she agreed, and observed that an open expression of interest, as in the Brazilian fashion, is regarded by Germans as too “pushy” .

Interviewerin: Würdest du sagen, dass die Deutschen müssen verstecken, dass sie ein Interesse haben?

Sybille: *Ja, jaja. Sonst findet man das zu aufdringlich. Und mir war das auch in Brasilien immer ein bisschen zu aufdringlich. [25-year-old German Masters student in Law (high-school degree)]*

Beate also emphasized that in Germany the flirtation is usually subtle. She observed that at the beginning of courtship, when people have not yet spoken to each other, they tend to exchange eye contact, smile and look away, then do something else, and then exchange eye contact once again and so on. She noticed that a flirtation can also happen on the telephone and that people would start courtship with a verbal exchange, however even then they would be subtle by making a few innocuous jokes, but not a compliment.

Beate: *Hm. ((lachen)).. ((Räuspern)) Also ich würde sagen, in Deutschland /ehm/... läuft die meistens ein bisschen subtiler. Ich würde sagen, da ist es dann doch erst mal wirklich nur so ein bisschen sich angucken und dann mal zulächeln und dann wieder weggucken und dann wieder Anderes machen. Und dann wieder hingucken. /ehm/ Zumindest dann, wenn man nicht miteinander spricht. Und ich glaube, auch wenn man, weil man kann ja auch flirten was weiß ich, man telefoniert eigentlich mit irgendwie, was weiß ich, man ruft irgendwo an um etwas zu bestellen und man kann ja auch durchaus so flirten. Und ich glaube auch da ist es eher vielleicht durch irgendwelche unverfänglichen Witze, durch, nicht Komplimente oder so was, sondern ich glaube, es ist relativ, wirklich mit ganz wenigen Sachen wird so geflirtet in Deutschland. Würde ich sagen. Zumindest das Anfangsstadium. [27-year-old German language teacher and PhD student in Linguistics (Masters degree)]*

Detlev, when reporting about the differences in courtship in Germany and in Brazil also observed that in the former the signs of interest are more “discreet” than in the latter, like starting a conversation, looking frequently at the admired person or sitting beside him/her and observing if he/she remains or go away. He observed further in his interview, that if the admired person does not understand his discreet signs of interest, then she is not suitable for him.

Detlev: *É, nos meus casos, né, a minha experiência de ter conhecido pessoa, né, num jogo de olhar também, mostrar de maneira muito discreta pra não se machucar, quando o outro não quer interesse. [...] Você bate um papo e pelos gestos você olha um pouco mais pra pessoa, você olha pro lado, você senta um do lado do outro e depois de cinco minutos uma pessoa vai sentar no, depois de mais um intervalo não senta mais do lado. Você já percebe. [...] É, uma linguagem verbal e corporal em conjunto, que eu acho que. Nas minhas experiências é igual. Eu não senti diferencial nessa fase. Depois, quando começa realmente, quando as pessoas admitem, né, que há um interesse um no outro, um interesse mútuo, aí entra esses aspectos que eu mencionei, né, esse jogo mais, mais a distância, esse olhar um pouco mais discreto. Os sinais são mais discretos lá. São existentes. Você pode ter a ideia, atrás disso que eu percebi lá, se o outro não entender os meus sinais discretos, aí nem quero. Não é adequado pra mim.. [37-year-old German higher-education teacher (PhD degree)]*

Karl, when describing how he approaches someone verbally after successful eye contact, stated that it is necessary to enact a scene. If the woman is at the bar and she has not yet seen the man, he could orchestrate a casual encounter like standing next to her at the bar to buy a beer, and as Karl ironically described, he could then “casually” start a conversation with the admired person.

Karl: *[...] Man macht das, man inszeniert ja dann eine Szene. Also sie steht an der Bar und sie hat einen noch nicht gesehen, dann tut man so als würde man sich gerade in dem Moment ein Bier kaufen und dann ist man halt neben ihr und kommt mit ihr ((ironisch)) zufällig ins Gespräch. Also so natürlich schon. [27-year-old German Masters student in Political Sciences (high-school degree)]*

Lina, when reporting how people approach each other verbally, stated that while Germans tend more to start a conversation about ordinary things, Brazilians tend more to make

compliments on physical appearance, like saying “Hi babe, how are you?”. According to her, such open expressions of interest used by Brazilians when approaching someone tend to be disliked by Germans.

Lina: Worüber spricht man? .. Hallo /ehm/ Warum bist du hier oder wen. Auf einer privaten Feier. Wen kennst du hier, oder. Oder wie heißt du. Vielleicht schon. Also, kennen lernen. .. Und in Brasilien kommt eher eine Anmache schnell. Also, " E ai gatinha, tudo bem?". So. [...] Also, ich würde jetzt im deutschen sagen eher Anmache. Also, Anmachspruch. Anbackerspruch. [...] Das wird dann hier eher als platte Anmache. [...] Nicht gerne gesehen. [25-year-old German Bachelors student in music (high-school degree)]

Julho also observed that in Germany a direct approach is not successful. According to him, a direct approach is to go straight to the person at the moment the eyes first meet or to come closer also without previous eye contact, and to address the person by making a compliment. Although in Brazil a direct approach works, in Germany, Julho observes, it is “repellent”. He noticed that in Brazil women tend to admire such direct approaches, since they regard the man as someone who knows what he wants. Julho observed further, that while women in Brazil want to be chosen, women in Germany want things to happen “haphazardly”, and therefore in the latter case it is necessary to create casual encounters. He described how in Germany, when he sees an interesting woman, he observes her until a situation arises that enables him to pretend that it was a “casual” encounter. He observed that if a man in Germany sees an interesting woman in the library and attempts to approach her directly there, he would probably be “mistreated”, but if he places himself behind her in the line of the canteen and comments that he thought about ordering the same that she is having but was unsure about it and asks her if it was tasty, the woman will open up to him. As Julho observed, in Germany it is harder to initiate contact, but when it happens it is not hard to go further. According to him, men in Germany rarely attempt to initiate a conversation with a woman and whoever manages to do so has already won half of the battle.

Julho: Abordagem direta é você chegar numa pessoa diretamente, sem ela ter te percebido antes, ou você olhar, ela te olhar e você caminhar diretamente até ela e falar “Oi, eu achei você uma graça.” Ou “Oi, não sei o que, não sei o que.” Isso aqui é repelente. E no Brasil isso funcionava bem, as mulheres até admiram isso “Pô, esse cara é um cara que sabe o que quer. E ele me escolheu.” As mulheres gostam de ser escolhidas no Brasil. E aqui não. As pessoas gostam que as coisas aconteçam por a c a s o. E é engraçado, né, ao mesmo tempo em que elas planejam tudo, elas supervalorizam o acaso, a espontaneidade. Na paquera, isso é bem evidente. Então, o que que acontece, criam-se situações de acaso. Às vezes eu olho uma mulher, e três quadras a diante, quando finalmente foi criada uma situação que vai parecer que foi por acaso, eu falo com ela. Muitas vezes funciona. E eu tenho certeza de que não teria funcionado se eu, sabe, três quadras atrás. Então, funciona, por exemplo, um exemplo assim.. Você entra na biblioteca e você vê alguém que você imediatamente achou interessante. Se você chegar naquela pessoa, ela vai te tratar super mal. Mas se você der um jeito de ficar atrás dela na fila da cantina e comentar que você queria um sanduíche igual o dela, mas não teve coragem, e queria saber se aquele é bom. Então pronto, as portas estão abertas. É difícil você ter o contato com as pessoas. Mas depois que você tem o contato, não é tão difícil você seguir adiante. Porque são poucos os que chegam a ter esse contato. Porque a maioria dos homens vai encostar numa mulher numa fila, e não vai falar nada. Então, se você chegar e falar, pra elas já foi metade do caminho andado. [29-year-old Brazilian Masters student in Journalism (Bachelors degree)]

The observation of Lenz (2009:206) that a lack of common experiences leads the couple to sustain small talk in order to keep the conversation going during courtship seems to be true for both regional groups. Nevertheless, as the statements above already indicate, it seems that there are subjects that are more or less appropriate when approaching someone for each regional group. According to respondents it seems that while individuals in Germany tend to speak first about ordinary subjects and to approach intimate subjects later – revealing only then their courtship intentions – individuals in Brazil tend to approach more intimate subjects directly, therefore openly expressing their interest in courtship from the beginning on. Beate, for example, observed that Germans tend to speak first about ordinary subjects before they address intimate subjects, while Brazilians tend to start the conversation with compliments on physical appearance and to address intimate subjects more quickly, revealing their interest in courtship from the start. According to her, women in Germany tend to regard compliments at the beginning of courtship with disdain, since they expect men not to be so direct. For her, it is necessary to engage in a conversation first about something, like the band that is playing in the room. For these reasons, as she observed, the approach in Germany tends to last longer than in Brazil.

***Beate:** [...] Und dann ist es eigentlich, zumindest die paar Male mit denen ich dann mit jemanden gesprochen habe, waren schon relativ so.. "Na du siehst aber toll aus! Was machst du denn hier? Wer bist du denn?". Und eigentlich relativ schnell dann eben auch nach der Telefonnummer gefragt usw. Und in Deutschland.. war es schon meistens, ich bin aber auch nicht so ein Partygänger, /ehm/ aber, wenn ich weg war und da halt auf Veranstaltungen oder so, das ist schon eher so: "Ja, hm, was machst 'n du hier?". Also schon auch, aber nicht so persönlich. Also ich finde, in Brasilien wird es schneller persönlich und auch schneller Komplimente. Also in Deutschland, glaube ich, also zumindest aus meiner Erfahrung her, ist das nicht so, dass gleich einer ankommt und sagt: "Boah, du siehst toll aus und Wahnsinn!" Natürlich gibt es da auch diese Sprüche mit "oh du hast aber schöne Augen und so", aber, ich glaube eigentlich finden das die Frauen eher scheiße und denken dann "na, das ist ja einer" und drehen sich gleich weg. Also, ich glaube die Männer wissen schon, wenn sie in Deutschland eine Frau ansprechen müssen, geht das eigentlich nicht so plump, nicht so direkt. Da muss schon erst ein bisschen über irgendwas sich unterhalten werden, vielleicht auch: "Guck mal die Band. Die ist aber gut!". Also, in Deutschland dauert das ein bisschen länger würde ich sagen. [27-year-old German language teacher and PhD student in Linguistics (Masters degree)]*

Julho, when asked about the subjects raised in a courtship situation, also noticed that with Germans it takes longer to get to intimate subjects than with Brazilians.

***Julho:** Ah, eu acho que aqui a intimidade é muito é.. Precisa de muito mais tempo. Você vai conversar sobre coisas não tão pessoais na primeira abordagem. No Brasil não. No Brasil você conversa cinco minutos com alguém e já sabe por que ela terminou o último relacionamento. Coisas mais privadas mesmo. [29-year-old Brazilian Masters student in Journalism (Bachelors degree)]*

As the statements of German and Brazilian respondents indicated, it seems that information on family and relationship status seems to be perceived by both regional groups as intimate subjects, while factual descriptions – like age, job, study, place of residence, tastes and places visited – and discussions of public topics – like politics, news, science – seem to be perceived as ordinary subjects. Karl, for example, observed that tastes and preferences for cultural products such as music, authors and food are typical subjects approached by Germans in the first moments of a conversation, and it tends to be a superficial conversation. In Brazil, however, he observed that people move more quickly to personal subjects and tend to make compliments on physical appearance early on, such as "I saw you and found your dress so

beautiful, that I would like to speak to you", something that he would never attempt in Germany.

Karl: [...] Ja, man unterhält sich erst mal über allgemeine Sachen und dann vielleicht über Sachen die man gemeinsam mag. So "Das finde ich toll!", "Ja, die Musik finde ich auch gut", "Und dann war ich bei dem", "Ach, das ist ja interessant!", "Kennst du den?" und so. Und dann ist es genau der schwierige Punkt dann mal in den persönlichen Bereich zu kommen. Wenn man nämlich nur über unpersönliches redet, dann geht auch jede Faszination verloren. /eh/ Also z. B. super ist es ja über Essen zu reden ((lachen)). [...] Es tendiert dazu oberflächlich zu werden und man muss dann das..... Aber in Brasilien.. nein.. der Unterschied ist nicht wie das dann später wird. Der Unterschied ist, wie man anfängt. In Brasilien kann man schon persönlich anfangen das Gespräch. In Deutschland ist es schwierig, in einer Situation in der sie sich für ihn interessiert und er sich für sie, dass man sofort persönlich anfängt. Das man sofort sagt: "Ich habe dich gesehen und ich fand dein Kleid so toll, dass ich gerne mit dir sprechen wollte". Ich denke, das ist eine Sache die ich in Brasilien machen könnte, in Deutschland auf keinen Fall.. [27-year-old German Masters student in Political Sciences (high-school degree)]

Ulla, when describing the topics broached in a situation of courtship in Germany noticed that people tend to speak about "banal" subjects and that to speak about one's family is not usual, since it would be an obvious expression of interest in courtship. But one's job, place of origin or something that the person is doing at the moment, such as the book he/she is reading, are permitted subjects.

Ulla: Nein, das sind ganz andere Themen. Also es ist ja, wenn dich jemand anflirtet, dann kommen dann natürlich ganz andere Themen zum Einstieg um anzufangen sozusagen. Um irgendwie den Kontakt zu dem anderen herzustellen. Das sind natürlich ganz, ganz banale Themen einfach.

Interviewerin: Ok, aber du hast gesagt, man würde schon nicht über Familie sprechen.

Ulla: Mit jemandem der dich anflirtet?

Interviewerin: Ja.

Ulla: Nein! Ich wüsste gar nicht wie es da auf das Thema Familie kommen sollte.

Interviewerin: Man kann sagen: "Ah, hast du Geschwister?" und "Hast du eine kleine oder eine große Familie?", "Wohnen deine Eltern auch in Berlin, oder nicht?" Man könnte das auch fragen. Oder: "Wohnst du bei deinen Eltern oder wohnst du alleine?" [...]

Ulla: Ne. Es könnte sehr wohl vorkommen: "Bist du gebürtig aus Berlin?", aber nein, das würde doch auch keinen Sinn machen. Wenn dich jemand anflirten will und der fängt über deine Familie an zu reden. Der will doch bei dir bleiben. Also das wäre dann: "Na, und was machst du so? Studierst du? Aha, was studierst du denn? Wo kommst du denn gerade her? Oder fährst du jetzt nach Hause?" Aber das bleibt ja nur zwischen den beiden. Also nur die Grundzüge abtasten. Die Grundeigenschaften, die Eckdaten von der anderen Person. Einfach so: Was machst du, wo kommst du her, bist du hier geboren, oder was liest du da, ist das interessant das Buch, oder...? Aber nicht Familie. [25-year-old German Masters student in Literary and Cultural Studies (high-school degree)]

Sybille observed, like Ulla, that family is not a common subject in courtship. According to her, people attempt to make "intelligent observations" about what is happening in their context. She observed that day-to-day topics like the weather, or the place they are in, or the people around them are common subjects, and that one's job or studies are always important.

Sybille: Ja, Familie nicht so viel. Also, Familie ist so privat. Über Familie redet man eigentlich nicht viel. ((lachend)) Das kommt erst so nach einem halben Jahr vor. Also, die Familie. Nee, aber so Alltagsgespräche. So was man. Also, Wetter ist auch immer ein gutes Thema und der Club und die Leute und so was. Was man beruflich macht, ist auch immer wichtig. Was man studiert oder so. [...] Wie so sonderlich intelligente Bemerkungen über irgendwas was gerade aktuell da in dem Raum

ist oder so. Und dann davon irgendwas weiter anzuknüpfen. Also, man redet so nach einander her. Nicht so richtig über Themen. Sondern. Was gerade so im Raum steht eher. [25-year-old German Masters student in Law (high-school degree)]

Anika, when describing what Germans and Brazilians tend to talk about in a courtship encounter, also noticed that while the former tend to ask first for her name and to speak about their jobs, the place where they are, and to comment about the news, the latter tend to ask her first to dance, then to speak about more intimate subjects such as personal experiences, and only later to ask for her name.

Anika: *Bei deutschen Männern.. wie man heißt, was man macht, ob man schon öfter in dem Club war. Bei brasilianischen Männern 'willst du mit mir tanzen?'. Also, das sind meine Erfahrungen. Das wirklich dann erstmal das Tanzen. Und danach, ob man etwas trinken möchte und dann? ... Wie man heißt, kommt nicht schnell. ((lächend)) Also, das kommt erst später. Und, sonst ist es natürlich für mich Deutsche, wenn mich ein Brasilianer anspricht, da ist dann natürlich auch was er in Deutschland macht. [...] Was sie hier machen, ob sie sich wohl fühlen. ((lächend)) Je nachdem wie die Sprache auch ist, das Sprachniveau. Oder ob ich schon mal in Brasilien war, das sind dann eher diese Themen. Also, man tauscht sich dann eigentlich eher über die kulturellen Sachen aus, bevor man dann in das ganz Persönliche geht. [...] ich kenne Deutsche, die sehr, sehr ins Persönliche sehr schnell gehen. Wo ich schon überrascht bin und es gibt Andere die dann wirklich eher auf einer Ebene erstmal sehr lange bleiben bis sie ins Persönliche gehen. Also, da habe ich beide Erfahrungen schon gemacht. Bei Brasilianern habe ich schon das Gefühl das es schneller ins Persönliche geht. ((lächend)) Auch, wenn der Name erst danach gefragt wird. Aber, sonst ist das schon.. doch schneller. [31-year-old German special education teacher (Masters degree)]*

Lucia, when describing her second meeting with her German boyfriend, noticed how she was surprised by his interest in dialogue. Comparing this meeting with the one she had with her Brazilian ex-husband, Lucia observed that while the German wanted to grasp her intellect and hear her opinions on general subjects, like films, places visited and cultural differences, the Brazilian wanted to know more about her private life and experiences, like her sensual and affectional side, her relationship status, restaurants she used to go to and previous relationship stories.

Lucia: *[...] o homem brasileiro ele tem uma certa pressa, né, uma pressa maior, ele passa sempre pra assuntos mais é. Como é que eu vou dizer? Mais íntimos, né. Ele sempre já quer saber mais de você, se você está disponível. E ele [o alemão] não. Era um papo, assuntos, assuntos gerais, do mundo. Parece assim, vamos dizer. Agora me veio isso na cabeça. Tá parecendo que eu tô fazendo análise, que análise que é assim ((risos)). Quando você está com o brasileiro, ele está muito interessado em descobrir a tua, o teu lado sensual, carinhoso, sexual. Ele está conversando com você, mas ele está meio assim voltado pra isso. E ele, eu vi que ele estava muito mais preocupado com o meu conhecimento, entendeu, a minha intelectualidade, a minha abertura de cabeça, entendeu. Então eu via assim, que os dois de alguma forma, quando eles se interessam, né, não é qualquer homem que quer ficar com você ali. Vamos dizer, o brasileiro se interessou e ele se interessou. O brasileiro, ele está muito interessado nisso, né, assim, o que você já fez com outros relacionamentos ou. Até o meu ex-marido, eu me lembro que ele perguntou bastante também na primeira noite que ele saiu comigo. Até eu brincava com isso "Foi um interrogatório.". Mas dizendo assim, os papos não foram tão ricos, entendeu. Ele me perguntou que restaurante eu gostava, onde é que eu ia e tal. Mas com ele, a gente fazia altas discussões de repente de filmes, de viagens, das diferenças dos povos, entendeu, uma cosia assim b e m ampla. [47-year-old Brazilian English teacher and MBA student (Bachelors degree)]*

Further in her interview, Lucia also noticed that at the beginning of those relationships, while her German boyfriend wanted to know more about her achievements in life, her professional career, her tastes and interests, her Brazilian ex-husband was more interested in knowing about the people she knew, her family and social relations.

Lucia: [...] O que ele [o alemão] me perguntou nas primeiras vezes? Ele perguntou muito sobre o meu trabalho. Ele se interessou muito em saber o que eu fazia. Mas não em nível de salário, de. Saber o que eu tinha estudado, o que eu tinha feito, né. Ele gostou muito de saber de viagem, se interessou muito em saber sobre as minhas viagens. [...] Mas ele não tava tão interessado nas minhas relações passadas não. Tava mais interessado, assim, na minha experiência de vida mesmo, isso que interessava mais. Onde eu morava? Eu vi que ele deu muito valor quando ele viu meu apartamento, ele queria saber de cada coisa, sabe. Ele gostou de ver que eu tinha a minha casa, era independente, né. Eu acho que mais isso assim, quem eu sou como pessoa, né, o que eu construí, que eu vivi, as minhas experiências, o que eu gosto, meus gostos, né. Muito mais do que família, do que relacionamentos, do que amigos. Isso não interessa m u i t o assim não. [47-year-old Brazilian English teacher and MBA student (Bachelors degree)]

It seems that while Germans tend to favor more impersonal subjects at the beginning of the approach phase in order to conceal their interest in courtship, Brazilians tend to approach personal subjects from the beginning, thereby revealing their interest in the other.

Differences between the regional groups in the approach phases could also be found with regard to preliminary physical contact. According to the observations at the events for singles, it could be noticed that while in Germany it was more common to observe men waiting for women to initiate physical contact before they attempted any further physical intimacy, in Brazil, men were usually the ones who initiated physical contact.

It could also be observed through the observations of singles and the reports of respondents that it seems that individuals in Germany and in Brazil have different timing for initiating physical contact during courtship, with individuals in Germany tending not to touch each other at the beginning of an encounter, while individuals in Brazil tend to touch each other right from the start. As Ulla explained, in Brazil physical contact is really important, and unlike in Germany it belongs to ordinary interaction, being present in the family, such as with hugging and cuddling, but also between strangers when they meet, by kissing the cheeks. As a German, she observed that she is not used to such intense physical contact with strangers and that at the beginning of her stay in Brazil such physical proximity was odd for her. She also observed that she still feels a strong defensive reaction when Brazilians at the beginning of courtship touch her or pull her close.

Ulla: In Brasilien ist Körperkontakt sehr wichtig. Aber auch wieder in anderen Ebenen auch. Also in familiären Beziehungen. Dass man sich umarmt, dass man sich an den anderen ankuscht. Also im Familienkontext. Dass man, was weiß ich, sich gegenseitig massiert, oder sich irgendwie.. Das ist generell bei allen zwischenmenschlichen Beziehungen in Brasilien stärker. In der Familie. Das fängt ja auch schon damit an, dass man den anderen beim Begrüßen so nah an sich ranlässt, dass man ihm die zwei Küsse auf die Wange gibt, oder einen.. Also es ist ja generell normaler, den anderen dichter an sich ranzulassen, als in Deutschland.

Interviewerin: Und wie ist das für dich, als Deutsche?

Ulla: Also am Anfang war es für mich sehr komisch. Da habe ich auch immer so dieses.. Auch wenn halt Männer, meinetwegen, wenn ich alleine unterwegs bin, wenn Männer sofort ankommen und mich anfassen irgendwie, oder mich vielleicht zu sich heranziehen möchten, oder so, da entsteht eine ganz starke Abwehrreaktion. Also da ist ein Instinkt, sofort mich zurückzuziehen. Und //ehm// bei Fremden halt, oder wenn die dann sofort ankommen... Also das ist befremdlich. Aber das ist natürlich dann in einer Beziehung dann sehr angenehm.

Interviewerin: In deiner Liebesbeziehung ist das angenehm? Aber wenn es von anderen kommt, die du nicht kennst, dann ist das schon fremd?

Ulla: *Also mittlerweile habe ich mich daran gewöhnt. In dieser Zeit in der ich war. Aber ich kann mich erinnern, dass man auch einfach von allen.. Man bekommt jemanden vorgestellt und man hat diesen Menschen noch nie gesehen, versteht ihn vielleicht nicht einmal richtig, wenn Portugiesisch noch nicht so richtig kann. Und der kommt erst einmal an und wird erst einmal gedrückt. So, das ist irgendwie so.. Da kriegt man.. Also das ist für einen Deutschen.. Das ist irgendwie als wäre die deutsche Haut nicht so gewöhnt, berührt zu werden. Und dann gibt es immer so ein komisches Gefühl. [25-year-old German Masters student in Literary and Cultural Studies (high-school degree)]*

Patrícia, like Ulla, observed that Brazilians tend to approach others verbally and physically at the same time, while Germans, on the other hand, may remain at the level of eye contact and not even approach someone verbally. According to Patrícia, in all the times she went out in Germany [at the time of the interview she had been living for five years in Germany], she had never been verbally approached in a courtship situation by a man, while in Brazil men do not wait for a woman's sign of interest to approach them, they just start touching.

Patrícia: *(...) Você vai para uma night aqui [Alemanha], uma balada, é um zero a zero tremendo, né. Bom, pelo menos eu nunca vivi a situação de eu estar numa night e o cara chegar em mim. Nunca! Já rolou de olhares. Só que alguém chegar em mim, nunca aconteceu. E no Brasil, as pessoas nem esperam, né. As pessoas já vão te tocando, né. [30-year-old Brazilian primary school teacher (Bachelors degree)]*

Another difference between the regional groups in regard to preliminary physical contact seems to lie in the form it takes. The tendency of individuals in Germany to conceal their interest seems also to influence how they touch each other during courtship. It could be noticed during the observations of singles and in the reports of respondents that individuals in Germany tend to implement physical contact in a subtler and less assertive form, such as touching hands when gesticulating or lighting a cigarette, or unintentionally bumping their feet under the table, while individuals in Brazil tend to implement physical contact in a more assertive form, like caressing the other, embracing him/her around the waist or pulling the other near. As Sybille, for example, observed, Germans tend to act as if the physical contact were unintentional, like touching each other accidentally when moving the feet or borrowing a cigarette.

Sybille: *Ja. Na, das sind dann so die ganz kleinen Zufälligkeiten. Dann steht aus Versehen der Fuß dicht aneinander. Oder wenn man sich eine Zigarette bei Jemanden schnorrt, dann berühren sich so die Arme oder so. Ganz kurz. Das reicht schon vollkommen. [25-year-old German Masters student in Law (high-school degree)]*

Jens also noticed, like Ulla in her statement on page 106 and Patrícia in her statement above, how men in Brazil tend to apply more assertive gestures when approaching women, such as embracing a woman around the waist. He observed further the woman's reaction to it: that whether she turns herself in the man's arms and faces him or whether she tries to free herself from his embrace will reveal if she is or isn't interested in him. In Germany, however, he described the women as initiating physical contact through subtle gestures, like touching the other on the arm or holding hands. He also mentioned that when the parties in Germany do not break physical contact during the encounter, it suggests that they might spend the rest of the night together.

Jens: */eh/ Ich glaube da gibt es schon mehr ein Regelwerk, jemanden kennenzulernen. Das ist hier genauso, aber, glaube ich, nicht mit so.. Dort [Brasilien] habe ich es erlebt, dass es schon immer sehr offensichtlich sind, automatisierte Schritte, die aber bei unterschiedlichen Personen gleich*

waren. Also die Frau.. Der Mann greift der Frau einfach um die Hüfte. Erwidert sie.. Wehrt sie sich, dann heißt es was. Vielleicht wehrt sie sich nicht, wendet sich ihm zu. Ich glaube, ich habe, vielleicht auch nur durch meinen Außenblick, Muster so festgestellt. Mehr als hier, wo die Frau legt die Hand beim Mann auf den Arm, und wenn man ins Bett will gibt man sich die Hand. Wenn sie sich nicht löst, bleibt es bei der Nacht. [28-year-old German Masters student in Sociology (high-school degree)]

Elke, when reporting about physical contact during courtship, mentioned her surprise when her Brazilian partner caressed her hair during their first encounter, since she was used to being caressed on the hand or to holding hands as a form of expression of interest.

Elke: Und mein.. also mein brasilianischer Freund hat zum Beispiel darüber auch die Kontakte zu mir aufgenommen, also als wir uns kennengelernt haben, dass er halt angefangen hat irgendwie meine Haare zu streicheln und so. Ja, das würde ein deutscher Mann vielleicht anders machen. Also nicht so, ja, weiß ich nicht.

Interviewerin: Was wäre anders? Die Art wie man streichelt oder wie oft man streichelt?

Elke: Ich weiß nicht, ich habe irgendwie die Erfahrung gemacht, dass die deutschen oft damit anfangen, sich gegenseitig die Hände zu streicheln. ((lachen)) [...] Ja, einfach so die Hände zu nehmen, wenn man sich kennenlernt. [24-year-old German apprentice in occupational therapy (high-school degree)]

It seems that while Germans tend to take a longer time to touch each other during courtship and to do it in a less assertive form, Brazilians tend to touch each other from the beginning on and to use more assertive gestures.

Another difference observed and reported by respondents between the regional groups in the approach phase regards the length of it. As observed at the events for singles and reported by respondents, individuals in Germany tend to maintain a longer conversation than individuals in Brazil before demanding a definition of the encounter, i.e. an objective expression of interest in the establishment of a more intimate relationship – sexual and/or affectional one. According to the observation of singles and the reports of respondents, the soul kiss seems to be the usual objective expression of interest used by both regional groups. Jens, for example, reported that in Germany people tend to talk much longer during the encounter than in Brazil before they kiss, and mentioned a situation in which a Brazilian woman demanded from him a definition of the encounter after 5-10 minutes of conversation.

Jens: Man redet viel länger. In Brasilien habe ich es einmal erlebt ... Wir haben dann 5, 7 Minuten gesprochen. Und ich merkte: OK, die ersten Fragen sind abgearbeitet. Und diese Frau, dieses Mädchen drehte sich dann um, aber wir hatten schon aus irgendeinem Grund genug Vertrauen. Sie drehte sich dann nur um, sie musste auch lachen, und sagte.. Und wollte mir dann anzeigen: Ich habe keinen Gesprächsstoff mehr. Küsst mich. Oder mach.

Interviewerin: Hat sie das gesagt?

Jens: Nein, nicht gesagt. Aber das Lachen und der Moment war dann so.. Dann habe ich sie geküsst und dann war eine große Erleichterung bei beiden. Aber was ich jetzt sagen wollte: Es war nach 5, 6 Minuten, war eigentlich der Gesprächsstoff vorbei. Der Spannungs(bogen?). Das Kennenlernen. Und das würde hier nach 7 Minuten oder nach einer viertel Stunde, vielleicht war es auch länger: viertel Stunde, 10 Minuten, nicht mehr als 10. Und daraus erwuchs dann eine sehr schöne Freundschaft. Aber das würde hier viel länger dauern. Nicht nach 10 Minuten. [28-year-old German Masters student in Sociology (high-school degree)]

Elke reported in her interview that her Brazilian boyfriend mentioned that it is more difficult to kiss German women in an encounter than Brazilian women, since the former are more

reserved than the latter. She noticed further that Germans are more hesitant than Brazilians in giving the first kiss, and that her Brazilian boyfriend was pretty fast with it.

***Elke:** Also.. weiß nicht, mein Freund, also mein brasilianischer Freund, hatte mir halt erzählt, dass es in Brasilien viel einfacher ist. Irgendwie, wenn man auf eine Party geht oder so und man ist Single und lernt Frauen kennen, das ist viel, viel einfacher die zu küssen, als Deutsche Frauen. Er meinte, dass die Deutschen da sehr zurückhaltend sind. Und ich glaube, also ich weiß es nicht ob das /ehm/.. Ja, genau. Das hat er so gesagt. Aber das kann ich jetzt so aus eigener Erfahrung nichts sagen. [...] Also vielleicht sind die Deutschen ein bisschen zögerlicher. Ich glaube die Brasilianer sind ein bisschen schneller. ((Lachen)) [...] Also, ich weiß nicht. Mein Freund war auf jeden Fall sehr schnell. ((Lachen)) [24-year-old German apprentice in occupational therapy (high-school degree)]*

Patrícia stated that Brazilians usually start a conversation with compliments and do not show interest in developing the conversation further, while Germans, according to her, develop a much more interesting encounter.

***Patrícia:** “Oi gata! Vocês são tão bonitas e..” ou então, por causa do meu cabelo, né [cabelo cacheado] “você faz teatro?”, eu ouvia muito isso! [...] Ai eu falei “Não. Eu sou professora.” Ai “Pô, você é professora?” e sabe? Parece que não tinha muita continuidade assim o papo. [...] E alemão, o flerte eu acho muito mais legal. [30-year-old Brazilian primary school teacher (Bachelors degree)]*

At another point in her interview, Patrícia observed that the approach in Germany is usually more interesting than in Brazil, since in the former people tend to show more interest in the person, to look them in the eyes and to hear what the other has to say, to check if there is any affinity between them, while in the latter people tend to keep the conversation short to get faster to the exchange of kisses.

***Patrícia:** Muito mais interessante, nossa! Os caras são muito mais interessados. Eles ouvem, te olham no olho, ouvem o que você está falando. Não é do tipo “Opa, você é bonita! Vamos beijar?” Não. É muito mais legal mesmo. Primeiro tem que ver se rola uma afinidade, né. Não tem muito esse negócio de ficção aqui. Não tem mesmo. Até tem, mas não tem muito né. Muito pouco, né. [30-year-old Brazilian primary school teacher (Bachelors degree)]*

Moreover, as the reports of the respondents suggest, it is not only that individuals in Germany tend to develop longer conversations in the first encounter; some of them also prefer to extend the approach phase over days, postponing the kiss. Heiner observed that in Germany it is more usual to meet the person several times before engaging in kissing, i.e. to date, while in Brazil, he observed, there are people that may kiss more than one person in one evening.

***Heiner:** Und in Deutschland eventuell erst küsst nachdem man sich dreimal getroffen hat. So von der Größenordnung her. Hier küsst man sich an einem Abend mit zwanzig Leuten und in Deutschland küsst man sich wenn man sich dreimal getroffen hat oder, wenn man sich zweimal getroffen hat. Also in diese Richtung gibt es einfach eine ganz andere Rangordnung was ein Kuss, was Liebe und so bedeutet. [31-year-old German MBA student and engineer (Masters degree)]*

Beate also observed that Germans tend to take longer before kissing someone than Brazilians tend to, and that the former may postpone physical contact until the second encounter.

***Beate:** Ich glaube auch nicht, dass es mit jedem ist. Ja, es gibt bestimmt auch verschiedene Gruppen oder vielleicht auch wie man erzogen wurde. Ich weiß es nicht mit was es zusammenhängt, ja. Ich will das nicht pauschalisieren. Aber ich kann mir schon vorstellen, dass es vielleicht hier noch ein Stückchen länger dauert bis man, mal ganz salopp ausgedrückt, so jemand anderen die Zunge in den Hals steckt, ja. Also bei mir zumindest, wenn ich meinen Freundeskreis betrachte, würde ich auch sagen, dass da doch ein bisschen mehr gewartet wird. Also das vielleicht erst so ein normaler Kuss ist oder erst trifft man sich noch zweimal. [27-year-old German language teacher and PhD student in Linguistics (Masters degree)]*

Patrícia explained, astounded, that Germans tend to date and to postpone physical contact to another day.

***Patrícia:** [...] A cultura é muito diferente sim. Aqui, as pessoas podem se conhecer, se interessar, e não beijar no primeiro encontro. Isso aí acontece. Eu achava que isso era piada. Mas é verdade. Os alemães, eles trocam telefone, eles chamam para o cinema?! Eles até têm que ir pro restaurante, aí rola um beijo. [30-year-old Brazilian primary school teacher (Bachelors degree)]*

Lucia also observed that while in Brazil people kiss fairly early on in an encounter, her German boyfriend kissed her on their second meeting and only because a friend of his pushed him to do so, by telling him that he would lose her if he didn't.

***Lucia:** ..Não. Não. Aí bem, se você perguntar a uma menina jovem, que teja aí, como é que esteja, elas estão pegando todo mundo na noite, né, que beija vários. Aí já não é a minha faixa etária. Aí talvez tenha. Agora, eu também não sei responder, porque eu não sei como é que eles se aproximam lá, numa noite. Porque aqui, o beijo está muito banalizado, né. Conheceu, já beijou. Primeira coisa. Parece que é um aperto de mão. Beijo de língua mesmo. E eu tenho a impressão que lá isso demora um pouco mais para chegar nesse estágio, desse beijo, que aqui, mesmo na minha idade, né, você está numa danceteria à noite, e o cara gostou de você e começa a conversar, ele já vem rapidamente querendo beijar, entendeu. Isso não aconteceu comigo e com o Mathias, né. A gente passou, a gente saiu duas vezes para que isso acontecesse. E ele até me disse. ((risos)) Não sei se eu posso falar isso por ele, né. Que uma amiga dele uma vez falou. Ele pensou comigo, quando ele estava comigo, já no final da noite, ele pensou que ele deveria me beijar, porque se não ele poderia me perder se não me beijasse. Porque uma amiga dele falou isso para ele "Você tem que fazer alguma coisa, se não a mulher vai embora." [47-year-old Brazilian English teacher and MBA student (Bachelors degree)]*

It seems that while individuals in Germany tend to take time during the approach phase and are prepared to postpone the kiss to another encounter, individuals in Brazil tend to kiss during the first encounter. If, after the kiss, both parties maintain interest in each other, it can be that they will meet again and start a relationship.

5.3. The development of a relationship

This phase regards what happens after the kiss and how individuals establish a relationship. As the usual objective expression of interest in courtship for both regional groups, a kiss seems to communicate without doubt the sexual and/or affectional interest of the parties for one another and consequently changes the relationship between the parties. As Juliana observes in her statement below, after the kiss the couple becomes more than friends. According to her, the kiss grants physical intimacy to the parties. By gaining access to each other's bodies, observed Juliana, people are able to test if they are not only intellectually compatible but also physically, i.e. if their "bodies also understand each other" .

***Juliana:** Então, a gente se beijou. A gente aproximou o corpo. Você começa a fazer carinho. Então, você ultrapassa, digamos assim, a barreira do amigo. Então aquilo passa a ser outra coisa. É isso o que eu quero dizer. Então, você encosta o corpo, você vai ter outro jeito de falar, outro jeito de tratar. Enfim, de poder pôr a mão na pessoa. Você tem um acesso ao corpo da pessoa, que de outra forma você não tem. Então, esse dia foi o primeiro dia assim, que a gente 'beleza, a gente se gosta. É legal e nossos corpos também se entendem, digamos assim. Não é só a cabeça'. [31-year-old Brazilian PhD student in Sociology (Masters degree)]*

Nevertheless, as the reports of the respondents suggest, it seems that the physical intimacy achieved with the kiss implies different things for the different regional groups. As

respondents described, while individuals in Germany tend to expect a more intimate relationship – a sexual and/or affectional one – after a kiss, in Brazil a kiss seems to be regarded exclusively as a momentary expression of sexual and/or affectional interest and as an end in and of itself. Heiner, for example, when speaking about amorous gestures, argued that those have a higher significance in Germany than in Brazil, and that is why in the former people do not apply such amorous gestures to anyone anywhere. He reported that in Brazil people may go to a nightclub and kiss a lot of people in one night, which for him would be inconceivable in Germany. He explained that for Germans a kiss is used to express amorous feelings and to demarcate a relationship, while in Brazil it seems to him to be applied indiscriminately, since people may kiss absolute strangers.

***Heiner:** Ja, also.. in Deutschland hat's schon einen großen Wert, weil es einfach in Deutschland mehr... ich denke grundsätzlich die Gestik sich zu küssen oder so, egal ob das jetzt in der Öffentlichkeit oder ob das jetzt außerhalb der Öffentlichkeit ist, in Deutschland einfach einen viel höheren Stellenwert hat. Deswegen macht man das auch nicht überall und mit jedem. Sagen wir mal so. Von dem was ich bis jetzt in Brasilien gesehen habe.. geht man in manche Diskos und, sagen wir mal so, da küssen, egal ob Männer oder Frauen, an einem Abend zwanzig oder dreißig Leute. In Deutschland undenkbar! [...] Und insofern hat natürlich der Kuss an sich absolut keinen Stellenwert. Also, prinzipiell kann man jeden küssen in dem Moment wo man nicht in einer Beziehung ist. Selbst wenn man in einer Beziehung ist manchmal. Für mich hat es einen sehr hohen Stellenwert, wie gesagt, ich würde es nie außerhalb machen, weil es ist halt.. ich bin halt Deutsch, in die Richtung. [...] Also, wie gesagt, für mich geht das gar nicht. Aber hier in Brasilien.. kenne ich viele Fälle wo das.. ja.. wenn man jemand anderen küsst ist es okay. [...] Die Symbolik hat in Deutschland einen viel höheren Stellenwert als in Brasilien.*

***Interviewerin:** Ich verstehe, dass es in Deutschland einen größeren Stellenwert hat, aber was bedeutet das? Dass es sehr intim ist, oder was?*

***Heiner:** Das man sich liebt. Dass man einfach zusammen ist und das man.. ja, dass man sich liebt.*

***Interviewerin:** Das man sich liebt, okay.*

***Heiner:** Man zeigt einfach dann in der Öffentlichkeit, man ist zusammen. Wo man hier einfach teilweise küsst obwohl man sich gar nicht kennt. [31-year-old German MBA student and engineer (Masters degree)]*

Julho, when trying to explain why it is more difficult to kiss someone in Germany than in Brazil, also observed that to kiss someone in Germany is a “clear” expression of interest, while in Brazil one may kiss five persons in one evening and find out that none of them was interested in him/her.

***Julho:** [...] Quer dizer, é tão difícil você se envolver com uma pessoa aqui, é tão mais difícil você beijar alguém aqui do que beijar alguém no Brasil, que se você beija alguém aqui, isso já é uma mensagem nítida de que a pessoa está realmente interessada em você. E no Brasil não. Você pode beijar cinco pessoas numa noite e descobrir que nenhum dos caras estava afim de você mesmo, né.*

At another point in his interview, Julho explained that a kiss in Germany usually implicitly means that they are going to have sex and will probably engage in a lasting relationship.

***Julho:** [...] Eu acho que assim, no Brasil é muito mais fácil você beijar alguém. Você ficar com alguém é muito mais fácil. Mas isso não significa que vocês vão terminar na cama, ou muito menos num relacionamento. Com um alemão, uma alemã, é muito mais difícil vocês se beijarem, mas se vocês se beijarem, já está subentendido que vocês vão terminar na cama, e provavelmente num relacionamento pouco mais duradouro. [29-year-old Brazilian Masters student in Journalism (Bachelors degree)]*

Volker, when confronted with the statement of other respondents that a kiss in Germany is perceived as the beginning of more intimate relationship, like a long-term relationship or sex, agreed, and observed that in Brazil there is no expectation after kissing, that it is just kissing for the sake of kissing.

Volker: *Ah, sim. Realmente agora é assim, mesmo. (...) tem a conotação de ter a intenção de rolar mais. Uma relação íntima, algum sexo, uma coisa. Isso aqui [no Brasil] é bem... mais costume, no carnaval, em alguma discoteca, boate, tal, só beijar... beijo com língua. E depois... era bom. Que aí eu acho melhor ((risos)). Eu acho bom. [46-year-old German manager of research and development (PhD degree)]*

Tiago, when confronted with the statements of other respondents, that a passionate kiss is perceived more as an act of intimacy in Germany than in Brazil, corroborated this and observed that while a peck on the mouth is usually used among friends and relatives in Germany, a deep kiss is used by them to signalize commitment. In Brazil, on the other hand, he observed that while a passionate kiss carries no further meaning, a peck on the mouth between relatives is taboo.

Tiago: *(...) Ao contrário que um selinho aqui é totalmente comum e lá é um tabu. Tabu, é. Você não dá selinho em pai, não dá selinho em amigo, no sexo. É um tabu. Aqui o selinho é liberado ((bateu o dorso de uma mão na palma da outra)). Todo mundo dá selinho em todo mundo e acabou. Agora, o beijo de língua não, o beijo de língua é um compromisso, sinaliza um compromisso. [39-year-old Brazilian visual artist (Masters degree)]*

Beate, when confronted with the statement of a fellow German that a kiss in Germany suggests the beginning of a more intimate relationship, agreed, and reported that when she kisses someone it is usually to express sexual intentions and not like in Brazil where, for her, a kiss is just a kiss. She also reported her astonishment in seeing how people kissed in the streets during the Love Parade in São Paulo, and how she considers that a kiss in Brazil involves less commitment between the parties than a kiss in Germany.

Beate: *[...] Also wenn ich einen Zungenkuss gebe, ich sag jetzt mal, wenn ich anfangs richtig zu knutschen, also das ist ja dann meistens so ein bisschen mit etwas mehr.. Feuer, /ehm/ dass es dann auch bedeutet es geht auch mehr. Das könnte ich mir gut vorstellen. Und, genau, in Brasilien ist es ja so, ich kann wirklich auf eine Party abends gehen und zwanzig Leute knutschen. Das heißt aber auch wirklich, ich habe die nur geküsst und fertig. Oder ich war z. B. bei der Love Parade in São Paulo.. meine Güte! Da wurde ja auch einfach auf den Bürgersteig, du gehst irgendwie von der Consolação Richtung Paraisópolis und knutscht einfach mal zwanzig Leute, oder hundert. Einfach so! Und dann gehst du weiter. Und ich glaube das..... Ja, weniger compromisso wenn du einfach nur, in Brasilien, wenn du küsst. [27-year-old German language teacher and PhD student in Linguistics (Masters degree)]*

At another point in her interview, Beate expressed her astonishment with the attitude of a Brazilian female friend who reported with pride about the twenty men she had kissed in one evening. Beate observed that although she believes that there are also people in Germany who may kiss more than one person in one evening, she does not believe that they would talk about it to others and if they did that they would not boast about it.

Beate: *[...] Es gibt zum Beispiel, ich weiß in (Inland São Paulo) hatte eine Freundin von mir, die war dann abends auf einer Party, viel Studenten, und da ging es dann so "Pegada total". Also es war ganz toll in der Nacht zwanzig Jungs die Zunge in den Hals gesteckt zu haben. Das war irgendwie super toll. Am nächsten Morgen: "Ah, beije vinte caras!" und so. Und da dachte ich, meine Güte! Ich glaube das gibt es in Deutschland sicherlich auch, dass der ein oder andere in der Disko viele Leute knutscht. Aber dass da so darüber gesprochen wird und dass es toll ist, dass ich gestern Abend*

zwanzig Leute mit Zungenkuss abgeknutscht habe, habe ich zumindest das Gefühl, gibt es hier [in Deutschland] nicht so. Und deswegen denke ich schon, dass es zwischen Brasilien und Deutschland einen Unterschied gibt. [27-year-old German language teacher and PhD student in Linguistics (Masters degree)]

Rosa, when commenting on the differences between Germans and Brazilians on kissing, reported an encounter with a German who interpreted her passionate kiss as interest in sex, although it was not her intention. She argued that kissing in Germany has more meaning than kissing in Brazil, since Germans tend to interpret it as preliminary stage before sex, while Brazilians do not. She also reported sarcastically about a German teen magazine that she had once read, which – to her bewilderment – informed readers about different forms of kissing without tongue and described the deep kiss as something really intimate that should be engaged in only with someone special.

***Rosa:** [...] Eu com meus exemplos maravilhosos, e como eu já te falei, sempre vem o exemplo de coisas que eu já passei, de tipo, ser um beijo, realmente um beijo, com vontade, com paixão, e da pessoa tipo assim “Nossa?! Você tá afim?” E eu falei “Não. Não estou afim.” “Mas você tá. Nossa! Você tá assim.” Eu falei “Não. Eu não tô assim.”, da pessoa interpretar mal o meu beijo. [...] Eu acho que não sempre, não é uma regra, mas eu acho que o beijo de língua aqui [na Alemanha] significa mais do que o beijo de língua no Brasil.[...] Acho que [na Alemanha] vai mais pro lado mesmo do ‘tá com tesão’, é uma coisa mais física.[...] É uma porta para o sexo. É um pé pro sexo. E no Brasil não. Um parêntese que talvez seja interessante, logo que eu cheguei aqui e pude ler um pouquinho mais de alemão, eu fui ler uma revista dessas de teenager e tal. Eu acho que era Bravo, não sei qual que era. E o tema, eu fiquei chocada com aquele tema, eram dicas para adolescentes e tal sobre como beijar, os vários tipos de beijos e o mais interessante é que os beijos que estavam sendo descritos, todos eram sem língua. Inclusive, quase que aconselhável ser sem língua, e o último beijo, a última classificação lá dos beijos, descrição dos beijos, para ser mais exata, era justamente um beijo de língua. E, de acordo com a aquela descrição, dizendo que um beijo de língua era íntimo. O beijo de língua era íntimo?! Aí, eu fiquei pensando “Ah, gente, vai ver que é isso. Só pode ser isso!” E eu achei aquilo muito estranho. Uma revista para adolescentes dando dicas, tudo de beijar, sem língua. E o beijo de língua, era quase como se a revista falasse assim, “Cuidado”. Não cuidado no sentido de perigo, mas como se eles quisessem dizer, que o beijo de língua é para reservar só para aquelas pessoas especiais, porque era um momento de intimidade. Eu falei “É? Beijo de língua é intimidade? Nossa senhora!” ((sarcasmo)). [38-year-old Brazilian Magister student in Art History (Bachelors degree)]*

In her interview, Juliana reported being disappointed in an encounter with a German who interrupted their first kiss to ascertain to her that they should not go further than this. She understood then, that the deep kiss for him was not only a momentary expression of interest like it was for her, but the beginning of a more intimate relationship.

***Juliana:** Vai rolar! Digamos assim, é o cenário perfeito! Está tudo bonitinho! E aí você dá um beijo. E ele super me beijou! [...] Mas aí foi isso assim, mãos em todos os lugares, por cinco minutos. 'Não podemos fazer isso!' Aí voltou o controle. Mas é porque é isso assim, se a gente dá um beijo de língua, já significa que a gente vai fazer mil coisas naquele quarto. Quem disse que a gente ia continuar só se beijando! "Não podemos!" Esse não é o ponto de parada. Ele é pacote. [31-year-old Brazilian PhD student in Sociology (Masters degree)]*

Jens, for example, observed that in Germany a kiss suggests the interest of the parties in an affectional relationship and consequently implies that they are going to see each other in the next few days. With regard to Brazil, he affirmed that the kiss there seems to have no deeper meaning and that people may kiss and then ten minutes later not want to see each other again.

Jens: *Ich glaube, Küssen ist hier [in Deutschland] schon eine Vorstufe für auch man landet vielleicht im Bett, darum auch viel weniger in Discos. Also nicht in der Öffentlichkeit, aber dann als Näherkommen. Und in Brasilien, glaube ich, ist Küssen nicht unbedingt gleich.. Ja das gehört dann quasi.. gibt es Sammlungen. Männer oder Frauen zu küssen. Ohne Absicht zu haben mit dem danach irgendetwas mit dem zu haben. Und hier bedeutet Küssen in dem Sinne mehr. [...] Man küsst nur, wenn man mit dem auch ein Intimverhältnis haben könnte.*

Interviewerin: *OK. Intimverhältnis bedeutet Sex?*

Jens: *Genau. Nicht unbedingt, aber ich glaube viel, viel mehr als in Brasilien.*

Interviewerin: *Würdest du sagen Zungenküsse in Deutschland bedeuten auch, dass man für eine Beziehung offen ist? Oder nicht unbedingt?*

Jens: *Würde ich jetzt sagen, ja. Oder zumindest für eine Affäre. Genau das. Sonst würde ich nicht küssen.*

Interviewerin: *Ok. Und in Brasilien..*

Jens: *Da muss ich überhaupt nichts mit der Person, möchte ich die vielleicht in den nächsten 10 Minuten schon nicht mehr wiedersehen. [28-year-old German Masters student in Sociology (high-school degree)]*

Further in his interview, Jens explained again how a kiss in Germany usually suggests that the persons will have sex later and that they are interested in a stable relationship, while in Brazil a kiss seems to carry no further significance.

Jens: *[...] Man denkt immer ‚da kommt gleich eine Beziehung raus, aber ich will gar nicht‘. Vielleicht will die andere aber auch überhaupt nicht. Und küssen bedeutet dann schon wiederum auch, dass man danach mit dem ins Bett geht, Sex hat. In der Regel. Eigentlich ja. Nicht heute, aber vielleicht morgen.*

Interviewerin: *Und wenn man küsst und ins Bett geht, dann bedeutet das auch, dass man auch offen für eine Beziehung ist?*

Jens: *Ja, genau. Mehr als in Brasilien wäre das schon wieder ein Beginn für eine Beziehung. [28-year-old German Masters student in Sociology (high-school degree)]*

To affirm here that Germans tend to expect the development of a more intimate relationship after kissing does not mean that they do not act like Brazilians tend to and just engage in kissing without further commitment, or vice-versa. As a few German respondents reported, individuals in Germany may also *Rumknutschen*, i.e. exchange kisses without engaging in a more intimate relationship, like individuals in Brazil tend to do. However, all of them mentioned that this usually happens in the context of a party and under the influence of alcohol. Max, for example, who also observed that kissing occurs in Germany among persons who are in an intimate relationship or who want to establish one, noticed that *ficar* – i.e. kissing for its own sake – is unusual in Germany and when it happens it is under the influence of alcohol or in the context of a party.

Max: *Das stimmt. Davon hat auch Manu schon berichtet. Das war für mich neu, dieses ‚ficar‘ kannte ich nicht in Deutschland. Aber das hatten wir neulich erst, darüber hatten wir uns unterhalten. Und das stimmt. Wer sich in Deutschland mit der Zunge küsst, hat in der Regel eine intimere Beziehung oder dort beginnt dann die Beziehung, wenn man sich das erste Mal mit der Zunge küsst, als unter Umständen in Brasilien. Aber das habe ich so in Brasilien nicht erlebt, aber es ist schon.. offensichtlich so, dass in Deutschland, ich kann jetzt nur sagen wie es in Deutschland ist, tatsächlich, wer sich mit der Zunge küsst, das da schon eine intimere Beziehung dann besteht oder in Anbahnung ist. Also das wird keiner machen, nur sich küssen und dann wieder nach Hause gehen.*

Das kann passieren in einer Diskothek, wenn man schon was getrunken hat und dann vielleicht, ja, sich auch wieder trennt. Aber dann hat man das vielleicht gemacht unter den Einfluss von Alkohol, aber nicht bei klarem Verstand. In einer normalen Laune, nicht in so einer Diskolaune oder so einer Feierlaune, sondern.. wenn man wirklich nüchtern ist, dann, denke ich mal, mit Zunge zu küssen ist schon eher eine intimere Sache, ja. [43-year-old German bank financial manager (Ausbildung degree)]

Sybille, when confronted with the statement of a countryman about kissing being the beginning of a more intimate relationship – affectional and/or sexual one – agreed, and added that a kiss is foreplay to sex, and, like Max, she observed that the exchange of passionate kisses in the public space usually occurs under the influence of alcohol or in the context of a party.

Sybille: *Ja. Das ist auch eher abends, eher mit Alkohol und dann und so. Also, auf Partys sieht man Leute eher Zungenküssen. Während so in der Öffentlichkeit weniger. [...] Also, Zungenkuss ist bei uns eine Eröffnung für alles Weitere. [25-year-old German Masters student in Law (high-school degree)]*

Lina affirmed that Germans also exchange kisses without engaging further in a more intimate relationship, like Brazilians. However, she observed that this usually occurs in the context of a party and that Germans have a higher inhibition against kissing a stranger than Brazilians do.

Lina: *[...] Das geht auch einfach so. Wobei es ja dieses "ficar" als /ehm/ Ausdruck nicht gibt, ne. Also, wir würden dann halt sagen: Rumknutschen mit jemandem. Und das war es dann. Und das ist auf jeden Fall okay, auf einer Party oder so. Und dann war es das. Dann muss da Nichts mehr kommen in irgendeiner Art. Also, das hat keine größere Bedeutung. Aber ich würde sagen, die Hemmschwelle jemanden zu küssen. Also, mit Zungenkuss. Rumknutschen. Also, ist höher als in Brasilien. Also, "ficar" in Brasilien: "Ja. Och, mache ich mal und so weiter." Ist hier. Passiert hier weniger. Aber trotzdem heißt es dann nicht, dass danach noch etwas Anderes kommen muss. [25-year-old German Bachelors student in Music (high-school degree)]*

Although respondents also mentioned parties or nightclubs as the usual context for courtship in Brazil, none of them grounded the tendency of individuals in Brazil to exchange kisses without engaging further in a more intimate relationship – i.e. *ficar* – in the context of a party or the use of alcohol as the reports above on German *Rumknutschen* suggest. When the context of a party was mentioned in the reports of Brazilians, it was usually related to the large number of individuals kissing in public and/or individuals who kissed more than one person at the event, as can be observed in the statements of Heiner on page 111, Julho on pages 111 and Beate on page 112. Marcelo, for example, observed that a kiss in Brazil does not suggest, like in Germany, that the parties are interested in a more intimate relationship, and that it is normal in Brazil to go to a nightclub and *ficar* with more than one person during the evening. He also reported with amusement that it became usual at a *micareta* – a street festival in Brazil – to see people using antibacterial mouth sprays in order to disinfect the mouth after each kiss with a stranger.

Marcelo: *(...) se você fica lá com alguém no Brasil, beijo ou abraço é ficar. Aqui se você fica com alguém, é beijo, abraço e tãtãtã. [...] Já vai para a cama. Se você beijar alguém aqui é porque você vai para a cama. Lá no Brasil, não. Se você beijar alguém, você ficou. Beijou, abraçou, ficou. [...] Acabou ali. [...] Um envolvimento maior. Do que lá... lá você fica na boate, na boate você pode ficar com uma aqui, aí depois você vai para o banheiro "ah, vou ficar com uma aqui também" ((risos)). Assim, mas ficar só beijar, só abraçar, nada demais, como micareta, né? Você vê na micareta, essas coisas, que tem aquele spray de ((som de spray))... não sabia, não?, no... no Brasil... [...] eu nunca fui para Salvador, o que tem em Salvador agora é aquele negócio de micaretas, todas, o carnaval*

agora tem aquele spray anti-bactericida, que você beija a pessoa, aí "ssssssss" ((imitando barulho de spray)) bota aquele spray para tirar toda a bactéria se tiver, né, da outra pessoa, então você vai estar pronta para outra pessoa. [31-year-old Brazilian dance tutor (high-school degree)]

It seems that although individuals in Germany may also regard kissing as individuals in Brazil tend to, i.e. as a momentary expression of sexual/affectional interest, the interpretation of kissing as the beginning of a more intimate relationship seems to be the prevalent one. Consequently, individuals in Germany tend more than individuals in Brazil to present and to expect after the kiss a higher degree of openness to each other and a higher degree of commitment in establishing a relationship, as the reports of respondents indicate. Pedro, for example, when reporting about courtship, suggested that the expectation of the establishment of a relationship when dating is different in Germany and in Brazil. He observed that in Germany when people meet someone they like, they go out with that person expecting the establishment of a relationship, while in Brazil people would go out repeatedly in terms of *ficar*, i.e. to engage in kissing without commitment.

Pedro: (...) aqui [na Alemanha] eu acho que pesa muito esta questão do Beziehung. Do relacionamento, de montar uma coisa junto, de montar uma vida junto. Acho que aqui tem, se dá um valor para isso. (...) Eu acho que aqui, de novo, a .. Se a pessoa sai conhece alguém e gosta é para tentar de fato apostar num relacionamento em geral. No Brasil, tu sai, conhece alguém e gosta, daí depende, fica uma semana, fica uma noite fica um... [35-year-old Brazilian PhD student in History (Masters degree)]

Beate observed that the terms Germans and Brazilians use when speaking about dating indicates their different understanding of it. According to her, while Germans tend to say that they are "having a relationship" or "having an affair" with someone, which would highlight the development of a relationship, Brazilians, on the other side, tend to say that they are "meeting again with a *ficante*"], which would highlight the non-committed character between the parties.

Beate: Ja, ich meine es gibt doch öfter auch in Brasilien, alleine schon das es in Brasilien ja ein Wort, *ficar*, das es das gibt. Das gibt es ja auf Deutsch nicht. Ich meine, gut, du kannst sagen: "Ja, ich hatte was mit einem" oder "Ich habe eine Affäre gerade mit einem", aber ich finde dieses Wort *ficar* unheimlich interessant, denn es bedeutet auch für die Brasilianer.. zumindest ist es meine Ansicht, jeder hat eine bisschen andere Definition von *ficar*. Also ich hatte die Freunde die sagen: "Ficar, das ist nur.. so *fiquei uma noite com alguém. Só beijei, pronto.*" /ehm/ Andere sagen: "Ach, ich treffe mich mal wieder mit meinen *ficante!*". Also öfter, über längeren Zeitraum. [27-year-old German language teacher and PhD student in Linguistics (Masters degree)]

Karl, when explaining the different meaning of a passionate kiss in Germany and in Brazil, declared that Brazilian women are "inexperienced in matters of relationships", since they kiss but do not surrender to the developing relationship as German women do. According to him, the behavior in Brazil of kissing more than one person in the evening attests to the meaninglessness of the kiss in Brazil, while in Germany, where people usually kiss someone only when they intend to develop a more intimate relationship – sexual and/or affectional – the kiss is more meaningful and the kissing is a significant moment for the parties in a developing relationship. As Karl observes, the consequence is that while in Germany the kiss leads to an openness of the parties towards each other, in Brazil the kiss does not lead to this and people need more time and more meetings to achieve the same level.

Karl: ... Zungenkuss? .. Also ich habe festgestellt, dass Brasilianerinnen im gleichen Alter wie Deutsche in der Regel unerfahrener sind. In allem was Mann-Frau-Beziehungen angeht. Das hat vielleicht mit der Kultur zu tun, dass sie allgemein nicht so viel Erfahrung sammeln. [...]: Also im Sinne, beispielsweise, als ich mit meiner [brasilianischen] Ex-Freundin, die war acht Jahre älter als ich, also schon an die 30 ran als wir noch zusammen waren sozusagen, und aber von ihren Erfahrungen hatte ich immer das Gefühl sie war eigentlich jünger als ich in.. den Beziehungen. Das galt besonders für solche Sachen wie Zungenkuss und dann auch sexuelle Beziehungen und solche Sachen. Das hat mich nicht großartig gestört, aber es war irgendwie seltsam. Und ich habe diese Erfahrung, also ich sage mal ich habe ja auch andere Brasilianerinnen geküsst bevor ich meine Freundin kennengelernt habe usw. Die allgemeine Erfahrung ist, dass Brasilianerinnen sich da noch nicht so gehen lassen, also der Kuss erst mal so eine Standardprozedur ist aber nicht etwas wo man sich voll reinlegt oder so. [...] Also sagen wir das mal so. Der erste Kuss mit einer Deutschen ist mehr Erfahrung und das ist besser als mit einer Brasilianerin. Nicht weil die Brasilianerin das vielleicht nicht so gut kann oder so, sondern weil sie sich noch nicht so hingibt. Man hat, sozusagen, etwas was man halt ständig macht aber nichts was irgendwie so speziell mit dieser Person, man will diesen Kuss. Und man muss ja auch sagen es gibt ja unter Brasilianerinnen in Brasilien diesen Wettbewerb, wer an einem Abend mehr Männer küsst. Das habe ich so oft gehört, dass ich fünf, also hier bei Lukas, der hat ja mit vielen Mädchen gewohnt, die haben sich dann getroffen und sind zu fünft ausgegangen und haben einen Wettbewerb ausgerufen, wer heute Abend also am meisten Männer küsst. Das ist eine Sache, die für Mädchen relativ unmöglich ist hier in Berlin. Aber wenn ich eben an einem Abend 20 Männer küsse, dann kann dieser Kuss ja auch nicht so seriös sein. .. Nicht dass ich jetzt mit Mädchen so viel geküsst habe, die mal eben an einem Abend 20 Männer küssen, aber ich habe das Gefühl, das erste ist immer noch so..... Es kommt ja viel schneller zum Kuss in Brasilien als bei uns, aber eben auch weil er nicht so viel bedeutet, denke ich, wie der Zungenkuss bei uns. Bei uns ist der Zungenkuss ja schon eine erotische Erfahrung ein Stück weit. In Brasilien ist es auch eine erotische Erfahrung, aber es ist abgegrenzt. Also es ist so eine Sache. Man küsst sich und dann ist aber auch, was soll ich sagen, der Kuss ist in Brasilien, der Zungenkuss, bei vielen ja schon das Ende sozusagen. Das ist das was man erreichen will. Hier in Deutschland ist der Zungenkuss sogar am Anfang in der erotischen Erfahrung. Ich sage jetzt nicht, dass man danach gleich Sex hat aber man öffnet sich dem anderen sozusagen. Das ist ein Zeichen das ich meine Person jetzt irgendwie öffne der Person mit dem Zungenkuss. Ob jetzt persönlich oder sexuell oder was auch immer. Und in Brasilien man merkt immer irgendwie, da ist eine Grenze. [...]. Es hat auch den, also das ist jetzt z. B. wenn man nicht jetzt unbedingt nur auf Sex aus ist, sondern die Person eben wirklich mag, dann ist in Deutschland, wenn man jetzt die Person geküsst hat, dann hat man die Mauer übersprungen. Dann ist man sozusagen die Person näher und von da an hat man eine ganz andere Qualität von Beziehung. In Brasilien ist es nicht so. Selbst wenn man die Person wirklich mag und die mag einen wirklich. So, man hat einen Zungenkuss und man ist immer noch nicht.. jetzt ist noch nichts so speziell das man der Person jetzt viel, viel nähersteht. Schon viel näher, aber nicht so nah wie in Deutschland. Also dieser Zungenkuss hat eben tatsächlich die Bedeutung das man sich näher kommt und dann irgendwie was hat, was die anderen nicht haben, also so zwischen einander. Und in Brasilien.. und so küssen die Frauen auch. Also das war meine Erfahrung, also dann, dass es eben keine so erotische Erfahrung ist, auch für den Mann nicht. Das ist so.. so jetzt kommt das küssen, man küsst sich mal und dann war es das aber auch. Da passiert nicht viel dahinter. Vielleicht ist es auch deswegen, dass es den Brasilianerinnen leichter fällt sich mit vielen Männern zu küssen, weil eben dann nicht so eine Bedeutung dahinter ist. Wenn sich eine Frau mit so vielen küsst, hinter so einem Kuss ist eben so viel Bedeutung, dass man denkt, die kann das ja nicht ernst meinen. Also wenn sie sich mit so vielen Männern küsst, sie kann nicht jedem Mann so viel Bedeutung geben. Das geht eigentlich nicht. .. Ja, diesen Unterschied habe ich. Und dann hat man eben als Mann, gerade wenn man, oder als unerfahrener (Mann), wenn man dort hin kommt oder, wenn man sich eben dann auch mit Brasilianerinnen küsst, denkt man sie können nicht küssen. Aber das hat, glaube ich, nichts mit dem können zu tun, weil wenn ich dann länger mit dem Mädchen zusammen bin, also sowohl meine Ex-Freundin als auch jetzt, können sie wunderbar küssen. Aber sie machen es einfach nicht am Anfang, weil sie sich nicht so.. da rein begeben. [27-year-old German Masters student in Political Sciences (high-school degree)]

Since individuals in Germany seem to regard subsequent meetings after a kiss as the construction of a relationship, they also seem to demand a definition of the relationship at an earlier point, i.e. whether or not they are going to engage in a stable relationship, while

individuals in Brazil seem to regard subsequent meetings as casually as the first and therefore to not demand a definition of their relationship as early. Jens, for example, described in his interview that while Brazilians may keep seeing each other for weeks without any further commitment, experiencing their sexuality and letting an amorous relationship develop from those sensory meetings, Germans tend to demand a definition of the relationship and their commitment to each other much sooner.

Jens: [...] der Beginn einer Partnerschaft [in Brasilien] ist eben mehr auf Sinnliches und Körperliches bedacht. Dann kann es wachsen, vielleicht auch organischer, eigentlich vielleicht auch viel natürlicher, wo es natürlich nicht gibt. Aber langsamer eigentlich und hier [in Deutschland] ist dieser Sprung so schnell. Diese Festschreibung: „Beziehung? Ja. Nein.“ [28-year-old German Masters student in Sociology (high-school degree)]

Although the previous statement of Jens indicates his sympathy for the Brazilian form of dating, he observed at another point in his interview how the lack of commitment in Brazil in this phase is hard on him.

Jens: [...] Dass man sich so streckenweise sieht, dann aber unverbindlich bleibt. Mir fällt so etwas schwer, so dauerhaft unverbindlich zu bleiben. Da habe ich so eine.. Ich habe diese Gesten, die Kennenlernschritte, die habe ich massiver wahrgenommen in Brasilien. [28-year-old German Masters student in Sociology (high-school degree)]

Juliana, when reporting on her relationship with a German, observed that their first cultural conflict was on the third or fourth meeting after they had kissed, since he demanded a conversation to make clear that they were not in a stable relationship, although she, as Brazilian, had never assumed that they were.

Juliana: [...] A gente já tinha saído umas três vezes. Eu fiquei doente, e ele veio me visitar em casa. Eu não sei, eu realmente não sei, o que fez virar para mim uma hora, sentar assim e falar 'Olha, precisamos conversar!' Eu falei 'Não, tá bom.' 'Aí fiquei olhando 'Tá, exatamente sobre o que?' 'Não, porque na verdade eu não quero que você fique dependente de mim. E eu não quero ter um Pärchen-Verhältnis, eu não quero'. Eu falei 'Tá, mas porque você está falando isso?' 'Não, porque na verdade eu não quero ser.' 'Eu faço isso?' 'Não, você não faz.' 'Bom, se eu não faço, então porque você está falando?' 'Não, porque eu não quero que você venha a fazer.' 'Mas porque você não espera eu fazer para você me falar? Eu não consigo entender o que eu faço de errado hoje, e muito menos qual a diferença que isso que você tem medo que eu faça.' Assim, e assim começou. Então isso foi o primeiro grande choque. Eu não consegui entender exatamente o que aconteceu. Onde foi, digamos assim, o Missverständnis, ou o sinal errado, ou a leitura. Até hoje eu não sei. [31-year-old Brazilian PhD student in Sociology (Masters degree)]

As can be observed in the description of courtship until this point, it seems that individuals in Germany tend not only to be subtler in the expression of interest in courtship, but also attempt to disguise it during the process, while individuals in Brazil tend to be open about their interest in courtship from the beginning on. Individuals in Germany also tend to spend more time than individuals in Brazil on the prelude and approach phases of courtship, i.e. until the kiss. And as observed above, individuals in Germany tend to expect after the kiss a higher degree of openness and commitment to each other and to demand a definition of the relationship sooner, while individuals in Brazil tend to keep meeting and enjoying physical intimacy for a longer time before demanding a definition of the relationship.

As the data in this study show, courtship seems to develop to some extent differently in Germany and in Brazil. The following chapter attempts to offer an explanation for the existence of differences in courtship between the regions, and, based further on the reports of respondents, it indicates two systems of meanings that seems to contribute to the shape of amorous interactions in Germany and in Brazil.

6. Love and regional differences: the formation of regional amorous codes

As observed in the description of the occidental formation of romantic love, the meanings of love have changed over time. Major transformations in society – such as the decline of religion, the rise of capitalism and of the nuclear family, the emancipation of sexuality – have influenced individuals' lives and led to transformations in the meanings of love, while at the same time, by applying the meanings of love to signify their experience, individuals have promoted further social changes – such as the emergence of marriage for love and the increasing rates of divorce and remarriage. Bourdieu's "Theory of Practice" offers a framework to better understand this reciprocal process, i.e. the way in which social structures and mental structures are interlinked by a twofold relationship of mutual constitution and correspondence (Wacquant 2008:267).

Like other social scientists – e.g. Durkheim, Weber, Luhmann – Bourdieu (1998:83) suggests that the development of the social world is characterized by a process of progressive differentiation, which leads to different and autonomous social structures, which he calls fields. The social space is formed by many fields, such as politics, science, art, religion, economy and law. Fields are socio-historical structures, which means that they arise at different moments and develop differently in each society and that they are not immutable, but experience changes and may disappear. Therefore, although the previous description of the occidental formation of romantic love regarded the Western nations as one region, one can expect that the different socio-historical trajectories and constellations of the different fields of each Western nation will lead to differences in the development of the individualization process – both in its progress as in its particularities⁷² – and in the amorous interactions in each of them.

As Wacquant (2008:269) observes, in the course of their development, fields become autonomous from other fields, establishing their own criteria of evaluation, their own rules. Each field has its own logic, which orients the individual's actions to specific ends and consequently also constrains their actions (Bourdieu 1998:32, Bourdieu 1990:55). For example, while in some contemporary societies like Brazil and Germany polygamy is disapproved of and legally forbidden, in others such as Egypt and Zambia polygamy is accepted and legally allowed.⁷³

Fields are comprised of social institutions, organizations and patterned processes that enact networks of meanings that generate and sustain cultural codes – i.e. systems of meanings.

⁷² The individualization process is regarded in this study as a course common to all societies, i.e. as the movement of individuals to focus on themselves, to cultivate a personal history, own interests, a self, and to develop a subjective perspective of the world; however, the socio-historical trajectory of each nation leads to different progressions of the individualization process within them and grants the individualization process in each nation a particular expression. The same can also be expected in a nation, for example, between urban and rural groups.

⁷³ <http://genderindex.org>.

According to Illouz and Wiff (2009:125), there are key institutional patterns that are likely to play a central role in the shaping of the regional cultural codes that orient the natives' understanding and conduct of love: religion (Ozment 2001), strategies of economic survival (Cancian 1987, Shorter 1975, Stone 1979), the private/public divide (Demos 1997, Stearns and Stearns 1988, Zaretsky 1994), legislation (Nussbaum 1999), and the cultural complex within which sexual relations are organized, such as the mass cultural production on love (Illouz 1997, Luhmann 1986) or gender and family literature (Bourdieu 2001, Giddens 1992b). Therefore, although romantic love may be regarded as the prevalent form of love in the modern Western world, its experience and expression reflect different nuances in each country. The cultural codes that define love – like the fields they derive from – are particular to each society and may change or disappear. Therefore the meanings of love may change across times, regions and also social groups.

As Bourdieu says, the fields are a game in themselves (Bourdieu 1990:67), a game whose rules can only be recognized by a native in a field, although he/she may not realize that he/she is playing. As Bourdieu (1998:77) describes it:

[S]ocial games are games that are forgotten *qua* games, and the *illusio* is the enchanted relation to a game that is the product of a relation of ontological complicity between mental structures and the objective structures of social space. That is what I meant in speaking of interest: games which matter to you are important and interesting because they have been imposed and introduced in your mind, in your body, in a form called the feel for the game.

Since natives of a field have been socialized in the game, that is what they know, what they believe, and therefore they invest everything unconditionally in it. In their trajectory they have developed a feel for the game: for them everything in the field is full of meaning and points objectively in a direction, and therefore they have the capacity for practical anticipation of the upcoming future contained in the present (Bourdieu 1990:66-68; 1998:77).

On the other hand, outsiders to the field cannot comprehend the game, because they are not equipped with the rules that make this field work. They cannot live the natives' beliefs, nor can they use their own beliefs in this foreign field, and they also cannot give natives the means of reliving it through discourse (Bourdieu 1990:66-68; 1998:77).

Because belief is an inherent part of belonging to a field, the entry into a game can only be through birth or through a slow process of co-option and initiation, such as rites of passage or examinations, which prove the individual's "undisputed, pre-reflexive, naive, native compliance with the fundamental presuppositions of the field" (Bourdieu 1990:68).

The internalized rules of the game are an integral part of what Bourdieu calls *habitus*. In an extensive description, habitus are (Bourdieu 1990:53):

systems of durable, transposable dispositions, structured structures predisposed to function as structuring structures, that is, as principles which generate and organize practices and representations that can be objectively adapted to their outcomes without presupposing a conscious aiming at ends or an express mastery of the operations necessary in order to attain them. Objectively "regulated" and "regular" without being in any way the product of obedience to rules, they can be collectively orchestrated without being the product of the organizing action of a conductor.

The habitus is structured by the patterned social forces that produce it, and structuring because it gives orientation and coherence to the life of the individuals and collectivities. As a system of schemes of production of practices and a system of perception and appreciation of practices – i.e. taste – internalized by individuals during the socialization process, the habitus orients and sustains the individual and the collective practice (Bourdieu 1989:19). Its efficacy lies in the fact that it functions below the level of consciousness and language, i.e. the habitus is not controlled by will or rational thinking (Bourdieu 2008a:464).

The habitus is produced in practice from a particular class of objective regularities, i.e. from a particular condition of existence (Bourdieu 1990:56). The past experiences accumulate in each organism in the form of schemes, which are the reference for subsequent perceptions and apprehensions; therefore the habitus incorporates history, internalized as a second nature and forgotten as history (Bourdieu 1990:56). It is necessarily transformed into muscular patterns and bodily automatisms (Bourdieu 2008a:474).

This system of disposition is a principle of continuity, since it is based on the past and tends to perpetuate itself in the future, sustaining the continuity and regularity of social practices, and therefore guaranteeing the reproduction of the social order. But at the same time the habitus is a principle of discontinuity, since it is adaptable. At each moment the habitus uses the structures produced with a basis on past experiences to structure new experiences. The new experiences, according to the limits defined by the power of selection, are able to modify the structures based on past experiences, thus producing a singular integration (Bourdieu 1990:60).

The habitus has also an inventive art. Despite the limitations imposed by the socio-historic moment, new thoughts, perceptions, expressions and actions may be formed, enabling the production of a variety of unexpected practices (Bourdieu 1990:55). And as Bourdieu and Wacquant (2007:133 note) also emphasize, a self-analysis of one's own dispositions can allow the transformation of the habitus.

Nevertheless, past experiences have more influence than new experiences on the whole cognitive process, and the habitus tries to preserve itself by producing situations that help to reinforce itself. The unconscious schemes of perception and appreciation of the habitus are the foundation of all protection strategies, which have as their main purpose to avoid contact with new information – e.g. avoiding “unsuitable events” or having “unsuitable friends” (Bourdieu 1990:60).

Although the protection strategies of the habitus suggest intentionality, this does not exist. The idea of finality attributed to practice, as Bourdieu (1990:62) explains, is an illusion engendered by the perfectly and immediately successful adjustment of the habitus to objective conditions. The base condition for the formation of habitus is necessity, which makes deliberation and the calculation of probabilities impossible. Based on past experiences, the practices engendered by the habitus tend to reproduce the same outcome whenever the conditions that engendered the habitus have remained the same. Therefore, observes the author, habitus enables objective meaning without subjective intentions.

Bourdieu (1990:53) concedes that a rational strategy may follow the response to a habitus; however, those responses are originally defined without calculation according to the objective potentialities inscribed in the present in relation to a probable future. In his words:

The practical world that is constituted in the relationship with the habitus, acting as a system of cognitive and motivating structures, is a world of already realized ends – procedures to follow, paths to take – and of objects endowed with a “permanent teleological character”, in Husserl’s phrase, tools or institutions. (Bourdieu 1990:53)

Each habitus is the product of the different positions in the social space, of different conditions of existence; therefore, they are distinct from each other and at the same time they are distinctive, i.e. they function as schemes of classification. Engendering different life-styles, the habitus enables one to identify what is good or bad, right or wrong according to each social position (Bourdieu 1998:8). The differences in manners, taste, practices, properties and opinions produce symbolic differences that act as symbols of distinction (Bourdieu 1998:8-9).

The habitus is this generative and unifying principle which retranslates the intrinsic and relational characteristics of a position into a unitary lifestyle, that is, a unitary set of choices of persons, goods, practices (Bourdieu 1998:8).

Bourdieu (1990:60) acknowledges two types of habitus: the individual habitus and the class habitus. The first is singular and inseparable from the body, is socially designated and can be immediately recognized, such as nationality, gender, last name, legal identity and occupation. The singular social trajectory of each individual guarantees the difference between each habitus, though some similarities can be found between individuals of the same class.

The class habitus (or group habitus) is related to the similarities found in the individual habitus of a group of individuals. Individuals who were exposed to analogous social conditions and conditioning over a long time have internalized similar external constraints and possibilities, and therefore have developed a common pattern (Bourdieu 1990:60; Wacquant 2008:267).

The homogeneity of the class habitus guarantees the intelligibility and the anticipation of the practices and activities of the individuals of the class, engendering a common lifestyle which renders the social class distinction (Bourdieu 2008a:172-173). The ordinary automatic and impersonal practices produce a meaning without intention, whose comprehension is also automatic and impersonal. The harmonization of the experiences of the individuals and the constant reinforcement that they receive from similar or identical experiences, enable a harmony between practical sense and objective meaning, and the development of a common sense. Therefore their practices are in harmony without calculation or conscious intent, and are mutually adjustable without direct intervention or coordination (Bourdieu 1990:62-63). The close fit between the mental dispositions and the social structures leads to a common set of shared opinions and beliefs that Bourdieu calls doxa (Bourdieu 1990:66). This shared opinion and beliefs bind the individuals of the field by engendering in them the feeling of

communality – e.g. the shared devotion to reason among scientists; or the common sense among individuals from the same nation.⁷⁴

With regard to love, this means that the regional cultural codes that orient amorous interactions in a nation are internalized by individuals during their socialization process and are constitutive of their class habitus. Since this knowledge has the status of belief, it enables individuals to act “naturally” and to regard their understanding and practices of love as “evident”. Since every native “instinctively” plays by the regional amorous dynamics, it is difficult for individuals from the same region to become aware of them and to describe their particularities – as detected in the exploration of the field in this study. Outsiders, however, who have not begun a process of acculturation, i.e. a slow process of co-option and initiation that enables them to internalize the local rules that orient the amorous dynamics, have difficulty playing by the local amorous dynamics. When engaging in amorous interactions with foreigners – i.e. persons raised in another field constellation and therefore socialized in different amorous cultural codes – individuals are confronted with different amorous conduct and therefore become more aware of their own conduct, and thus more able to describe the differences between their amorous own code and the other’s.⁷⁵

The particularities in the courtship process observed in Germany and in Brazil in the previous two chapters can be understood as a product of their distinct socio-historical trajectories and field constellations. The scope of this study does not allow an elaboration of all possible factors that have led to the observed configurations of courtship. However, when regarding the reports of respondents, two main systems of meanings could be observed structuring their courtship practices: liberal democracy and feminism. Although the latter has been known to be the introducer of the former in the realms of intimacy, feminists have encouraged particular discourses to succeed in their struggles for equality that together with liberal democracy seem to have produced particular courtship dynamics, as will be observed in this chapter.

⁷⁴ The concepts of field and habitus developed by Bourdieu help to illustrate how social structures and mental structures are interlinked. His Theory of Practice, nevertheless, is more complex than that and focuses on struggles for power and the social reproduction of class. Focused on the relationship between social groups in the same society, Bourdieu regards the social world in terms of power relations, with the generative principle of each field being “none other than the structure of the distribution of the forms of power or the kinds of capital which are effective in the social universe under consideration” (Bourdieu 1998:32). The position of an agent in the field is determined by his/her accumulation of capital, which enables him/her able to improve, keep or lower his/her position. Assuming that individuals attempt to improve their position in the field, social relations would be characterized by struggles for power. The present study, however, focusing on the social construction of love, does not attempt to discuss power relations, but to regard how particular field constellations, in the case of Germany and Brazil, may engender particular amorous codes that lead to particular amorous interactions in each region. Therefore no emphasis was given in this text to Bourdieu’s discussion on power relations.

⁷⁵ To affirm that a class habitus orients individuals’ amorous experience does not mean that individuals are not able to determine their own lives. It only means that social structures mold the amorous meanings that one may apply to signify their amorous experience, and since some meanings are more present in one group than in another, they tend to become more relevant and prevalent for those in the process of signifying their amorous experience.

6.1. Liberal democracy

Liberal democratic discourses have a significant role in the process of individualization. Defending liberty, equality and justice for all individuals, they promote individual autonomy (self-governance) and have been the main motor behind many social movements in the last decades, such as the labor and sexual equality movements. The democratic discourses achieve a higher expression when they are implemented as a political system and develop into a welfare state, by turning rhetoric into practice. In establishing liberal democratic discourses as a legitimate social order, a democratic political system encourages individuals to orient their lives according to democratic principles. The welfare state turns democracy into reality by guaranteeing the protection and improvement of the economic and social well-being of all citizens. By freeing individuals from the daily struggle against oppression and misery, a welfare state renders individuals more independent to determine their own lives, and grants them more free time to invest in their own interests, to develop their subjective perspective of the world and singular personalities.

The different socio-historical trajectories of Germany and Brazil have given them different progress on the establishment of liberal democracy and welfare state, and consequently a different degree of individualization. In Germany the roots of democracy can be traced to the 18th century and the welfare state to the 19th century, and both were intensely developed above all after the Second World War⁷⁶ – initially in West Germany and later in the whole country after the reunification of the nation in 1990. In Brazil, however, the roots of democracy can be traced back to the 19th century and the welfare state to the 20th century, both being more intensely developed only after the end of the military dictatorship in the country in 1985.⁷⁷

The Democracy Index published by the Economist Intelligence Unit (2013) provides a reference for the state of democracy in 165 independent states. Based on five categories – electoral process and pluralism, civil liberties, the functioning of government, political participation and political culture – it measures the progress of democracy in the countries and classifies them as one of four types of regime: full democracies, flawed democracies, hybrid regimes and authoritarian regimes (2013:1). According to the fifth report (2013:3-4), Germany is placed in 14th place in the ranking and is classified among the full democracies, i.e.

countries in which not only basic political freedoms and civil liberties are respected, but these will also tend to be underpinned by a political culture conducive to the flourishing of democracy. The functioning of government is satisfactory. Media are independent and diverse. There is an effective system of checks and balances. The judiciary is independent and judicial decisions are enforced. There are only limited problems in the functioning of democracies. (2013:28)

Brazil, however, is placed in the 44th position in the ranking and classified among the flawed democracies, i.e. countries that

also have free and fair elections and even if there are problems (such as infringements on media freedom), basic civil liberties will be respected. However, there are significant weaknesses in

⁷⁶ https://www.bundestag.de/htdocs_e/artandhistory/history/parliamentarism.

⁷⁷ <http://revistacult.uol.com.br/home/2010/03/democracia-no-brasil-um-breve-historico/>.

other aspects of democracy, including problems in governance, an underdeveloped political culture and low levels of political participation. (2013:28)

As the report on democracy (2013) indicates, despite the progress of democratization in Brazil in the last decades, the country scores lower than Germany in three categories: in that of functioning government, while Germany presents a score of 8.21, Brazil's score is 7.50; in political participation, while Germany's score is 6.67, Brazil's score is 5.00; and in democratic political culture, in which the difference between the countries is the most substantial, while German presents a score of 8.13, Brazil's score is only 4.38. As this last category suggests, it seems that individuals in contemporary Germany are more aware of democratic discourses and more engaged in their fruition than are individuals in contemporary Brazil.

As mentioned above, democratic discourses achieve a higher expression when implemented as a political system and through the development of a welfare state. The Human Development Index (HDI) published by the United Nations Development Programme (2014) provides a reference of economic and social welfare in 187 countries. As a summary measure of average achievements in three dimensions of human development – health, education and income – the HDI makes it possible to follow the progress of those dimensions in each country, and to evaluate national policy choices and to question how countries with the same level of income per capita can have different human development outcomes. The Inequality-adjusted Human Development Index (IHDI) is based on the HDI; however, it also takes into account how the achievements in the three dimensions of human development are distributed among the population by “discounting” each dimension's average value according to the level of inequality. In other words,

while the HDI can be viewed as an index of average achievements in human development dimensions, the IHDI is the level of human development when the distribution of achievements across people in a society is accounted for. The IHDI will be equal to the HDI when there is no inequality, but falls below the HDI as inequality rises. The difference between the HDI and IHDI, expressed as a percentage of the HDI, indicates the loss in human development due to inequality.⁷⁸

As the Human Development Report (2014) indicates, while Germany is among the countries with the highest HDI with a score of 0.911 and is placed at the 6th position in the ranking of Human Development, Brazil has a score of 0.744 and is at the 79th position in the same ranking. However, when “discounting” the inequalities (IHDI), while Germany would present a new score of 0.846 and would ascend one position in the rank of Human Development – i.e. Germany would be in 5th place – Brazil would present a new score of 0.542 and would lose 16 positions in the same ranking – i.e. Brazil would now be in 95th place. Regarding the economic and social welfare in a country as a reference for the experience of democracy, it seems that for individuals in Germany, democratic discourses are more of a reality than for individuals in Brazil.

It seems that Germany not only has a longer trajectory of being a democracy and welfare state than Brazil, but that individuals in Germany seem to be more aware of democratic discourses

⁷⁸ <http://hdr.undp.org/en/faq-page/inequality-adjusted-human-development-index-ihdi#t293n102>.

than individuals in Brazil, and the former seem to experience the effects of its implementation more than the latter, as the Democracy Index and the HDI/IHDI indicate.⁷⁹ In other words, one may say that liberal democratic discourses are more disseminated in Germany than in Brazil and that the individualization process in the former is consequently more advanced than in the latter.

As Bourdieu (1990:66-67) suggests, individuals internalize the rules of the fields during their socialization process in the form of shared practices and opinions. Since this knowledge has the status of belief, it enables native members to play “instinctively” by the rules (Bourdieu 1990:66-68, 2006:77). The internalized knowledge orients not only individuals’ actions, but also how they see themselves, since it is constitutive of their habitus. Therefore, in a context of advanced democracy and welfare state as in Germany, individuals are not only more aware of democratic principles and tend to act more in accordance with them, but the higher autonomy they enjoy also leads them to define themselves more by these principles than individuals in a context of moderate democracy and welfare state as in Brazil. In other words, individuals in a context of advanced democracy and welfare state such as Germany are more concerned about their autonomy, about the boundaries between oneself and others, than are individuals in a context of moderate democracy and welfare state such as Brazil.

In a context where the individuals’ autonomy is encouraged and supported, observe Beck and Beck-Gernsheim (1995:43), a phase of exploration arises, in which individuals are able and want to experience life freely. Focused on their needs and regarding those as rights, individuals become ready to defend them against any threat. Enjoying their freedom, individuals become “highly aware of having to protect their lives against encroachment from outside and ready to become socially and politically active whenever their private territory is endangered” (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 1995:43). In those societies where peace and democratic rights begin to be taken for granted, where prosperity and social security have reached high levels, remark Beck and Beck-Gernsheim (1990:9, 16-17; 1995:47), individuals enjoy high autonomy and become more concerned with the contradictions between personal freedom and the demands of intimate relationships.

In modern Western societies, freedom has become the pure expression of democracy and the exercise of choice its cultural hallmark (Illouz 2012:59). Choice, observes Illouz (Illouz 2012:19), has become in contemporary society the embodiment not only of the exercise of freedom, but also of two faculties that justify the exercise of freedom, i.e. rationality and autonomy. The private sphere, as the main space for the individual’s self-realization, for the exercise of his/her individual choice and autonomy (Berger and Kellner 1964:6-7), becomes a space to be safeguarded and defended. The concept of “privacy” stands in modernity for the boundaries between individuals.

⁷⁹ Although the different rankings of democracy or human development may place the nations in a hierarchical order and suggest the idea of evolution, the present study does not share this perspective. The comparison of Germany and Brazil in those rankings attempts only to illustrate how different socio-historical trajectories lead to different field constellations, which engender different realities and particular understandings and practices of love.

As Heilborn (2004:155) observes in her study on amorous relationship in Brazil, in specific contexts and situations where individuals feel threatened in their freedom or autonomy, they tend to speak negatively about intimacy as something that compromises the respect for each other, as an intrusion of privacy. The same discourse could be observed in this study; however, it seems that the different degree of individualization in Germany and in Brazil – due, among other factors, to the different dissemination of democratic discourses in both nations – leads the regional groups to present different perceptions of what is “too intimate”.

As the reports of respondents indicate, individuals in Germany tend to regard courtship practices more frequently as acts of intimacy, as movements in the private sphere of the other, than do individuals in Brazil. More concerned about the boundaries of each other’s privacy and more concerned in protecting it than individuals in Brazil, individuals in Germany seems to be more cautious during courtship acts in order to avoid being regarded as intrusive or disrespectful. Volker, for example, after mentioning that women in Germany usually react negatively to compliments on physical appearance at the beginning of courtship, conceded that when the persons are no longer strangers and have known each other for a while, women tend to enjoy such compliments, thus suggesting that compliments on physical appearance are an act of intimacy.

***Volker:** Era mal visto. Eles [alemães] gostaram, e eles achavam muito bacana em um momento romântico, se você tem uma vez quebrado o gelo, conhece muito bem, aí eles gostaram muito, adoraram. Mas para conhecer uma mulher, não foi possível fazer uma coisa dessas. Você sempre tinha que conhecer uma mulher, uma alemã, através de um amigo dela. Ou amiga dela. [46-year-old German manager of research and development (PhD degree)]*

Later in his interview, Volker also argued that physical contact, like hugging, is engaged in by Germans only in close relationships, while in Brazil it is also common with acquaintances, suggesting once again that physical contact is an act of intimacy. He observed next that the particular conduct of Germans with regard to physical contact is the reason why they tend to interpret a touch coming from a stranger or acquaintance as having deeper significance, i.e. as having courtship intentions, while Brazilians do not tend to attribute any deeper meaning to it.

***Entrevistadora:** E o que você acha das expressões gestuais de afeto, como abraçar, beijar, acariciar. Você percebe se elas usam isso de formas diferentes?*

***Volker:** Ah, sim. É bem mais costume com brasileiras, né, que com alemãs. Eu faço isso bastante com minhas melhores amigas também, na Alemanha. Abraçamos... [...] As diferenças... ah, sim. Com minhas bons... com minhas amigas eu faço isso bastante, abraçar, sempre pego um contato físico, dá um beijinho e mostra o afeto com elas. E aqui é possível fazer também só com colegas, ou amigas que não são amigas de muito tempo, é bem mais fácil e eles não tomam como uma aproximação com algum... com intenção.*

***Entrevistadora:** Segunda intenção. Tá. Porque, na Alemanha é visto dessa forma, é isso?*

***Volker:** Ah, sim. Se você começa bem rápido a tocar uma pessoa, ou mostrar algum carinho, as coisas... é muito rápido, que eles acham que tem uma intenção atrás. É muito rápido, porque não é cultura, não é costume fazer isso lá. [46-year-old German manager of research and development (PhD degree)]*

Wulf, when confronted with the statement of fellow Germans who said that women in Germany do not like compliments on their physical appearance from strangers agreed and

suggested that to compliment is an act of intimacy and therefore when performed by a stranger it would be perceived as intrusive and impolite behavior.

Wulf: *Also in Deutschland wird es als Unangemessen erlebt, als zu intim, wenn man zum Beispiel zu einer fremden Frau sagt "Wow, du hast schöne Haare!" oder "Ich liebe deine Augen" oder...[...] Das ist nicht, das macht, das ist unhöflich in Deutschland. Und hier, würde ich mal sagen, ist es nicht so unhöflich. [47-year-old German medical computer scientist (PhD degree)]*

Further in his interview, Wulf explained that a kiss is for Germans something really intimate, since it involves contact with body fluids. And at another point he observed that also physical contact is regarded by Germans as an act of intimacy and that to be touched during conversation is regarded by many as unpleasant, while in Brazil it is much more natural.

Wulf: *Ja, also in Deutschland ist das schon, das ist schon sehr intim.*

Interviewerin: *Ein Zungenkuss ist schon sehr intim?*

Wulf: *Ja. Weil, naja, nur so als Begründung, weil das hat ja schon was mit Flüssigkeit zu tun, mit Austausch von Substanzen, /eh/, was eben in Deutschland eher als intim, also wirklich intim erlebt wird. [...] Also und der Zungenkuss ist halt schon eine sehr intime ((raunen)).. schon eine sehr intime Geste.*

[...]

Wulf: *(...) Selbst Berührungen sind glaub ich in Deutschland intimer. Also wenn wir zum Beispiel reden und beim Reden jemand sich berührt, Fremde, wird in Deutschland als unangenehm empfunden von vielen Leuten. Und das ist glaub ich hier viel selbstverständlicher. [47-year-old German medical computer scientist (PhD degree)]*

When observing that Brazilians tend to seek eye contact with strangers more than Germans do, Wulf explained that to establish eye contact with a stranger, like to offer compliments to a woman recently met, is unusual among Germans since it is regarded as an excessively intimate act.

Wulf: *Aber der Augenkontakt zu Fremden, der ist glaube ich hier [Brasilien] relevanter. Wird auch gelebt, gerade auch zu anderen Frauen oder Männer zu Frauen. Also [meine brasilianische Freundin] beschreibt oft, dass einer sie anguckt, einer mit ihr Blickkontakt hat und ich sehe das auch. Oder Männer gucken mich an als Partner von /ehm/.... Es gibt mehr Augenkontakt hier. Und in Deutschland wird Augenkontakt oft vermieden mit Fremden. .. Also gilt auch als, also wie die Berührung. Wir hatten das vorhin ja mit der, mit dem Kompliment hatten wir das, genau. Also zu einer fremden Frau ein Kompliment zu machen ist nicht so üblich in Deutschland. Und genauso ist auch Augenkontakt mit Fremden schon ziemlich.. eher intim. [47-year-old German medical computer scientist (PhD degree)]*

Anika, like Wulf, also observed that, in contrast to Brazilians, Germans tend to touch each other less in a conversation and therefore to regard it as odd when it happens. She argued that Germans touch less in interaction as an act of respect for each other. She added next that physical advances of men in a courtship situation in Germany would lead women to back away, since this unexpected behavior would be alarming.

Anika: *Wenig, also bei den Deutschen, wenn man sich kennen lernt, sind eher wenig Berührungen. Und das sehe jetzt natürlich auch im Vergleich mit Brasilianern, also da ist ja viel mehr Körperkontakt. Auch im Gespräch. Aber bei den Deutschen ist es schon sehr distanziert. Vielleicht soll damit auch Respekt dem Anderen gegenüber gezeigt werden, weil einfach die deutsche Mentalität anders ist. Und ich denke, es würden sich wahrscheinlich auch einige Deutsche sehr, sich deutsche Frauen wundere, wenn der Mann sie gleich anfassen würde. Ich glaube das wäre merkwürdig und sie würde dann vielleicht einen Schritt zurückgehen. Weil das wäre ihnen vielleicht*

ungeheuer. Also, dass es so schnell geht. Und.. ja, bei Brasilianer ist es wieder ganz anders. Da ist viel mehr Körperkontakt. [31-year-old German special education teacher (Masters degree)]

Later in her interview, Anika suggested that eye contact – like touching during a conversation – is an intrusion into the private sphere of the other. When explaining the tendency of Germans to avoid establishing eye contact in public spaces, Anika argued that it is an act of respect to others by not being intrusive.

Anika: [...] Ich denke auch, dass das Brasilianer, die Köpersprache und den Augenkontakt mehr nutzen. Also, ob im Alltag oder ob in der Beziehung. Ich denke, dass das mehr genutzt wird. Und das konnte ich auch in Brasilien sehen. Dass da viel mehr Körpersprache passiert als jetzt in Deutschland. In Deutschland ist, ist auch zurückhaltender. [...] Wegen Augenkontakt jetzt direkt. Also, jetzt richtig wörtlich genommen, Augenkontakt. Das ich wirklich mitkriege wer mir in die Augen guckt. Und in Brasilien wurde ich schon genau angeguckt. Das hatte ich's schon das Gefühl.

Interviewerin: Dass die Brasilianer intensiver gucken?

Anika: Ja.

Interviewerin: Aber wie interpretierst du das?

Anika: ...Zurückhaltung. ..Vielleicht soll es auch so eine Art respektvolles Verhalten von den Deutschen sein, dass man halt nicht gleich.. so wie beim Flirten auch, dass es vielleicht eine Art respektvolles Verhalten sein soll. Oder ausdrücken soll, dass man eher dann nicht gleich so direkt guckt. Vielleicht, Schüchternheit, Unsicherheit. Dass man dann weniger den Augenkontakt sucht. [...] Also dass was ich gerade gesagt habe. Also. Respekt, Schüchternheit. Ja, das man das andere Individuum erstmals so lässt und nicht bedrängt. [31-year-old German special education teacher (Masters degree)]

Lina, when answering how she perceives a compliment on her physical appearance, noted – like Volker – that when it comes from a stranger she perceives it as a cheap approach and feels disrespected, while when it comes from her boyfriend she perceives it as nice and sincere, and therefore takes it as pleasant. By pointing out that giving compliments is accepted between close persons but not between strangers, Lina suggests that it is an act of intimacy.

Lina: Also, kommt darauf an von wem das ist. Also, wenn das [Kompliment] jetzt von jemandem ist den ich nicht kenne, der mich blöd anmacht. Also, egal jetzt ob Brasilianer oder Deutsche. Dann nervt mich das, dann bin ich beleidigt. Aber wenn das jetzt von meinem Freund kommt, der das einfach nett und ehrlich meint, dann freue ich mich darüber. [25-year-old German Bachelors student in Music (high-school degree)]

Jens, when describing how he feels embarrassed when praised and does not know what to answer, noted that for him it is awkward to be praised, especially in front of other people, suggesting that such practice belongs to intimate relationships.

Jens: Na, innerlich werde ich bestimmt immer rot. ... Kompliment () ((flüsternd)) Ich glaube ich bleibe dann schüchtern und erwidere nicht unbedingt etwas.

Interviewerin: Aber stört dich oder gefällt dir das?

Jens: ((ins Wort fallend)) Bestimmt .. gefallen? Bestimmt stört es mich ein bisschen. Es hängt bestimmt auch von der Situation ab. Wenn es von Person zu Person ist, dann kann ich damit umgehen, aber nicht, wenn andere Leute dabei sind.

Interviewerin: Aha, wenn andere Leute zuhören?

Jens: /ehm/ Ich glaube da hätte ich mehr Probleme damit. [28-year-old German Masters student in Sociology (high-school degree)]

Detlev suggested in his interview that kissing is an act of intimacy. He argued that Germans regard their body as a constitutive part of their intimate sphere and therefore they are more

careful with any physical contact in order not to get emotionally involved before they are sure that they want to engage in an intimate relationship with the other.

Detlev: [...] [contato físico] *Diversão que faz parte, não tem como julgar. É uma diversão aceitável. Só o tempo, né, a hora que entra nesse jogo de se conhecer, né. Falando de jogos, do que conhece, você fala, você faz, você faz atividades e aí. Eu só quis dizer, que lá você vai a um cinema.. a um museu, você vai fazer um passeio de domingo à tarde pra conversar, pra se conhecer. Isso é gostoso! Aí depois, você se abre mais pessoalmente, seu coração. Você abre aos poucos, né. Mas o significado é maior, sempre é assim, né. Se você demora mais, aí a decisão tem mais peso, mas é.. envergadura, do que aqui. Isso não é um julgamento nenhum, só uma. Eu acho que isso faz sentido de valores. [...]. Só para ficar nesta visão interessante, o próprio corpo humano é para nós é uma parte. Pra nós, na minha experiência, com meus amigos, no meu contexto social e tudo, é uma parte íntima, né. Aí, isso pode demorar um pouco, né, para não me machucar com alguma coisa. E isso aqui [Brasil] já é o contrário. Aí, pra ficar nesse exemplo, é uma imagem cruzada. ((risos)) [37-year-old German higher-education teacher (PhD degree)]*

Beate also argued that a kiss seems to be more special or intimate for Germans than it is for Brazilians, since the former do not apply it as quickly in an encounter as the latter.

Beate: *Ja... ich denke schon. Also eigentlich, ich würde jetzt irgendwie nicht sagen mein Gott, hier ist ein Zungenkuss jetzt so was Besonderes wie das erste Mal. Das ist es natürlich auch nicht, ja. Aber.. dadurch das vielleicht nicht ganz so schnell damit umgegangen wird, ist es vielleicht schon etwas Intimeres oder ein bisschen was womit gewartet wird. [27-year-old German language teacher and PhD student in Linguistics (Masters degree)]*

Brazilian respondents, on the other hand, may have mentioned that courtship acts engender intimacy, yet they do not regard them at any time as being an incursion into the private sphere of the other and involving the risk of being intrusive or disrespectful. Juliana, for example, observed that kissing is an intimate act for Germans and Brazilians; however, it seems that the regional groups attribute to physical contact different degrees of intimacy. According to her, because of the common use of physical contact in ordinary interaction in Brazil, the exchange of kisses seems to be perceived by Brazilians as a less intimate act than it is perceived by Germans, and therefore it is also applied with less concern by the former than by the latter.

Juliana: [...] *Os corpos [no Brasil] se encostam muito. E sei lá, você está descobrindo a vida ainda, mas esse contato ele já tem. Então é muito comum assim. Tanto que para a gente o beijo talvez não seja tão íntimo. Porque o contato físico para a gente é uma coisa constante. Então o beijo, ele é uma expressão. Ele já é da ordem da normalidade. Então quando você dá um beijo, na verdade. Claro que é íntimo, não vou dizer que não é íntimo. E eu acho que tem os graus. Há diferença, né, entre pessoas que conseguem ficar com 15 caras numa noite de carnaval. E outras pessoas que não conseguem fazer isso. Mas mesmo assim, em comparação com o alemão, isso é para gente, é mais fácil você dar um beijo em alguém. Bem mais fácil, bem mais descomplicado, assim. [31-year-old Brazilian PhD student in Sociology (Masters degree)]*

Further in her interview, Juliana, who in her statement on page 94 asserted that Germans tend to rely above all on eye contact to express their interest in courtship, also noticed that Germans tend to attribute more value to eye contact, to regard it as a movement into the intimate sphere of the other, while in Brazil eye contact is not as “deep” as in Germany. And because eye contact in Germany has a higher significance, observes Juliana, it bothers them when someone stares.

Juliana: [...] *Porque assim, a gente falou, né. Que o olhar aqui tem um p e s o assim, né. Porque o olhar, é como se você olhar para o alemão. Tem isso que você falou, da esfera íntima. É como se você entrasse nele. Você olhou para os meus olhos, então você entrou em mim. Entende? E eu acho que o nosso olhar no Brasil ele não é tão profundo. Então ele circula! E aqui não. Quando ele olha,*

ele o l h a! Então aquele olhar, assim, que eles se incomodam, porque ele entra no olhar dele! [31-year-old Brazilian PhD student in Sociology (Masters degree)]

Vanessa, like Juliana, also affirmed that Germans tend more than Brazilians to consider a kiss an intimate act, that they tend to kiss less than Brazilians and that they usually give more intensive kisses when they want to have sex. Brazilians, on the other hand, according to her, tend to enjoy kissing and to kiss more often than Germans, and they do not tend like Germans to relate kissing with sex.

Vanessa: Ah, sobre valor, não sei. Brasileiro é beijoqueiro. Tanto mulher como homem, acho que eles são beijoqueiros, alemães são menos, eu acho. Acho que em relação ao beijo, é uma coisa muito mais íntima do que para nós, para nós a gente já beija, tá bom. É mais normal para brasileiro beijar do que... eles têm o beijo como uma coisa muito íntima, uma coisa muito ligada, assim, beija quando está... eles gostam de beijar... beija, assim, mas um beijo profundo eles gostam de dar quando vai n a m o r a r, está na cama, eles gostam de dar aquele b e i j o, aquela coisa mais... eles têm, eles valorizam o beijo muito, assim, sobre relacionar beijo com intimidade, muito mais profundo do que... o brasileiro você está lá, beija, ((som de beijo)), daqui a pouco "tchau", "tchau" ((risos)). Eles são mais... é, acham que... não é por aí. Tem mais valor um beijo. Não sei se.. [...] Brasileiro já aceita o beijo mais natural, né. Alemão dá um beijo de língua já quer ir para a cama, eu acho ((risos)). Já é relacionado beijo com sexo, alguma coisa assim, desse gênero. [40-year-old Brazilian housewife (high-school degree)]

Guilherme, by reporting that his German wife tended to interpret his tendency to use physical contact when greeting someone as an overly intense expression of affection and therefore as flirting, made the same observation as Volker on his statement on page 128, that Germans tend to regard physical contact as an intimate act and when coming from strangers or acquaintances they tend to regard it as flirtation.

Guilherme: Não são os dois beijinhos que eu te d e i. Mas talvez a minha forma de tratar você, a nossa convivência, pode levar a Heidi, por exemplo, a falar assim 'Ah, você trata ela muito bem. Você não acha que você está exagerando?' Exagerando em que? Se é a mesma maneira de tratar uma pessoa, né. Então, eu vou chegar para você, eu vou te dar dois beijinhos e se possível te dou um abraço, mas eu não dou dois beijos num homem porque não é cultural no nosso país. Mas um abraço, se for um cara, uma pessoa, que eu já tenha um contato maior, eu prefiro dar um abraço do que dar um aperto de mão. E aí, se isso acontece com uma mulher, às vezes, a minha companheira toma isso como mal. Em consequência também da interpretação dessa pessoa em consequência do meu abraço. Às vezes, ela interpreta o meu abraço como uma coisa muito ruim. Como não tem uma característica de segundas intenções, né. Ou não tem uma característica sexual, né. Não tem. Mas é assim que muitas das vezes é interpretado. [41-year-old Brazilian fight tutor (high-school degree)]

It seems that the advanced individualization process in Germany in a context of an advanced democracy and welfare state seems to encourage individuals in Germany to be more concerned in safeguarding the boundaries of their private sphere; therefore they would tend to regard acts of courtship – like eye contact, mentions of physical appearance (compliments), personal conversation, touch, kissing – as acts of intimacy and would tend to be careful and subtle when applying courtship acts so as not to be intrusive or disrespectful.⁸⁰ Consequently,

⁸⁰ Although the role of democracy and the welfare state over the definition of intimacy is emphasized here, it must be considered that other social structures and social-historical factors may also have an important role in modelling the understanding of intimacy in Germany, such as, for example, the history of scrutiny of the private sphere by the state experienced during the National Socialist period or in the Socialist Republic of the GDR.

as observed in the previous chapter on the description of courtship between strangers, individuals in Germany would tend to avoid making eye contact in public spaces, or approaching someone without previous eye contact, or offering compliments on physical appearance, or approaching personal subjects at the beginning of a conversation, or assertively touching someone, or kissing someone too soon. At the same time, unexpected or unsolicited acts of intimacy tend to be taken by individuals in Germany as offensive, and may engender in-kind reactions, as the statements of Volker on page 91, Rosa on page 92 and Karl on page 93 illustrate when they observe that in Germany individuals can regard eye contact as offensive and therefore react negatively. Or the statement of Sybille on page 99, in which she observed that to be approached without previous eye contact is regarded as offensive in Germany.

The greater awareness in Germany of the boundaries between oneself and the other and the greater concern about the limits of each other's freedom also helps to explain the longer amount of time that individuals in Germany spend on the first two phases of courtship – the prelude and approach phases. Regarding acts of courtship as incursions into the private sphere of the other, a too-rapid behavior or the skipping of a phase, as observed above, may be regarded as intrusive or disrespectful. By taking time to evaluate each other's interest in courtship at each phase, individuals increase the chance of a successful courtship.

In Brazil, on the other hand, where the liberal democratic discourses are less disseminated than in Germany, where peace and democratic rights are not taken for granted and prosperity and social security have not reached high levels, the individualization process is more moderate. Less aware of liberal democratic principles and enjoying less individual autonomy, individuals in Brazil are less concerned about boundaries between the self and others and about protecting them than are individuals in a context of advanced democracy and welfare state such as Germany.⁸¹ Consequently, individuals in Brazil tend not to regard acts of courtship as an incursion into the private sphere of the other, and to show less concern about such acts being intrusive or disrespectful. Therefore, as observed in the previous description of courtship with a stranger, they would tend to make eye contact more frequently in public spaces, or to approach someone without previous eye contact, or to offer compliments on someone's physical appearance, or to approach personal subjects at the beginning of a conversation, to touch someone assertively, or to kiss someone sooner in an encounter. The lesser concern about autonomy and possible threats to one's privacy seems to lead individuals in Brazil not to regard unexpected or unsolicited eye contact, physical contact or personal conversation as offensive as individuals in Germany tend to do, and since "rushing" or skipping a phase in courtship does not necessarily increase the risk of rejection, individuals in Brazil would tend to move faster through the courtship encounter by skipping the prelude phase and/or keeping the conversation short.

⁸¹ As noted previously, other social structures and socio-historical factors also play a role in modelling the understanding of intimacy in each region. In Brazil, for example, one may consider that the social organization of families, their broad extension and close-knit structure, may lead to a relativization of the individual's private sphere.

It seems that the different progress of the individualization process in Germany and in Brazil due to the different socio-historical trajectories of liberal democracy and the welfare state in those nations may lead individuals to enjoy different degrees of individual autonomy and therefore to have different degrees of awareness about each other's "privacy", different concepts of the limits of each other's freedom, and consequently to regard courtship acts as being more, of less, intimate.

As mentioned previously, liberal democracy has been the platform for many social movements in the last decades. Defending the individual's right to liberty, equality and justice, democratic discourses have furthered the formation of political identities and helped minorities to fight for better conditions. Among those movements, the feminist one has been responsible for engendering the most significant changes in the realms of intimacy, by introducing democratic discourses into the interaction between the sexes. Nevertheless, like democracy and the welfare state, the feminist movement has developed differently in Germany and in Brazil, leading to different gender relations and consequently to different courtship dynamics, as will be observed next.

6.2. Feminism

Regarding the relations between the sexes in terms of power, feminists argue that an androcentric view of the world has been sustaining masculine social domination by grounding it in biological differences between the sexes. Promoting masculinity and femininity as relational concepts that are opposed and complementary to each other, the androcentric discourse has been favoring men and excluding women from the most prestigious tasks and most powerful positions – in politics and the labor market; delegating them to unworthy places – at the edge of the road or embankment; teaching them how to hold their bodies – bowed down before respectable men; and assigning them to degrading and difficult tasks – such as cleaning (Bourdieu 2001:24). Social institutions, such as the state, the church, the family and the educational system, have important roles in the perpetuation of the androcentric view of the world, since their traditional practices and assumptions help to corroborate and reinforce masculine domination, and to discourage and punish inappropriate behaviors (Bourdieu 2001:25).

According to scholars (Bourdieu 2001; Giddens 1992; Illouz 2012), love relations are a privileged context in which to observe the gender dynamic. Even with the weakening of the patriarchy in early modernity, the androcentric perspective of the world oriented the emerging nuclear family and the essentialist and complementary two-sex model in which it is based. Women may have been granted more autonomy in the private sphere with the rise of the nuclear family, but in order to preserve their virtue and achieve moral and social appreciation, they still needed to be reserved in expressing their romantic emotions and sexual longing, which consequently led them to adopt a passive position in courtship (Illouz 2012:62). Men, on the other hand, were allowed to express their romantic emotions and sexual longing more forcefully, and with the aim of marriage to improve their social, moral, and economic position, adopted an active position in courtship (Illouz 2012:63).

As Bourdieu (2001:21) observes, the social relation of domination still present in sexual relations is a reflection of the fundamental principle of the modern division between the sexes, which establishes women as passive and men as active. This principle orients male domination and female subordination, by inculcating in men the desire for possession, as eroticized domination, and in women the desire for masculine domination, as eroticized subordination or eroticized recognition of domination (Bourdieu 2001:21). In this sense, the sexual harassment of men over women has been not only the pure affirmation of social male domination, but also an expression of the embodied male desire for sexual possession of women, who – having been raised in a male-dominated context – tend to accept this and also desire it (Bourdieu 2001:21). As Bourdieu (2001:23) emphasizes, since the dispositions inscribed in the individuals' bodies – i.e. habitus – unconsciously orient their practices, individuals, by performing traditional prescriptions of gender, have been helping to sustain the dominant social order by inadvertently reproducing the social inequalities between the sexes.

The different socialization of men and women in European and American societies in regard to sexual [amorous] relations, observes Bourdieu (2001:20), have also led them to develop different perspectives on amorous relations: while men tend to regard love relations in terms of conquest – especially in conversations with male friends – and the sexual act itself as a form of domination, appropriation and “possession”, women tend to regard sexuality as an intimate and emotionally highly charged experience (Bourdieu 2001:20).

Adopting liberal democratic discourses, the feminist movement in Western societies in the last decades has been fighting to improve women's conditions in society and has achieved many political and social benefits for women – like the right to vote, to study and to work, better remuneration, the weakening of double standards benefitting men, the reduction of prejudices and violence against women – which have granted them more autonomy and decreased the inequality between the sexes. Nevertheless, since each country presents a particular socio-historical trajectory – and consequently a different field constellation in which feminists have been fighting – the degree of autonomy achieved by women in each society varies. For example, the last wave of feminist movements was in the 1960s and 1970s, when women struggled for equality between the sexes by rejecting the legitimations of differences between men and women based on religion or biology and criticizing many double standards that had favored men – such as the sexual division of work and the restriction of female sexuality to marriage (Del Priori 2005:13; Duarte 2003:165; Giddens 1992a:44-45; Lenz 2010:870). As Illouz (2012:46) observes, in reconceptualizing sexuality as political, feminists turned orgasmic sexuality and mutual pleasure into moral acts of affirmation of autonomy and equality. The exercise of sexuality became a way for women to affirm themselves socially, to express their individual autonomy (Illouz 2012:46). Nevertheless, while the feminists in Germany could concentrate on the sexual revolution, in Brazil, the socio-historical context of the 1970s meant that the feminists joined the major political movement against the military dictatorship and censorship, and for the re-democratization of the nation, the amnesty of political prisoners and a better quality of life (Duarte 2003:165).

Supported by the advancing democracy and the welfare state, women in Germany started in the 1970s to ally themselves with institutions such as churches, universities, political parties and organizations, giving birth to women's politics [*Frauenpolitik*] (Lenz 2010:872). The combined efforts of the feminist movement, of women in politics fighting for equality [*Gleichstellungspolitikerinnen*] and of female scientists denouncing inequalities have promoted, since the 1980s, many mobilizations that have enabled important legal reforms that benefitted women and decreased the inequality between the sexes in Germany (Lenz 2010:875).

In Brazil, on the other hand, the absence of democracy and a weak welfare state in the 1970s restricted the feminist movement. A strong antifeminist discourse arose in the same decade, appealing for the return to traditional forms of masculinity and femininity and presenting men as victims in the process of change (Del Priori 2005:305). By suggesting that feminists were "unloved women, macho, ugly and... the opposite of 'feminine'", this antifeminist movement promoted a prejudice that seems to haunt the term until today (Duarte 2003:151). At the end of the 1970s and throughout the 1980s, feminists in Brazilian universities founded the first research groups, institutes and scientific magazines dedicated to women (Duarte 2003:167). However, the assimilation of the new academic discussions on gender coming from other countries starting in the 1990s contributed further to the weakening of the feminist movement, which lost its privileged place in the academic world among the emerging fields of cultural studies and homosexual studies (Duarte 2003:167).

The strength of feminism in Germany and its broad institutionalization enabled feminists to keep their fight against gender inequality active and visible in society, while in Brazil the restricted institutionalization of the feminist movement in the academy and its dilution later in the new discussions on gender did not have the same effect. The stronger presence of feminists in public life in Germany than in Brazil consequently makes discussions on gender inequality a more common subject in the former society than in the latter, with individuals in Germany more aware than individuals in Brazil of such matters, as could be observed during the interviews. While it was common for German respondents to mention matters of gender inequality, such as machismo, objectification and harassment, only a few Brazilian respondents broached those subjects.

The different trajectories of feminism in Germany and in Brazil achieved different degrees of autonomy for women and consequently led in contemporary society to different degrees of inequality between the sexes. The Gender Inequality Index (GII) provided by the United Nations Development Programme (2014) offers a reference for inequality between the sexes in 152 countries. By revealing how women are less favored than men in reproductive health, empowerment and the labor market – which reflects discriminatory practices and social norms that have negative repercussions for the development of women's capabilities and freedom of choice – the GII indicates the areas which need critical policy to overcome systematic disadvantages against women. According to the Human Development Report 2014, Germany belongs to the countries with a low index of gender inequality, being in 3rd

place in the rankings of equality; Brazil, however, shows up in the rankings at 85th place, with an index value above the average in Latin America and the Caribbean (2014:172-173).

As the GII (2014) indicates, feminism in Germany has achieved more autonomy for women than feminism in Brazil and while women in Germany experience more equal relations to men in their social lives, in Brazil the opposite seems to be true. The following statements from Jens and Julho help to illustrate this. In his interview Jens reported his surprise at noticing the pressure on women in Brazil to engage in a relationship in order to receive social appreciation, which led them to sustain long-term relationship even with partners who mistreated them.

Jens: (...) Was für mich neu war, ich glaube.. Eine Mitbewohnerin z.B. ging mit Typen zusammen, die sie schlecht behandelt haben, da meinten die anderen. Ihr ist es gerade wichtig überhaupt mal einen Freund mal wieder zu haben. Einen Festen. Und da meinte sie: ‚Ja, Jens, das ist so ist das in Brasilien!‘ Aber das ist jetzt nur von einer anderen Brasilianerin, die mir Brasilien erklären wollte, wo ich dann auch immer dachte: Hier steht ein hoher Druck auf Frauen, dann irgendwann ab Mitte Zwanzig einen festen Freund zu haben. Oder vielleicht auch Ende Zwanzig. Und das habe ich auch so beobachtet. [...] Ja, das hatte ich hier mit der. Ja, das hier ja. Das hatte ich mit der Deutschen nicht so das Gefühl, dass es ihr wichtig wäre überhaupt eine Beziehung zu haben. (...) Vorher kannte ich nicht diesen Druck. [28-year-old German Masters student in Sociology (high-school degree)]

A counterexample to Jens's observation could be found in the interview with Julho, who stated his surprised at observing that women in Germany go out alone or only with female friends without needing male company. Julho argued that while in Germany women can do everything alone, in Brazil, when women get to a particular age, they need a man to be able to do certain things.

Julho: (...) Uma coisa nova aqui na Alemanha, para mim, foi perceber que as mulheres saem, saem com as amigas, saem para beber, saem para dançar, saem para jantar fora, ou para ir ao teatro, ao cinema. Tudo sozinha ou com as amigas, sem precisar de uma companhia masculina para fazer determinadas coisas. E no Brasil tem uma certa idade de que as mulheres precisam de um homem para fazer determinadas coisas. [29-year-old Brazilian Masters student in Journalism (Bachelors degree)]

The different degree of autonomy enjoyed by women in each society consequently affects the courtship dynamic, as will be observed along the following sections. Nevertheless, the discourses disseminated by feminists in their fight to improve conditions for women in each society are what seem to more significantly affect amorous interactions and to lead today to particular courtship dynamics in each region, as will be observed next.

6.2.1. Germany

As observed previously in the theoretical chapter on love, in aiming to make power relations explicit, feminists have been attempting to unravel the web of implicit meanings in which power hides and aestheticizes itself (Illouz 2012:186). Studies on kinship and marriage alliances, for example, have shown that women have been – and in some nations still are – regarded as an object in the matrimonial market, serving the economic and social interests of the men controlling their clans, nations and families (Bourdieu 2001:42-43). Since the image that a person has of himself/herself depends on how he/she is perceived by others, observes Bourdieu (2001:63), the female habitus and its actualization in the androcentric social world reinforces the objectification of women, their experience as a body-for-others. Women's

bodies “exist first through the and for the gaze of others, that is, as welcoming, attractive and available objects” (Bourdieu 2001:66). Being defined by men as feminine – i.e. smiling, friendly, submissive, beautiful, etc. – women contribute to their own objectification by inadvertently reproducing men’s expectations of them when performing their gender habitus, i.e. by following their “disposition” towards appearances, like attention to image, body form, behavior, and so forth (Bourdieu 2001:99). In other words, since women are treated as aesthetic objects, they also see themselves as such and behave accordingly.

Grounded in such criticism of traditional masculine and feminine conduct, feminists in Germany have been pushing women to break with tradition, to act differently, to reject traditional male behavior. Many gentlemanly behaviors became reinterpreted by feminists over the last decades as expressions of male symbolic dominance, and have consequently begun to be rejected by women. Nevertheless, as the data in this study suggest, the significant dissemination of feminist criticism of traditional courtship practices in recent decades seems to have led men in contemporary Germany to reject them as well.

Compliments on physical appearance, for example, seem to be generally regarded by individuals in Germany as an act of objectification and therefore strongly rejected when coming from a stranger, as the statements of Lina on page 102, Beate on page 103 and Karl on page 104 already illustrate. At another point in her interview, when confronted with the statements of other respondents that women in Germany tend to dislike compliments on their physical appearance at the beginning of courtship, Lina agreed. She observed that women tend to consider that the man is only interested in their appearance. Further she admits in her interview that it is quite a paradox, since in the first moment of courtship there is not much other information available about each other than physical appearance.

Lina: Ja. Also da stimme ich dir zu. Sowohl mit dem das das. Das ich auch die Beobachtung teile also das das von deutschen Frauen nicht gerne gesehen wird. Dass die denken: „Hä? Der interessiert sich nur für mein Aussehen“ und beleidigt sind. Aber das es genauso paradox ist, weil sie in einer Kennlernsituation wie gesagt gibt es ja noch nichts Anderes. Also das ist auch problematisiert an der Stelle einfach wieder. Dann wird einfach diese Flirtsituation total problematisiert an der Stelle. [25-year-old German Bachelors student in Music (high-school degree)]

Jens also explained in his interview how compliments on physical appearance are an act of machismo, since they objectify the person and ignore him/her as a human being. When comparing the use of compliments in Germany and in Brazil, Jens observed that while in Latin America compliments are applied in an excessive way, in Germany they are applied with caution, since German women are much more critical of them. He also observed that he was always careful with using compliments in Germany, first because he was raised knowing that compliments can be negatively regarded by others, and second because of what he learned when studying Gender at university.

Jens: Ich glaube, in Brasilien gebe ich mehr Lob. Da bin ich mit einer anderen Sprache aufgewachsen. Oder rein gewachsen Ja. Also, .. ich habe auch vorher zwei Jahre in Mexiko gelebt, also war jetzt insgesamt 3 1/2 Jahre drüben in Lateinamerika und bin schon .. Ich glaube, weil es .. Ich habe für mich diese Sprache Spanisch und den Gebrauch von Lob und Komplimenten oder Worten 'Ich liebe dich' so verstanden, dass es inflationär gebraucht wird und darum habe ich selbst nicht mehr so viel Angst es zu nutzen.

Interviewerin: Aber vorher hattest du Angst es zu nutzen?

Jens: Weil es für mich immer noch eine andere Bedeutung hat. Eine engere Bedeutung. Oder ich Angst habe, ich verspreche zu viel. Einer Frau oder ich erwecke falsche Hoffnungen oder ich will eigentlich das gar nicht sagen.

Interviewerin: Aber wie funktioniert das mit Komplimenten? Hast du auch Angst Komplimente zu machen?

Jens: Ich glaube schon. Ich bin, glaube ich, aufgewachsen hier und bin vorsichtig mit Komplimenten. /ehm/ Also .. ich habe mir das so erklärt /ehm/ die Schönheit oder das Äußere einer Frau oder einer Person zu charakterisieren, daraufhin auch ein Lob zu geben, objektiviert sie auch irgendwo. Also es macht eine Frau auch mehr zum Objekt und lässt sie nicht als die Person. Sondern es wird ja, eigentlich, ja Schönheit, die viel durch Make-Up oder eine Menge Kunstwerk am Körper, um den Körper .. Also, wo eine Menge Arbeit am Körper stattgefunden hat. Dann aber am Körper und nicht am Menschen. Ich glaube aber, diesen Konflikt, den ist man durch eine andere Art Feminismus hat man den. Also darum .. Ich gebe aus solchen Gründen würde ich hier viel weniger Lob geben, weil ich den Eindruck habe, ich .. das ist eigentlich überhaupt das Gegenteil von Kompliment. Ich reduziere die Frau auf ein Objekt. Das mag jetzt (sein?) "der Jens, jetzt tut er so als ob er" ((lachend)). Also ich glaube schon, dass ich damit groß geworden bin in einer Gesellschaft wo man Lob nicht so viel gibt an Schönheit, weil das eigentlich auch kritisiert wird. Auch von vielen Frauen. Und ich habe irgendwann auch angefangen Gender-Studies zu studieren. Und da bin ich vorsichtig. Und weiß eigentlich auch was es häufig bedeuten kann. Es ist eine Objektivierung. [28-year-old German Masters student in Sociology (high-school degree)]

As the reports of respondents indicate, however, it is not that feminists in Germany have only identified traditional courtship practices as machismo; they have also relied particularly on discourses about the supremacy of the mind over the body⁸² to weaken the essentialist and complementary two-sex model that has sustained the inequality between the sexes. As observed in the reports of male and female German respondents on courtship, traditional expressions of attraction, like approaching someone without previous eye contact, making compliments on their physical appearance, or touching them assertively, tend to be negatively regarded by individuals in Germany as a direct expression of sexual interest, or primitive conduct, or less-cultivated behavior. Like Lina on her statement on page 130, Ulla also noted in her interview that in Germany compliments on physical appearance offered by strange men are understood as a naked expression of physical attraction and therefore as a cheap flirtation.

Ulla: (...) Und wenn das [Kompliment] von Fremden kommt, eben vor allem von Männern, dann ist es halt hier schnell so eine.. Also wenn es sich auf Äußerlichkeiten bezieht, "Ah, das ist ja eine blöde Anmache". [...] Also vor allem wenn es von Männern kommt. Dann denkt man, "Ach super, ist dem jetzt nichts Besseres eingefallen als mein Kleid toll zu finden, oder was?!" [25-year-old German Masters student in Literary and Cultural Studies (high-school degree)]

When attempting to explain why Germans tend to take longer to kiss someone in an encounter than Brazilians, Jens observed that to kiss someone too soon in an encounter in Germany would be an assault upon the other person, since they are strangers to each other – which suggests, as observed previously, that a kiss would be an act of intimacy, a movement in the private sphere of the other in Germany. Subsequently, Jens noticed that in Germany to kiss someone too soon is perceived critically or as a reduction of the other to his/her physical

⁸² As observed in the theoretical chapter on love, since ancient times scholars have been furthering a discourse of the supremacy of the mind over the body by pointing out reason as a sufficient means to reach the Good [in ancient Greece], God [in Christendom], and knowledge [in the modern era], and encouraging a disregard for and scepticism towards the physical senses.

attractiveness, ignoring his/her personal traits – i.e. as an act of objectifying the other – and/or as a “primitive” and “too simple behavior” – i.e. uncultivated behavior. According to him, nobody wants to be regarded as simple or primitive; individuals want to convince the other, to be sure of the other’s common interest in courtship, and therefore people in Germany take a longer time to kiss. Further, he observed in his interview that to kiss a person too quickly would lead him/her to contemplate “How simple is he, that he would think that I am as simple as he is?!”.

Jens: Auch, wenn beide [in Deutschland] denken ‚Mensch, total toll‘. Wenn beide es denken und beide sich das auch.. Große Augen machen. Ja, ja, ja.. Und sich näherkommen und die Hand auf den anderen Arm legen. Aber man knutscht sich nicht sofort. Das könnte.. Das liegt, glaube ich, am fehlenden Mut, und nicht, weil man es nicht macht. Und fehlender Mut, weil keine Praxis da ist. Keine Praxis. Weil keiner anfängt. Keine Ahnung... Weil es auch doch wieder ein Angriff auf die Persönlichkeit der Frau sein könnte. Oder Angriff.. Die Frau würde genauso denken. Ein Angriff auf die Persönlichkeit. Und ich kenne den Menschen ja nicht. Würde ich ihn gleich küssen wollen, ist es zu simpel. Es gilt als primitiv. Ich kenne die Person ja nicht. Knutschen würde ich gerne mit dem. Vielleicht.. Klar sagt jeder ‚Ach, mit dem ins Bett. Natürlich tolles Abenteuer‘ /eh/ Aber eigentlich, wenn man zu schnell knutscht, oder auf das Körperliche geht, ist es ja eine Reduktion oder eine Simplifizierung. Ich weiß jetzt nicht wie ich sagen soll. Dann würde man sagen ‚Ach, ich halte dich erst einmal für schön. Mehr interessiert mich nicht. Deine Schönheit reicht mir‘. Das würde es ja bedeuten sich so schnell sich mit jemandem zu küssen. [...] Ja, darum spricht man auch viel länger? Man will die Person wirklich erobern, oder sichergehen.. Na, will nicht primitiv sein. Simpel. Zu simpel. Und man will nicht primitiv sein und den anderen eben nicht als primitiv abstempeln, was man machen würde, würde ich die Person gleich küssen. Dann denkt der ‚ich bin so einfach‘, oder ‚Wie einfach ist der denn? Wie simpel ist dieser Typ, dass er denkt auch, dass ich so simple bin?!‘. [28-year-old German Masters student in Sociology (high-school degree)]

The higher concern in protecting one’s autonomy due to the advanced individualization process in Germany, combined with the feminist critique of traditional courtship practices, seems to have led women in Germany to adopt a defensive position in courtship. As the reports of respondents indicate, by considering courtship acts as acts of intimacy and traditional courtship practices as machismo, women in Germany tend to regard them as really offensive, especially when coming from a stranger, and some of them may respond to them accordingly. Volker, for example, when reporting about compliments, noted that in Germany, to pay a compliment to an unfamiliar person can earn the man an exclamation of very strong defiance and contempt, since it is regarded as a macho behavior and a woman would attempt to establish a distance. In Brazil, observed Volker, the machismo allows men to pay compliments freely; however, he observes that Brazilian women seem to enjoy it.

Volker: Se você faz uma coisa dessa falando "oi, olha que linda você está", sem conhecer a mulher muito bem, elas responderam como "fick dich ins Knie", como "vai foder-se no joelho", em alemão. É uma coisa muito, muito forte. Para manter a distância, né, "ah, que isso, né, o jeito disso, você é um macho, um macho". [...] Não, não era possível. Isso é bem diferente aqui no Brasil, por exemplo. Ou em latino-americano. Um lado porque, também é um lado machista, que os homens têm a liberdade de poder fazer isso, e eles sentem na liberdade, mas também eu vi que as mulheres também gostam, de um certo maneira. Ou estão acostumados com isso e sabem responder, também. E não ficam insegura, e essas coisas. [46-year-old German manager of research and development (PhD degree)]

Sybill, who affirmed in her statement on page 99 that men in Germany are “slightly slow” in approaching women and therefore she is usually the one to do it, explained further in her interview that the behavior of German men is an act of respect towards women and that they

do not want to be regarded as macho. According to her, to approach women or attempt to kiss them too quickly in Germany is easily regarded as machismo and may yield a man a slap in the face. She concluded that in Germany the approach should come from both parties or from the woman. She noticed that with her Brazilian boyfriend it was different, since he kissed her first, which she found surprising. Later in her interview, she affirmed that she would never approach someone without previous eye contact and noted that if a man in Germany does so it would be considered odd and disrespectful, an act of machismo. When describing her courtship experiences in Brazil, she reported that Brazilians would often approach her without previous eye contact, i.e. without her acquiescence, which she regarded as a macho behavior.

Sybille: ... Na, ich glaube sie haben schon so ein bisschen Respekt vor Frauen. So, dass, also sie wollen nicht der Macho sein. Das geht sehr schnell ins Machogehabe, wenn man auf eine Frau zugeht und sie einfach küsst. Da kann man sich schnell eine Backpfeife einfangen oder so. /ehm/ [...] Also, dass gilt einfach so ein bisschen als so, so ein Machotyp dann. Das will man, glaube ich, nicht so richtig. Wenn dann muss es entweder Gegenseitig so kommen oder eher von der Frau. Aber auch mit, Paulo [Brasilianischer Freund] heißt er, /ehm//ehm/der hat mich zuerst geküsst. Was ich auch überrascht fand. Ja, da war es auch umgekehrt. [...]

Interviewerin: [...] Würdest du Jemand ansprechen ohne Augenkontakt?

Sybille: Nee.

Interviewerin: Okay, man muss zuerst Augenkontakt herstellen.

Sybille: Ja. Also, ohne Augenkontakt. Wenn man auch ohne Augenkontakt angesprochen wird, empfindet man das als total Machohaft und /ehm/, komisch. ,Warum der sich jetzt? Was der sich jetzt raus nimmt, einen jetzt anzusprechen!' Also, das. Ohne Augenkontakt geht vorher geht überhaupt nicht. [...] ((lachend)) Also, die [Brasilianern] haben mich immer zuerst angesprochen bevor sie Augenkontakt mit mir hergestellt hatten. Was ich als machohaft empfinde, dann. Also, ich bin da ein paar Mal auf der Straße, entweder von der Seite, einfach so angesprochen worden. Oder auch im Club, abends. [25-year-old German Masters student in Law (high-school degree)]

As the statement of Sybille already indicates, the defensive position of women during courtship in Germany seems to leave men unsure about how to act in an encounter and afraid to engage in courtship. Like Jens in his statement on page 99, who admitted that he was always afraid that the women would feel annoyed if he took the initiative to approach them, Karl also observed in his interview the fear of men in Germany in engaging in courtship. When explaining about the use of compliments in courtship, Karl observed that while in Germany women tend to regard negatively the man who makes them, in Brazil women tend to be glad about the compliment, and observed that in Brazil men are less afraid of saying something wrong.

Karl: (...) Dann sagt der Mann halt dieses Kompliment /eh/ und die Brasilianerinnen freuen sich darüber. Die Deutschen fassen sich an den Kopf und sagen: "Ja, was ist das für einer". [...] Das ist auf jeden Fall ein riesen Unterschied. Da hat man als Mann nicht so viel Angst da was Falsches zu sagen. [27-year-old German Masters student in Political Sciences (high-school degree)]

Max stated in his interview that it is difficult to approach women in Germany. For him, they are too demanding in courtship and tend to reject many forms of approach or comments from men, also when they are honestly meant. In an ironic statement Max said that German women want to be approached in a way that is simultaneously witty, interesting and romantic, which makes courtship pretty hard.

Max: Ansonsten..... Ich glaube, es ist schwieriger mit einer deutschen Frau zu flirten, weil die deutsche Frau für einen Flirt doch sehr anspruchsvoll ist. Also es gibt viele Flirts, oder erste Gespräche wie man sie einleiten kann, und viele sind aber falsch. Also viele Frauen /ehm/ mögen es eben nicht, auf diese oder jene Art angesprochen zu werden, obwohl es eigentlich nur ehrlich gemeint ist vom Mann. Sie legen die Messlatte sehr hoch. Sie wollen in einem Satz witzig angesprochen werden, interessant angesprochen werden, sie wollen /eh/ romantische angesprochen werden. ((lachen)) So viel auf einmal. [...] Und das macht die Sache sehr schwierig, richtig eine deutsche Frau anzusprechen. [43-year-old German bank financial manager (Ausbildung degree)]

Anika, when describing a flirtation situation in a night club in Germany, observed that it is important to provide enough signs of interest for men, like smiling, exchanging eye contact for a long time, or avoiding turning one's back on the admirer, in order to assure him that he may approach. For her, Germans are shyer or need more time to be assured about the other's courtship interest than Brazilians; therefore it may take a long time in Germany for people approach each other verbally.

Anika: [...] Ich denke man sieht sich. Man guckt sich an, wenn man dem Mann ein Signal gegeben hat, dass man ihn ganz nett findet, dann traut er sich vielleicht auch einen anzusprechen.

Interviewerin: Was wäre ein Signal? [...]

Anika: Anlächeln, oder zuprostet. Oder ihn auch eine längere Zeit anguckt. Und nicht den Rücken zuwendet, sondern dann eher zu ihm wendet. Also, ich habe immer so gedacht, ich gebe ihm die Sicherheit er kann mich ansprechen. Also, er darf. Weil ich das Gefühl hatte immer, das deutsche Männer schon zurückhaltender sind. [...] Und die anderen Männer was ich erlebt habe, so, wenn ich in die Disco gegangen bin ist eher, das sie eher zurückhaltend sind, lange Warten und dann ne Sicherheit brauchen das sie keinen Korb bekommen. [31-year-old German special education teacher (Masters degree)]

Julho, when reporting about courtship in Germany, stated that men in Germany are confused, that they do not know their limits. According to him, to be socially accepted, men had to become "tamed". As he observed, the feminists have criticized masculine traits and emphasized feminine ones, so that German society has become more feminine. Masculine traits, such as violence, persistence or courage, became negative evaluated, while feminine traits, like prudence, were stressed. Even sexual desire, observed Julho, needs to be repressed. According to Julho, men who do not want to lose women, since they are the ones who at the end choose, need to adapt to their demands, while those men who are not willing to comply are banished from society and regarded as "barbarians". At the same time, observed Julho, women in Germany want a "manly man" but tamed, which leaves men pretty confused about how to express their desire, how to be a man.

Julho: Não. Eu acho que não são regras claras. Eu acho que os homens, eles estão confusos, estão sem saber também os limites deles, sabe. Eles percebem que eles têm que ser, que eles foram bem domesticados. Tem que ser domesticado para continuarem sendo aceitos na sociedade. A sociedade é feminizada, os valores da sociedade têm se tornado femininos. Como assim? Tudo que é masculino ganhou sentido pejorativo. Tudo, não, né. Mas eu estou generalizando. Como assim? Ah, o típico masculino é violência. "Ah, violência é ruim." É.. Insistência. "Insistência é ruim." Que mais? Falar a l t o. É coragem. "Ah, coragem? Prudência é tão importante quanto coragem." Aquelas coisas das mulheres de antigamente, os estereótipos femininos estão ganhando mais valor na sociedade. Então, os homens estão percebendo "Puxa, eu não posso demonstrar violência. Eu não posso demonstra, inclusive, desejo sexual. Eu não posso ser muito insistente, isso, isso e aquilo." E as mulheres têm vindo de um "bum", assim, é.. São como um foguete feminista, sabe? E só tem ganhado espaço. E os homens têm se comprimido, se comprimido ali nos cantinhos, e as mulheres estão vindo, estão ditando as regras. E eu acho que os homens, que não querem perder

as mulheres, entram nesse jogo, ficam do lado das mulheres, porque eles sabem, as mulheres é que escolhem. Então “eu vou entrar no jogo delas, e elas me deixam participar”, sabe. E os poucos homens que continuam “Opa, pera aí, eu não sou assim não. Eu sou homem.”, vão sendo banidos da sociedade, estão sendo tratados, vistos como “Aí, que bárbaros”. Aí, os homens ficam nessa dúvida assim, se eles. E ao mesmo tempo eles percebem o que? As mulheres querem os homens m á s c u l o s, porém domesticados, porém sociáveis. Então eu acho que isso deixa os homens muito confusos. Como você não demonstrar desejo? Mas, quando a mulher quer que você demonstre desejo, como fazer isso? Como não ser insistente, se mulher adora cara persistente? Cara que sabe o que quer? [29-year-old Brazilian Masters student in Journalism (Bachelors degree)]

Afraid to be negatively regarded by women and unsure about how to act when courting, men in Germany seems to hesitate in approaching someone, as the statement of Sybille on page 141 indicates, or may opt to let the other take the initiative, as the statement of Jens on page 99 and Rosa on page 100 already illustrate. In another point in his interview, Jens affirmed how it became easier for him in Brazil to approach women, while in Germany he had seldom attempted it. He observed that in Germany he only did it when the woman gave him enough security about her interest, like exchanging smiles for half an hour. According to him, his few experiences of approaching women in Germany were not successful and he started to regard courtship then as a “waste” and too “complicated”.

Jens: Also für mich ist es in Brasilien leichter, mittlerweile. Also nicht.. Ich habe zum Schluss.. Also, ich habe es auch geschafft, Leute anzusprechen. Auch hier habe ich das geschafft. In Deutschland. ((lachend)) Ich habe es geschafft.. ((flüsternd)) In Flirtsituationen. Aber auch nur, weil ich massiv Sicherheit hatte, dass die Person etwas von mir will. .. Eine hat eine halbe Stunde mir immer wieder zugelächelt. Dann bin ich zu ihr: „Was kann ich dir bringen?“ Und dann weiß ich es auch. Aber ich traue mich eigentlich nie, den ersten Schritt zu machen. Aber..

Interviewerin: Aber warum fällt es dir in Brasilien leichter?

Jens: Weil ich da mehr solche Erfahrungen gemacht habe einfach. Hier gar nicht, weniger.. Ich war hier in Deutschland weniger aus. Ich war hier immer anders beschäftigt. Auch Freizeit, deswegen. Gruppen oder so. War weniger in Diskos. Dann habe ich es einmal probiert auch, und hatte dann auch zwei Mal solche Kontakte. Und dann haben wir uns danach dann auch getroffen. Und dann ging das auseinander. Und dann merkte ich schon, die will jetzt dann doch nichts mehr. Wo ich dachte: Wie kompliziert. Dann hätte man sich.. Man gefiel sich doch am Abend. Hätte man ja auch was machen können dann noch die Nacht. Was für eine Verschwendung. Da habe ich gedacht: Was für eine Verschwendung. Das würden auch bestimmt Leute in Brasilien sagen: “Na, wenn ihr euch gefällt und Lust aufeinander habt, macht doch was“. Klar, dass sehe ich nicht anders. .. Ergab sich dann nicht. Weiß nicht mehr warum. Und danach.. Also da habe ich vielleicht auch eine blödere Erfahrung gemacht. War dann doch.. Irgendwas war dann vielleicht doch komplizierter. [28-year-old German Masters student in Sociology (high-school degree)]

Juliana, when reporting about her courtship process with a German, stated that it was much more dramatic than in Brazil and she had the feeling that it happened in steps. She perceived the man as insecure, which she regarded as boyish behavior. She described that when he held her hand, he did know what to do with it. She had the impression that only after holding hands was it possible to go to the next step, such as embracing, and that it was necessary to complete each step before going to the next. According to her, she took the initiative to kiss him, because she could not restrain her desire any longer. For her, if she had waited for him to kiss her, she would be waiting until today.

Juliana: É um drama. Eu via isso assim, é inseguro, parece um menino. 'Caramba! Eu não sei se eu posso abraçar ela? Se eu posso tocar?' 'Aí pega na mão. 'Ai meu Deus peguei na mão.' Sabe? Eu interpretava muito as reações dele, como as reações de um menino. [...] 'Aí pega na mão, aí fica segurando, né. Não sabe o que fazer com aquilo. Isso eu tinha vontade de rir! ((risos)) Porque ele

pegou na mão, e agora, o que eu faço com essa mão na minha mão? O pior é que ele não sabe! (...) Mas era assim, como tivessem etapas a serem seguidas. Então a gente começa pegando na mão. Ai você não consegue fazer outra coisa. Ai fica segurando a mão. Mas para mim, o faz carinho ou não faz. Mas ficar segurando a minha mão, parece que está me segurando. Ai então tá. Agora a gente já pode, de pois de x tempo segurando a mão, pode ser que eu possa agora dar um abraço, ou andar junto abraçado. Entendeu? Eu tinha essa sensação, assim. De etapas a serem cumpridas. Então quando você vai dar o beijo, significa, assim. Quem tomou a iniciativa fui eu, porque eu não estava aguentando mais! Se eu tivesse que esperar por ele, eu acho que eu estava esperando ainda! Assim, é muito lento! Não é lento, mas assim. Eu nem sei! Eu tinha essa sensação, agora estamos na próxima etapa. Agora isso pode. [31-year-old Brazilian PhD student in Sociology (Masters degree)]

It seems that the success of German feminists in disseminating their critique throughout society has led men and women today to avoid and reject traditional courtship practices. As the statements of Jens on page 140 and Sybille on page 141 well illustrate, it is not only that individuals do not want to act as machos or primitives by applying traditional courtship practices, they also do not want to be regarded as machos or primitives by accepting someone who acts in this way.

As Illouz (2012:171-175) observes and the data of this study corroborate, the scrutiny of power in sexual and gender relations by feminists has revealed, criticized and questioned traditional scripts of courtship and consequently eliminated the tacit spontaneity that normally [traditionally] attended sexual transactions. As Illouz (2012:187) argues, by generating procedures for politically correct speech and dress codes, feminists have eliminated the ambiguity that traditionally characterized eroticism in amorous relationships (Illouz 2012:187). Nevertheless, as observed in this study, it is this uncertainty that enables individuals to engender changes and generate new courtship dynamics.

As the statements of Sybille on page 141, Jens on page 99 and 143, Rosa on page 100 and Juliana on page 143 already illustrate, the uncertainty of men and women about how to act in a courtship encounter in Germany has led them to exchange roles in the interaction, i.e. men in Germany may adopt a passive role in courtship, while women may adopt an active one. Indeed, in the observation of courtship behavior at the events for singles, it was possible to notice more men waiting for women to lead the courtship process and more woman approaching men in Germany than in Brazil.

Moreover, the uncertainty that dominates courtship interactions in Germany seems not only to lead to an exchange of active-passive roles between the sexes, but also to engender a new courtship dynamic. As the reports of respondents suggest, by attempting to manage the impasse of wanting to engage in courtship, being uncertain about how to act and fearing rejection, individuals in Germany seem to have developed a new courtship dynamic: concealing interest. As observed in the description of courtship, individuals in Germany not only present a subtler expression of interest during courtship than do individuals in Brazil, but they also attempt to disguise it [see pages 95 and 100]. They do this by favoring alternating eye contact; avoiding approaching the other directly and attempting to create an excuse to come closer – like meeting by chance at the bar; avoiding broaching intimate subjects – like asking directly about the relationship status of the other; avoiding paying compliments on physical appearance; and touching only subtly – like touching hands when handing over a

drink or a cigarette. The following statements of Sybille, Max and Karl help to illustrate the courtship dynamic of “concealing interest” that seems to develop in Germany.

As Sybille stated, although it is common sense that when a stranger approaches another, that the admirer has courtship intentions, such interest should not be explicitly stated during the interaction in Germany or people regard it as “too pushy”. Therefore, it is first necessary to “casually” look in the direction of the person, and if the admired person smiles it means the admirer may approach. Then people act as if they are going to engage in “ordinary” conversation as if it was no flirtation situation. With regard to touch, as Sybille described in her statement on page 107, it should also happen in an “unintentional” fashion, like brushing the feet, or people would regard it as too intrusive. As she observed further in her statement below, people should converse for at least two to four hours. During this time, they attempt to seduce each other through their conversation: thus following, according to her, a very rational dynamic. She observed further that if the parties remain interested in each other, they may exchange numbers, or those who are bold may directly invite the other to come home with them to have sex, even, she observed, when they not have yet had any physical contact. Or some may start to kiss there and then, which, according to her, suggests that they are going to engage in sex later. Others may invite the other person to have a drink at home. According to Sybille, everything related to drinking usually works. Another excuse, observed Sybille ironically, is to invite the other to go home “so they can talk in peace after they have already spoken for four hours”. As the respondent observed at the end of her statement, such excuses to come physically closer belong to the courtship game, and although both parties are aware of it, they cannot act differently.

Sybille: [...] hier in Deutschland tut man immer so, als würde man zufällig in die Richtung geguckt haben. Es ist nicht so offensiv. [...] Na ja, [in Brasilien] sie sprechen einen dann an und. Also erst, erst dann blicken sie so auffordernd und dann sprechen sie einen an. Also, in Deutschland tut man immer so, als würde man sich eigentlich ganz normal unterhalten. So. Und als hätte das jetzt keine. Also hätte das jetzt. Keine Flirtsituation. [...] Also, erst hat man Augenkontakt und wenn man lächelt, dann weiß man, dass man den Anderen ansprechen darf, hier in Deutschland. [...] Also, in Brasilien weiß ich nicht so richtig [wie es mit Berührung funktioniert]. Aber in Deutschland muss es, also muss es auch wieder so sein als wäre es zufällig. ... Es muss alles so zufällig aussehen, sonst findet man das zu aufdringlich. [...] Dann muss man sich mindestens 2- 4 Stunden unterhalten. Also, und während dessen muss man dann versuchen so zu sagen über die Unterhaltung dann den anderen zu gewinne. Also, sehr rational. [...] dann kann man entweder Telefonnummern austauschen. Wenn man sagt ‚Das Gespräch war ja so nett, wir müssen uns mal wieder treffen‘. So. /ehm/ Oder, wenn man offensiver ist kann man auch einfach /ehm/. Es sind oft so rationale Fragen. Hättest du nicht noch Lust mit mir nach Hause zu kommen? [...] Einfach dann so am Ende des Gespräches. Aber ohne dass vorher jetzt ein körperlicher Kontakt wirklich bestand oder so. [...] Oder, oder man fängt dort direkt an zu knutschen, so. Und dann ist es aber auch relativ klar, dass das dann irgendwie weitergeht. [...] Also, man kann auch so fragen: wollen wir nicht noch was bei mir noch weiter trinken? Über das Trinken funktioniert ganz viel. [...] Dann können wir uns ja noch in Ruhe weiter unterhalten. Nachdem wir uns jetzt schon vier Stunden unterhalten haben. Ja. ((ironisch)) [...] Es ist dann natürlich auch. Man merkt, dass dann von beiden Seiten auch ein Spiel ist. Aber man kann da auch nicht raus. [25-year-old German Masters student in Law (high-school degree)]

Max, when confronted with the statement of a fellow German asserting that in Germany it is necessary to pretend that there is no interest in courtship during courtship, corroborated this and observed that in Germany it is difficult to evaluate whether a woman is interested or not,

and that men are afraid of being rebuffed. Similarly, Max agreed with the statement of another German who noted that it is usual to stick to impersonal subjects at the beginning of a conversation, and explained that this is a way people disguise their interest. According to him, if a man directly declared his interest in courtship to a woman, by paying her a compliment or admitting to wanting to know her better, the woman might rebuff him, by telling him that she does not like him, and he would sit there like a "fool". In order not to lose respect, Max observed, people engage in impersonal conversation, such as speaking about a book the woman is reading, and during the conversation the man can observe whether or not the woman is interested in courtship. If the women show no interest, however, the man can always say that he was just interested in the book, and that the women dismissed him only because she wanted to continue reading her book in peace.

Max: *Das ist das was ich vorhin beschrieben habe, dass der Mann nie genau weiß, hat sie denn nun Interesse oder nicht? Findet sie mich nun gut oder nicht gut? Und aus Angst das sie dann sagt: "Lass mich in Ruhe!", /ehm/ geben viele Männer natürlich dann auch auf. Aber das ist die Schuld der Frauen. ((lachen))*

Interviewerin: *((lachen)) Ja. Und das eine war auch sehr interessant, dass sie auch gesagt hat das bei den Deutschen es kommt viel das Gespräch über Politik und Wissenschaft, sehr unpersönliches Thema.*

Max: *[...] Das stimmt. Weil man da sich am besten auch wieder aus der Situation zurückziehen kann. Wenn ich jetzt eine Frau ansprechen würde und sie gleich darauf ansprechen würde: "Du siehst toll aus! Deine Augen sind toll!", oder "Ich habe dich gesehen. Ich musste dich unbedingt ansprechen". Und die Frau sagt dann aber: "Nein, du gefällst mir aber nicht", so, dann steht man dumm da. Das heißt, wie kann man sich dann wieder zurückziehen ohne das Gesicht zu verlieren? Wenn man allerdings anfängt und sagt: "Mensch, das ist ja ein interessantes Buch was du da liest", so im Straßencafé oder auf der Parkbank. Und sie sagt: "Ja, ist interessant". "Ah, ist von dem und dem Schriftsteller. Ah ja!". Und so baut man sich die Brücke und merkt im Grunde über dieses Gespräch, ob denn die Frau Interesse hat sich zu unterhalten oder nicht. Hat die Frau kein Interesse sich weiter zu unterhalten, wird sie es schon zeigen oder bemerkbar machen. Bloß dann kann der Mann immer noch sagen, naja, habe mich ja nur über das Buch unterhalten. Sie will halt weiterlesen. [...] Wenn er aber zurückgewiesen wird über das Buch, wenn dann z. B. die Frau sagt: "Ja, es ist ein schönes Buch, aber lass mich bitte in Ruhe. Ich will weiterlesen". Dann weiß man auch, dass sie kein Interesse hat, aber dann verliert man nicht unbedingt das Gesicht als Mann, das man abgewiesen wurde wegen ihr, sondern einfach nur, aha sie will weiterlesen. [43-year-old German bank financial manager (Ausbildung degree)]*

Karl, when confronted with the statement of a fellow German about the tendency of Germans to express their interest in courtship less explicitly than Brazilians, confirmed this and observed that in Germany, although male friends may talk among themselves about a women's physical appearance, when they approach a woman they attempt to act as "a serious academic cultivated person" and therefore avoid any open expression of attraction. In Brazil, on the other hand, he observed that the attraction does not need to be disguised, which make the courtship process much easier.

Karl: *Richtig, weil man geht als seriös, sagen wir mal seriös-akademisch gebildeter Mann geht man da hin. Man achtet ja nicht aufs Äußere. Man geht ja nur da hin, man findet die Frau hat einen interessanten Blick und man will sich halt gern mit ihr unterhalten, weil man ein gebildetes Gespräch haben will. Das ist natürlich überhaupt nicht so ((lachen)). Das ist dann immer auch der krasse Unterschied zwischen [Handy klingelt im Hintergrund] .. Ich sitze so mit meinen Kumpels und da geht es zu wie beim Bierbrauer, weißt du. "Die hat ja einen geilen Arsch!" und bla und dann geht man da hin und redet aber mit ihr total gebildet und achtet überhaupt nicht auf dieses Äußere. Und das ist, was ich vorhin schon gesagt habe, das in Brasilien die Frauen erstens das Weibliche nach*

außen kehren und dann auch darauf angesprochen werden wollen und wenn ich es hier mache, dann gehe ich damit als roh und ungebildet und als Macho durch oder so. Naja, das stimmt auf jeden Fall ((lachen)).ja, in einer Flirtsituation. Das ist natürlich schwierig, weil es sich ja widerspricht. Man geht ja hin wegen der äußerlichen Attraktivität, aber kann dann nicht darüber sprechen und es nicht direkt ansprechen. Und dann heißt es immer, man muss das dann irgendwie versteckt zeigen und so was. Also ich bin da ja nicht so gut darin /eh/.. ((lachen)) ich finde das alles ziemlich kompliziert hier in Deutschland. Das ist in Brasilien alles einfacher. [27-year-old German Masters student in Political Sciences (high-school degree)]

The concealing of interest, however, it not the only particularity observed in the courtship dynamic in Germany. Feminist critics have promoted the individualization process in Germany not only by weakening traditional gender identities and encouraging individuals to define themselves, but also by emphasizing the supremacy of the mind over the body. By criticizing the expression of sexuality, feminists have pushed individuals to deny their bodies and to focus on their subjective world.

As observed on the theoretical chapter on love, the focus on one's subjective world leads individuals to develop singular personalities, and engenders in the individual not only the longing for a comprehensible and close reality – i.e. for someone who shares, at least in part, the meanings that permeate their subjective world – but also the desire to be acknowledged for one's personal traits.

The push towards individualization in Germany due to the feminist discourses of the supremacy of the mind over the body seems to increase the individual's desire to be acknowledged for his/her singular personality and to get to know the other's personal traits during courtship, as the reports of respondents indicate. Detlev, for example, noticed in his statements on page 131, that individuals in Germany want to get to know the other first before getting physical. Jens, in his statement on page 140, observed that in Germany to kiss someone too fast would be a reduction of the other to his/her physical attractiveness, ignoring his/her personal traits and therefore disregarding the other's subjectivity. Ulla, when confronted with the statement of fellow Germans that they do not like compliments on physical appearance, confirmed this and argued like Jens that those types of compliment are superficial. She explained that compliments on physical appearance are not important since the body may change, like beautiful hair can be cut. According to her, what is important is the personality and therefore a good compliment is one that praises someone's personal traits. Since it takes time to appreciate someone's traits, she observed that a compliment should come only from someone who knows her better.

Ulla: Ja genau, das ist genau das. Dass halt Äußerlichkeiten halt unwichtig sind. Also Aussehen ist halt einfach nicht so wichtig. Und deswegen wirkt ein Kompliment, was jetzt 'Du hast schöne Haare'. Da denkt man als Deutscher 'Ja super, und wenn ich sie mir morgen abschneide, dann habe ich keine schönen Haare mehr'. Also das ist halt nicht sehr kreativ. Sozusagen zeugt halt nichts davon, dass man die Person sozusagen als Person schätzt, sondern nur, also die Person. Als Deutsche, wenn ich ein Kompliment wirklich gut finde, wirklich mich sehr geschmeichelt fühle und nicht nur so 'Jaja, mm, egal'. Dann ist es definitiv kein Kompliment zu den Äußerlichkeiten. Sondern dann muss es von jemandem kommen der mich schon besser kennt und der dann irgendetwas über meinen inneren Wert aussagt. [25-year-old German Masters student in Literary and Cultural Studies (high-school degree)]

Paulo reported in his interview with enthusiasm that in Germany people enjoy longer conversation during courtship. He mentioned that in Germany, as opposed to Brazil, “not all women would go away” if the man starts a conversation. According to him, people in Brazil seem to be less interested in conversation, while in Germany a long conversation during courtship seems to be expected, as “if it was really necessary to get to know the other somehow” .

***Paulo:** Agora na verdade não. Eu estive aqui [na Alemanha], da outra vez que eu fiquei três meses e era verão, era, assim, prum homem aqui era fantástico, na verdade. Porque tava quente, tinha sol até as dez e tinha muitas meninas e tudo, muitas meninas na rua. A gente chegava conversando, não tinha muito. Então, era, eu achava super legal assim. Era super. Uma coisa que era muito legal, é que todas as meninas não vão sair de perto se você começar uma conversa, entendeu? Geralmente, parece que uma coisa necessária no flerte é conversa também. Não sei, no Brasil, eu sentia mais que as meninas não tinha. Eu não fiz muito no Brasil, também na verdade. Eu acho que, eu não sei dizer muito do Brasil. Mas pela experiência que eu tive, ouvindo os amigos e vendo as coisas, eu acho que as meninas não davam tanto espaço pra conversa, como aqui eu acho, sabe? Como se fosse, realmente necessário se conhecer de alguma maneira. Pelo menos, não sei se é na balada. Na balada eu acho que. Mas eu digo num bar mesmo, assim, você encontrar pessoas, e geralmente. Eu acho que na balada também, as pessoas conversam, não sei. Claro que tem aqueles que já nem conversam, né. Qualquer lugar do mundo eu acho que tem isso, mas.. que já se pegam mesmo, mas. Eu acho que, realmente as minhas experiências de flerte aqui foram, até agora, nesse sentido, de conversa.. [27-year-old Brazilian Masters student in German Studies (Bachelors degree)]*

Lucia, who in her statement on page 106 observed that her German boyfriend was more interested in getting to know her intellect during their encounters, and who noted in her statement on page 110 that while Brazilians tend to rush to kiss the other in the first encounter, her German boyfriend postponed it to their second encounter and only kissed her then because a friend told him that he would lose her if he did not, described at another point in her interview how men in Brazil tend to consider courtship as a momentary game of seduction to please their own ego, and expressed her surprise with her German boyfriend at the beginning of their relationship, as he seemed to be interested in finding a partner and to be evaluating whether or not he wanted to be with her. According to Lucia, the German was as selective as her in choosing a partner. In Brazil, she observed, she has the impression that men are oriented only toward physical attractiveness.

***Lucia:** Atribuo, eu acho que aqui a essa coisa da conquista, entendeu. Mas uma. Tem que ser rápido. É uma coisa do Ego. O cara está fazendo aquilo assim porque “Ah, é uma mulher bonita. Eu vou conquistar essa mulher.” E ele não. Ele não precisa disso. Vamos dizer, a palavra é isso. Ele, eu acho que ele tem plena consciência que ele pode, entendeu, atrai uma mulher, beijar, sair, transar. Mas ele não queria isso. A busca dele era outra. Não era uma conquista de mais uma mulher pra cama, de um prazer momentâneo, de um sexo. Eu acho que ele queria uma coisa maior. (...) Ele também, eu acho que ele também estava vendo se ele queria estar comigo, se ele queria me beijar, se ele queria. Ele estava tão seletivo quanto eu. E eu vejo que aqui não, o homem brasileiro, ele tá quase como um bicho, entendeu. Claro, que ele olhou, só viu a beleza. É bonita? Pronto. Entendeu. Então ele chega, pronto, e o resto não interessa para ele, né. E eu não vi ele [o alemão] assim. Ele não estava com essa sede, com essa.. [47-year-old Brazilian English teacher and MBA student (Bachelors degree)]*

Flávia made the same observation as Lucia. According to her, while Brazilians express their courtship interest, particularly their sexual attraction, through looks and touch at the

beginning of an encounter, Germans go slower with the expression of interest; they want to talk and to get to know the person first.

***Flávia:** O brasileiro demonstra através da mão. ((risadas)) Atacando mesmo! Ah, brasileiro é. Não precisa nem ter boca, com os olhos dele. Ummm, ele tira a sua roupa na hora. O alemão não. O alemão, ele já chega ele conversa com você. É com tempo. Gosta de conhecer a pessoa melhor. Brasileiro não. Brasileiro chega chegando. [32-year-old Brazilian beautician (high-school degree)]*

Patrícia, in her statement on page 109, observed how people in Germany tend to show more interest in the other person during courtship by listening to what they have to say, by checking if there are affinities between the parties. At another point in her interview, Patrícia also stated her surprise at finding out that her German husband was choosy in his selection of a mate. According to her, physical appearance was not enough for him to select a woman; their perfume and make-up were also significant criteria for him.

***Patrícia:** [...] O Oli [marido alemão] é um que não diz sim por dizer não. Pra ele ficar com uma garota, ela tem que ser o que ele gosta, assim. Nem que seja o tipo físico só. Mas tem que ser muito o tipo que ele gosta. [...] Por exemplo, se for uma menina totalmente o tipo dele e ela tiver fedendo a perfume, ele não pega. Ele odeia mulher fedorenta de perfume, que ele diz. Eu acho impressionante isso. Eu acho que pro brasileiro não seria um problema tão sério. O cara não dispensaria uma menina porque ela está fedendo a perfume. Uma menina com muita maquiagem, o Oliver não curte. Ele também não pegaria. Pode ser gata, mas ele diz que não pegaria. [30-year-old Brazilian primary school teacher (Bachelors degree)]*

The stronger individual demand in Germany to be acknowledged for one's singular personality and to get to know the other during courtship, due to the emphasis on the supremacy of the mind over the body, seems to lead consequently to a higher demand for communication during courtship, which explains the observation made of the description of courtship that people in Germany tend to develop longer conversations during an encounter than people in Brazil, and that the former may also extend the conversation (the approach phase) over days, postponing physical intimacy [see page 108]. Jens, for example, who noticed in his statement on page 108 how conversation during courtship in Germany lasts longer than in Brazil, observed further in his interview that in his social group of higher-educational students in Germany, at least one hour of conversation is expected before something happens.

***Jens:** Also ich würde jetzt... Ich bringe jetzt ein paar Beispiele wieder. Also was ich vorhin schon einmal sagte: Hier wird vielleicht von einem Freund mehr auch .. jemand erwartet. In meinem Umfeld hier. In meinem studentischen Abiturfeld. Ich weiß nicht, wie es woanders ist. .. Dass ich .. Dass ich zumindest einmal eine Stunde reden kann. Bevor irgendetwas passiert. Das ist die erste Hürde. 1 1/2 vielleicht quatschen, auf einer Fete. [28-year-old German Masters student in Sociology (high-school degree)]*

Julho, when reporting on the use of compliments about physical appearance in Germany and in Brazil, noticed that for him compliments were always a successful form of approaching someone verbally. However, as he observed, this explicit expression of interest does not seem to work with Germans, who are less interested in compliments and more interested in conversation.

***Julho:** No Brasil é total. Começa até pela cantada, né. Eu achei que abordagem do homem com uma mulher, em qualquer lugar do mundo, a mulher, por mais inteligente que ela queira transparecer, mais independente, mais interessante como pessoa, elogios físicos sempre vão bem.*

Mas na Alemanha, eu acho que isso funciona muito menos do que no Brasil. Porque no Brasil, você já começa qualquer relacionamento com elogios. “Poxa, você é tão querido, você é tão simpático, você é tão gato.” Da parte da mulher, né. E da parte do homem, normalmente, “Poxa, você tem os cabelos tão lindos, você tem uns olhos tão lindos, você tem um jeito de andar, você tem um jeito de falar, blá-blá-blá-blá-blá.” Sempre elogios. E aqui não. Aqui as pessoas querem comunicar, se conhecer melhor, sem necessariamente bajular uma a outra, sabe. [29-year-old Brazilian Masters student in Journalism (Bachelors degree)]

According to Giddens (1992a:72, 96-97), with the decline of the essentialist and complementary two-sex model and the rise of sexual emancipation, the romantic game of seduction (gallantry) no longer makes sense and should disappear, since the womanizer has lost his purpose, i.e. to despoil a woman's virtue, and women have lost their subterfuge in convincing men to marry, i.e. the restriction of their sexuality to marriage. Nevertheless, as the data of this study suggest, also in a context of less gender inequality, as in Germany, men and women still attempt to seduce each other, but based on new rules.

In the face of discourses that affirm the supremacy of the mind over the body, a courtship dynamic that depends on concealing interest and a high individual demand for communication, conversation seems to have become the main instrument of seduction in courtship in Germany, as observed in this study. In order to disguise their interest in courtship, rather than applying endearments and explicit compliments, people in Germany tend to conduct a “neutral” conversation based on non-intimate subjects, through which they attempt to communicate implicitly their interest or disinterest in each other, as Sybille pointed out in her statement on page 145. Detlev, for example, described the different courtship approach of the two regional groups by observing that in Brazil people express affection through physical contact sooner, while Germans on the other hand, tend “to play more with words”, to spend more time on conversation to reach a level of interpersonal understanding before moving on to physical intimacy.

Detlev: [...] Eu acho que uma grande diferença é que o afeto aqui [Brasil] é mostrado de uma maneira bem mais direta, bem mais rápida. [...] contato pessoal, contato físico você faz muito mais cedo aqui, né. Eu tenho a impressão de que as alemãs, os alemães, gostam de brincar um pouco com palavras. Muito mais tempo com palavras, fazendo um jogo de simpatia, mas é deixar um pouco o contato físico mais pra lá. Isso aqui é bem mais rápido. [...] Até um pouco assustador. ((risos)) Mas tudo bem, faz parte. [37-year-old German higher-education teacher (PhD degree)]

The verbal game played by Germans can be well observed in the following reports of Jens and Ulla. When answering which topics are usually discussed in a courtship situation in Germany, Jens mentioned jobs, study, plans for the future, trips and places of residence as usual subjects, but personal preferences and the relationship status of the person, i.e. whether or not one is single, are according to him to intimate subjects and therefore avoided. He also described how he asks about the place of residence as a way of obtaining some personal information, such as the personal preferences of the person expressed in the neighborhood where she chooses to live, if she lives alone or with a housemate, if there is the possibility of sleeping at her place. According to Jens, conversation about a person's place of residence is a well-known subterfuge applied by Germans to ascertain subtly and implicitly the relationship status of a person. Since it is not appropriate to ask directly about the relationship status of

the person, and since people consider it “too primitive, too stupid, too simple” to directly mention that they are not single at the beginning of a conversation, talking about where they live enables them to acknowledge it indirectly. Since the knowledge that the admired person is already engaged in a relationship usually breaks the interest of the admirer, Jens observed that people avoid mentioning that they are not single at the beginning of a conversation in order to keep it going.

Jens: /ehm/ B e r u f, S t u d i u m. Meine Welt gerade. Es geht um Stipendien, was macht sich danach, was macht er danach? Hat sie einen Job? Wie kombiniert man Job und Arbeit? Reisen? Welche Auslandserfahrung? /ehm/ Aber so persönliche Vorlieben kommen dann weniger. Kann guter Zufall sein, dann ja. Sehr viel Banales für... [...] Man fragt, ich glaube schon: Wo wohnst du? Stadtteil??' In Berlin ist der Stadtteil wichtig. Ist ein großes kulturelles soziales Merkmal. Gerade in Berlin. Ich glaube anders als in anderen Städten. Durch diese Unterschiedlichkeit mancher Stadtteile aber die dann.. Stadtteile haben hier eine hohe Symbolik. Kreuzberg. [...] Oh.. Netter Student. WG. Du bist offen, bist nachts aktiv. Prenzlauer Berg, da braucht man schon wieder.. Entweder ist man noch ein bisschen mehr Ostdeutscher.. Kreuzberg, da sind alle zugezogen. Da gibt es keine Authentischen. Ich kenne auch nur Berliner.. Die Berliner die ich kenne, da wohnt auch keiner in Kreuzberg. Die wohnen im Wedding. Die wohnen in Charlottenburg. So, und dann weiß man schon wieder ganz genau: Ah.. 'Bist du aus Berlin?' - 'Ja!' [...] Und dann: Das bedeutet: OK, haben die dann einen Freund? So wird, glaube ich, auch hier schon gleich vermittelt: Ich wohne alleine, oder ich wohne in eine WG.

Interviewerin: Aha! Würde man fragen, ob sie einen Freund hat?

Jens: Nein, man würde nicht direkt fragen. Nein, um dem zu entgehen. Aber wenn die Person will, dass man weiß. Entweder sie ist naiv und sagt: 'Nein, ach ich wohne da.' Sie kann aber auch sagen: 'Nein, ich wohne mit einem Freund.' Sie kann aber auch sagen: 'Nein, ich wohne in einer WG. Ist total offen bei uns.' Dann ist das eine wichtige Info. Und in der Regel.. [...] Es gibt so viel Banales. Also, 'Was machst du?' 'Was studierst du?' Aber die Wohnungsfrage und der Kiez, da geht es um Beziehung. [...] Aber nur weil. Könnte man bei der Person übernachten? Hat die vielleicht einen Freund? Oder eine Freundin? Ich glaube, diese Frage taucht dann auch hier immer relativ schnell auf, um so etwas zu klären.

Interviewerin: Man fragt direkt? Hast du einen Freund?

Jens: Nein, eben nicht. Man fragt nach der Wohnung und da kriegt man indirekt ein paar mehr Infos. Wenn sie dann sagt: 'Ach, ich wohne in einer WG, ich wohne in einer offenen WG.' Dann heißt offen 'Ich habe keinen Freund'. Oder 'Und wenn ich einen habe, dann geht das auch klar'.

Interviewerin: Interessant. Also wenn man sagt 'Ich wohne in einer WG', dann kann das auch heißen, dass der Freund mit der Person wohnt? //

Jens: Dass die Person trotzdem einen Freund hat. Entweder will sie es dann nicht sagen, weil es ihr zu primitiv ist, zu blöd, zu simpel, gleich zu antworten: 'Ah ja, ich habe einen Freund'. Also Indirekt.

Interviewerin: Das ist interessant. Also wenn man direkt sagt 'Ja ich habe einen Freund!', wäre das nicht gut angesehen?

Jens: Doch, aber dann hat auch hier, genauso wie in Brasilien, jeder die Angst 'Naja, dann spricht man ja bald nicht mehr miteinander'. Da würde ich sagen, das ist auch gleich. In Brasilien aber hatte ich dann ein paarmal die Erfahrung, da hatte ich dann die Person, die Frau hat sich auf der Stelle umgedreht und ist weggegangen. [28-year-old German Masters student in Sociology (high-school degree)]

Ulla, when describing an appropriate way of paying a compliment in Germany, reported about an encounter with a friend at a moment where she was questioning her studies. By explaining to her that all thinkers have their moments of doubt, and with that implying that she was a thinker, he made her a “deep” compliment. According to her, to say “your eyes are beautiful” would be too simple and superficial.

Ulla: Z.B., dass jemand sagt. Z.B hat mir letztens jemand, da war ich irgendwie schlecht drauf und habe irgendwie alles, weiß ich, den ganzen Sinn des Lebens mal wieder in Frage irgendwie mal wieder in Frage gestellt, und warum studiere ich eigentlich und was bringt das der Welt usw., dann hat derjenige mir gesagt ‚Ja, aber es ist doch auch ok, weil guck mal, alle großen Denker, was weiß ich, haben.. waren immer große Zweifler. Also sozusagen, es ist normal, dass man diese Sinnkriesen hat, wenn man jemand ist, der kritisch denkt.‘ Das ist ein Kompliment, das schmeichelt mir halt. Dann sagt der sozusagen ‚Hey, du bist intelligent, du bist schlau, wie was weiß ich, wie es viele große Denker gab, und deswegen fühlst du so.‘ Das ist halt ein Kompliment. Was halt in die tiefe geht und nicht einfach nur ‚Ja, deine Augen sind schön‘. Das ist halt so flach, das ist so oberflächlich. [25-year-old German Masters student in Literary and Cultural Studies (high-school degree)]

This expectation/demand for a communicative and cultivated person who “skillfully” express his/her amorous intentions could also be observed in the analysis of the questionnaire filled in by high-school students in Germany, who highlighted that: a letter written by oneself has more value than a printed one; a gift must be creative; a compliment must be profound; and that a partner must be able to speak about everything, to have deep conversations. It seems that in a context that praises the mind over the body, “true” expressions of love become those that involve some “intellectual effort”.

At the same time, in a context of advanced individualization as in Germany, where individuals are encouraged to realize their own desires, each minute seems to carry the chance for self-realization and courtship encounters seem to be evaluated by one’s ability to engender an “interesting exchange”. In other words, one may say that love seems to become a matter of merit, no longer measured by one’s brave deeds – as it was in middle ages – but by one’s intellectual expression, as the report of Julho below so well illustrates. When discussing the conduct of women during courtship in Germany and in Brazil, Julho observed that while Brazilian women seem to be wary and concerned whether or not they should trust the men during courtship, German women seem not to be afraid of trusting men, but rather concerned whether or not the admirer deserves their attention, their time. For him, women in Germany are more autonomous than women in Brazil and regard themselves as not needing a man. He also suggested that since women in Germany are concerned whether the man courting them is worth their time, they tend to evaluate the admirer particularly through his ability to maintain an interesting conversation. According to him, communication and fluency are very important for a successful courtship in Germany.

Julho: (...) no Brasil é muito mais uma avaliação assim “Posso confiar nesse cara?”. Enquanto que aqui, com uma alemã, é mais uma avaliação “Vale realmente a pena dar atenção para esse cara?” Sabe que as mulheres são muito mais p o d e r o s a s, autônomas na Alemanha. Então, eu acho que elas têm a sensação de que elas não precisam dos homens. Então, assim “Será que vale a pena?” E elas se acham muito inteligentes também, né. E eu acho que as mulheres inteligentes, tendem a achar os homens bobos, eu acho. E então eu acho que elas ficam assim “Ah, esse cara? Será que ele é inteligente o suficiente para continuar conversando?” Eu percebo isso muito com as alemãs. No diálogo, a fluência é muito importante. Se você saber se comunicar, na mesma sintonia, demonstra muito.. [...] Mas, no geral, essa avaliação é nesse sentido, “Posso confiar nesse cara?” no Brasil, “Posso realmente abrir meu coração para ele?” [...] “Posso confiar? Posso deixar ele me levar ou não?” E aqui na Alemanha elas não têm esse medo, né, de se entregarem. Mas elas têm o fator seletividade. Então, “Será que eu quero me entregar para esse cara? Deixa eu ver se vale à pena.” Entendeu? “Quem é você? O que que você tem de interessante pra contar? O que você faz de interessante?” No geral, os dois são importante, né. Tanto brasileiras como alemãs prezam os dois, mas eu acho que uma mais do que a outra. [29-year-old Brazilian Masters student in Journalism (Bachelors degree)]

The fear of being regarded as intrusive or primitive when engaging in courtship, the doubts about how to act during courtship, the greater uncertainty about each other's interest because of the subtle and disguised expressions of interest, and the great demand for communication seem to lead consequently to the postponement of the kiss during courtship in Germany and the resultant extension of the prelude and approach phases, as observed in the description of the courtship process. Anika, for example, noticed that courtship moves faster in Brazil than in Germany. According to her, it is easier to come in contact with people in Brazil than in Germany and that in the former it is not necessary to worry about it, while in the latter it seems to happen step by step, especially in regard to courtship. As she observed, first comes eye contact and then slowly people move closer, but it all takes time. With Brazilian men, observed Anika, people quickly start dancing and later talk. She noticed that if a woman is lucky, a German man can also dance, but probably it will be an individual dance rather than a couple's dance, which, according to her, also makes the whole courtship process slower, since the physical distance between the parties remains.

Anika: .. Ich denke schon, jetzt besonders, wenn man abends weggeht, ist es leichter mit Brasilianern in Kontakt zu kommen. Da braucht man sich auch nicht viel Kopf machen. Das funktioniert sehr schnell. Und das. Mit deutschen bzw. mit deutschen Männern? Da ist es Schritt für Schritt habe ich das Gefühl. Also, es gibt bestimmt auch Andere, wo das sehr schnell und gut funktioniert. Aber meine Erfahrung war, dass es wirklich Schritt für Schritt. Wenn der Augenkontakt war, dann kann man langsam sich der Person nähern und. .. Und das dauert dann auch länger. (...) Bei den Partys kommt man mit den brasilianischen Männern schnell ins Tanzen dann. Und danach dann ins Sprechen. ((lachend)) Also, ich glaube da tanzt man eher und dann spricht man. Bei den deutschen Männern dann spricht man erst. ((lachend)) Wenn man Glück hat, dann tanzen sie [Deutschen] auch mal. Aber dann halt nicht so im Paartanz, sondern wahrscheinlich eher jeder für sich. Und was das natürlich dann auch wieder verlängert Alles. Weil man hat ja immer noch diese Distanz dazwischen. Was mal gut sein kann, was aber natürlich manchmal auch schwierig sein kann. Also, ich denke es hat Vor- und Nachteile. Aber einfacher ist natürlich, wenn man schneller ins Gespräch kommt oder schneller in Kontakt kommt. [31-year-old German special education teacher (Masters degree)]

Lina, like Anika, also emphasized that the courtship process in Germany moves more slowly than in Brazil. According to her, people in Brazil are faster and more direct in flirting than in Germany. They approach someone sooner and ask them to dance or invite them for a drink. In Germany, the exchange of eye contact before approaching someone takes a longer time, according to her because the inhibition level against approaching or engaging in body contact is higher.

Lina: (...) In einer Flirtsituation in Brasilien sind glaube ich die Leute schneller und direkter. Also, sie sprechen schneller jemanden an. Kommen so: "Hallo, wollen wir mal tanzen?". "Kann ich dich zu einem Getränk einladen?". Was auch immer. Und in Deutschland ist das eher weniger. Also, das heißt das in einer Flirtsituation eher noch längere Zeit etwas über Augenkontakt passiert. Also, sich irgendwie Blicke zugeworfen werden. So. Weil halt, die Hemmschwelle zum Körperkontakt oder Ansprechen noch größer ist. [25-year-old German Bachelors student in Music (high-school degree)]

It seems that the advanced individualization process in Germany – due to advanced democracy, the welfare state and feminism, and the disseminated feminist critiques – is giving rise in Germany to a new courtship dynamic. The emphasis on one's autonomy, on the supremacy of the mind over the body, and the critique of traditional courtship practices have

been weakening traditional gender identities in Germany and leading individuals to conceal interest during courtship and to avoid expressions of sexuality in courtship encounters. No longer “desired” to be performed in public, sexuality seems to become in Germany just a secondary feature of one’s identity and a restricted, private, but also “primitive” experience. What once may have helped to bind individuals together seems today to have become a source of shame, and consequently it seems to promote separation rather than connection. At the same time, the push to focus on one’s subjective world and to develop further one’s singular personality increases the individual’s need to find someone to construct a social reality that is understandable, intimate and close and the need to be acknowledged for one’s personal traits. The demand for communication increases, verbal exchange becomes the main instrument of seduction and individuals start to favor subjective intimacy over physical intimacy as the path to an intimate relationship.

Although the description above of this courtship dynamic of “concealing interest” suggests the awareness of the parties, individuals play the rules of the game “instinctively”, as Bourdieu (1990, 2001, 2006) states, without questioning their actions and the consequences of them. By doing so, they corroborate each other’s identity and place in the group, which in this case in Germany seems to be as a modern, democratic, autonomous, feminist, cultivated, non-macho and non-primitive person – as the reports of Ruth on page 99, Karl on page 146 and Jens on page 149 so well illustrate.

6.2.2. Brazil

Although the last wave of the feminist movement in the 1960s and 1970s in Brazil was impaired by the socio-historical context that demanded they join the major political movement for the re-democratization of the nation and better quality of life (Duarte 2003:165), they achieved some improvements for women’s lives, such as the integration of family planning and birth control into public policies (Duarte 2003:165). Defending the rallying cry “our body belongs to us” (Duarte 2003:165) and supported by other social changes in Western societies – such as the disassociation of sexuality and disease, the advent of modern contraceptive methods that freed sexuality from reproduction, and the sexual equality movements – the feminist movement furthered the emancipation of sexuality in Brazil.

The seclusion of feminists in universities in the 1980s and later the dissolution of feminism within the discussion of gender in the 1990s contributed further to the impairment of the movement (Duarte 2003:167). Although unable to severely criticize traditional gender relations or to strongly diminish the inequality between the sexes, as observed in the GII (2014), feminists challenged the androcentric discourses that stipulated gender distinction as the basis of the marital unit and its dynamics (cf. Ardaillon 1989 apud Heilborn 2004:108) as well as the social moral order that had been restricting women’s sexuality, a challenge which has led men and women in recent decades to engage more freely in impersonal and brief sexual encounters (Quinteiro 1990 apud Heilborn 2004:108) and to accept more easily divorce and maternity outside of marriage (Dauster 1987 apud Heilborn 2004:108).

The push for sexual emancipation in the 1960s-1970s in a context of a weakened feminist critique, traditional gender identities, and increasing individualization processes due to the developing democracy and welfare state – i.e. the dissemination of liberal democratic discourses – seems to have led women in Brazil to regard until today the exercise of their “feminine sexuality” as an expression of autonomy, as the following statement of Volker illustrates. When comparing the conduct of women in Germany and in Brazil, Volker observed that while German women tend to regard sexy clothes as a male prescription of femininity and therefore to consciously avoid them, Brazilian women tend to regard sexy clothes as an expression of their independency and emancipation.

Volker: E também se vestia sexy, eles... até para brasileiras, para espanholas, esses países, se vestir sexy é uma forma de mostrar também independência e emancipação. Que eles mesmo falaram. E para uma alemã, se vestir sexy, ou até lingerie, essas coisas, era naquela época mais uma coisa de "ah, eu faço só isso para agradar os homens". [...] Porque isso é que os homens querem, e não que a mulher quer. E não é que a mulher se sente muito atrativo mesmo, é só para agradar os homens, para chamar a atenção dos homens. E por isso as alemãs na minha geração quase nunca vestiram roupa lingerie, roupa mais sensual, essas coisas. Era uma coisa mais "ah, se você coloca isso, você está sendo dominada pelos desejos dos homens. Se comporta como eles querem que você se comportar". [46-year-old German manager of research and development (PhD degree)]

The focus on the exercise of feminine sexuality, and consequently of masculine sexuality, as expressions of autonomy in Brazil seems to have increased the individual's desire to be acknowledged for one's body, for one's appearance and sexual attraction, i.e. for one's sexiness, as the observations and reports of respondents in this study indicate.⁸³ Sexiness, according to Illouz (2012:45) is a cultural category that emerges with the emancipation of sexuality in Western societies; it is “a set of self-consciously manipulated bodily, linguistic, and sartorial codes geared to elicit sexual desire in another”(Illouz 2012:42). Although Illouz (2012:45) suggests that sexiness expresses the transformation of gender identities into sexual identities, the data on this study indicates that in Brazil, where traditional gender identities still orient sexual relations, gender identities and sexual identities remain one and the same. Also in contrast to Illouz (2012:42), who suggests that sexiness is detached from a moral world of values, the reports of respondents in this study indicate that in a context still strongly oriented by traditional gender identities and marked by strong gender inequality, as in Brazil, double standards still orient individuals' sexual life⁸⁴ – as the reports of Jens and Julho on page 137 already illustrated.

⁸³ The Statistics on Cosmetic Procedures Worldwide released by the International Society of Aesthetic Plastic Surgery in 2014 also seems to corroborate the observation made in this study. According to the statistics, men and women in Brazil have been having more aesthetic procedures performed each year, so that in 2014 Brazil for the first time edged out the United States for the number one position when it comes to total surgical procedures performed.

⁸⁴ Although Illouz (2012:45) speaks about sexiness as an emerging Western cultural category, as the data of this study shows, due to the socio-historical trajectory of sexuality in each nation, sexiness may develop differently in each of them. For example, the intensive discussion of sexuality in the Victorian period and its repressive discourses probably played a part in the formation of the discourse of supremacy of the mind over the body that could be observed among individuals in Germany, while the colonial history probably played a part in the formation of the discourses of the exercise of sexuality as an expression of autonomy observed among individuals in Brazil.

The focus of individuals in Brazil on traditional prescriptions of femininity and masculinity has inadvertently helped to sustain the androcentric moral order that constrains women's autonomy. Women may be able to enjoy their sexuality more freely today; however, in a context still dominated by traditional gender relations and marked by great inequality between the sexes, women are still confronted with double standards.⁸⁵ Still classified according to their sexual activity as either virtuous or licentious, women in Brazil are not able to experience their sexuality completely. They may engage more often in sexual encounters; however, in order to protect their "reputation" and receive social appreciation they tend frequently to restrict their experience of sexuality to the kiss. As observed in the description of courtship, while in Germany the kiss seems to be regarded as the beginning of the development of a more intimate relationship – a sexual and/or affectional one – in Brazil it is regarded as an activity which is an end in itself, not carrying any suggestion of a more intimate relationship [see page 110].

The endurance of traditional gender identities in Brazil seems to lead individuals to sustain the traditional conquer–surrender dynamic of courtship, now boosted, however, by increasing sexual emancipation and the individual demand to have one's sexiness acknowledged, as the observations and reports of respondents indicate. Karl, for example, reported with astonishment how people in Brazil still perform traditional gender identities, expecting to be acknowledged first by their femininity and masculinity, and therefore how women in Brazil expect men to automatically flirt with them. Karl observed that he, as a German, attempts first to get to know the woman, her personality. According to him, he tries to show the woman that he takes her seriously.

Karl: ((lachen)) In Brasilien erwarten die das jetzt geradezu, also das man schon, sozusagen, automatisch mit den Mädels flirtet. [...] Das ist das was ich gesagt habe, dass sie versuchen ihre Weiblichkeit nach vorne zu stellen und dass man an die Person schwieriger herankommt. Und das ich dann immer erst mal versuche, erst mal die Person, sozusagen das ich der Frau zeige das ich sie ernst nehme als Persönlichkeit und dann auch die Weiblichkeit, natürlich. Aber das ist eine Sache die ein bisschen persönlicher ist, was dann ein bisschen später kommt. Und in Brasilien ist ja sofort Weiblichkeit und Männlichkeit.. man zeigt wie sehr man Mann ist, man zeigt wie sehr man Frau ist und man spricht das auch an so. [27-year-old German Masters student in Political Sciences (high-school degree)]

As Parker (1989:124-125 apud Heilborn 2004:184) observed in his study on sexuality in Brazil in the 1980s, the polarity active masculinity / passive femininity is a constitutive element of the Brazilian sexual order, and it can be observed in the formula Brazilians use to describe sexual relations, with the man being the one who "eats" and the women the one who "gives". Still maintaining the upper hand in society, men in Brazil are usually the ones to conduct the encounter, as the reports of respondents in this study indicate and the observations of events for singles revealed. An inversion of roles during courtship, i.e. with women being the ones to

⁸⁵ A recent example of the prevalence of these double standards in Brazil can be observed in the video "Piranho" released on YouTube by a group of artists focused on humor. The video makes fun by applying the double standards through which women have been impaired in society to men. In this case, the man is censured by his female boss about his tightly fitting clothes and sexual activity with co-workers. The film can be found at http://youtu.be/-tpSo_Hb4dM.

initiate courtship and men being the ones to follow, is less commonly seen in Brazil than in Germany [see page 99]. The statements of Lina on page 96, Beate on page 97, Patrícia on page 98 and 149 and Ruth on page 98, for example, already illustrate how men in Brazil tend to be more active in approaching women and more assertive when doing so than men in Germany – by addressing them when not invited, by embracing them on the waist when coming closer, by attempting to kiss them without consent.

Women in Brazil may enjoy their sexuality today more freely than before; however, in a context still dominated by men and their double standards, they seem to restrict their autonomy to more active behavior in provoking men into courtship, by attempting to seduce them through their body, appearance and gestures. As the reports of respondents indicate, the advances of men towards women in Brazil are so intense that women have no other choice than to adopt a passive/defensive position during courtship. Marcelo, for example, observed in his interview that his German wife, who lived in Brazil for a while, complained about the strong male harassment. He described ironically in his interview that to harass someone in Berlin is to read a book and drink a coffee, while in Brazil it is to whistle or call out, or grab the person and attempt to kiss her quickly. According to him, courtship in Brazil is wilder, more intense.

Marcelo: *Já. É. Aqui, é, é. Pelo que, pelo que, é... ela me falou também, né, porque lá no Brasil ela também foi assediada e ela achou muito forte o assédio lá, porque aqui para você assediar alguém, aqui em Berlim você tem que... estar... lendo um livro e tomando um café ((risos)), né, assim, tipo... assim, e você, lá no Brasil, você para assediar alguém você tem que ficar ((barulho de assovio)), ou chamar, assim, ou... pegar e tentar beijar logo, sabe, mais selvagem, assim, mais forte, né... [31-year-old Brazilian dance tutor (high-school degree)]*

Guilherme, when reporting about his perception of courtship in Germany and the tips he gives his pupils, illustrated the domineering approach of men in Brazil. According to him, the courtship behavior of his German apprentices is “too slow” or shy, and he tends to advise them to give more signs of interest, to be more proactive by “grabbing” the person.

Guilherme: *[...] Os alunos que eu tenho, né. Porque a gente sai junto. A gente acaba de fazer o workshop, a gente vai pra cá, vai pra lá. Então eu estou sempre vendo como é que eles se interagem. E a coisa é um pouco meio demorada. Há uma comunicação, mas a coisa é um pouco meio, muito parada. No meu ponto de vista, eu acho 'liih, esse negócio está muito devagar aí.' Eu até falo assim 'Pô, vai lá. Pega essa menina. Agarra ela. Arrasta ela.' Ou então eu falo para ela 'Vai lá, dá uma piscadinha pra ele, dá um sorriso.' 'Ai, não, eu tô sem graça, não sei o que.' Então, eu acho muito parado. [41-year-old Brazilian fight tutor (high-school degree)]*

Juliana, when discussing the conduct of men in Germany and in Brazil during courtship, observed that Brazilian women have a macho representation of men, of someone who approaches the other directly and discloses his interest, “someone who knows what he wants”. The high self-assurance of men in Brazil can be unpleasant, according to her, since they approach women constantly and assume that they will always be successful in courtship. In Germany, however, she states that men are insecure and act for her like boys, not knowing if they can embrace someone or not. For Juliana, Germans have another relation with the body than Brazilians, one that carries more rules about what may or may not be done.

Juliana: *Ah, um cara que sabe o que quer mais, assim. Eu acho que a gente tem muito mesmo esta ideia do macho, que vai chegar e vai falar. [...] Mais seguro de si! ((risos)) Isso no Brasil chega até*

a ser desagradável. Os caras são tão seguros, que todo mundo vem te xavecar! Porque na verdade, todos acham que eles podem conseguir. Mas aqui não. Eles são inseguros. Então faz eles agirem como menino. Eles não sabem se eles podem te abraçar! Porque aí também tem toda uma regra, o que é corpo, a relação com o corpo, se eu posso ou não posso. Então, assim, tem tudo isso que no Brasil a gente não tem. [31-year-old Brazilian PhD student in Sociology (Masters degree)]

Karl reported with astonishment in his interview the conduct of men and women during Carnival in Salvador (Brazil), that men approached women saying “I want to kiss you!” and a woman needed to “defend herself with hands and feet” if she did not want to be kissed.

Karl: (...) In Brasilien, und ich rede jetzt von Salvador, da.. machen die ja nicht nur Augenkontakt. Die gehen zum dem Mädels hin und sagen: "Ich will dich küssen!". Und dann muss das Mädels eigentlich sich mit Händen und Füßen wehren, damit sie nicht geküsst werden so. Also.. gut, das war Karneval. Karneval ist ja sowieso die Zeit ohne Regeln in Brasilien. [27-year-old German Masters student in Political Sciences (high-school degree)]

Ursel also observed in her interview how Brazilian men tend to impose their will on women, emphasizing that even when women dismissed them, they tended to keep insisting. In her opinion, Brazilian men always attempt to prove how far they can go in an encounter. Therefore, she noticed that they keep attempting to court women even when they have already been rejected. According to her, with Brazilian men it is necessary to make it clearer that there is no interest in courtship than with German men.⁸⁶

Ursel: Und ich glaube das trifft es auch ganz gut. Ein Brasilianer versucht halt erst mal wie weit er gehen kann, so habe ich das Gefühl. [...] Aber sie probieren es trotzdem noch ein, zwei, dreimal, auch wenn du schon gesagt hast, nein, ist nicht. Ich glaube man muss schon einem Brasilianer deutlicher zu verstehen geben das man ihn nicht will, als einem Deutschen. [29-year-old German conference and event planner (Masters degree)]

Sybille, like Ursel, observed how men in Brazil are more pushy than German men by suggesting that Germans, in contrast to Brazilians, are less bothersome, that they take more time to approach and also go away when they are not accepted.

Sybille: (...) Also, der Brasilianer war auf jeden Fall aktiv. Das ja. Wenn die Deutsche. Also so. Die Deutschen sind immer so ein bisschen zurückhaltend und warten. Die werden. Die gucken so ein bisschen, werden sie akzeptiert oder nicht. So, und die gehen dann auch wieder, wenn sie nicht akzeptiert werden. Nicht so richtig aufdringlich. [25-year-old German Masters student in Law (high-school degree)]

Lucia observed in her interview that men in Brazil usually “invade” a woman’s space, and lead her to assume a (physically) defensive position in order to keep them at bay. According to her, in Brazil while during courtship women usually defend themselves and hold off men’s advances, later in the relationship women attempt to keep men in the relationship. When regarding her courtship encounter with her German boyfriend, Lucia observed that it was different, since at no moment did she need to tell him that he was invading her space. She noticed that the development of a relationship is natural and organic, that first people like what they see, then they start to talk and they like what they hear and then a desire arises to touch and then to kiss and so on. She argues that the rhythms of this process must be respected in order to be successful, that people must wait for the time to touch, to kiss, to

⁸⁶ A similar situation is reported by the researcher in the Appendix under “The observation of events for singles”, to illustrate a courtship situation in Rio de Janeiro.

have sex. She observed that she could feel during her courtship encounter with her German boyfriend that he, like her, was respecting his and her timing.

Lucia: (...) Então, mas não é a coisa do brasileiro, porque o brasileiro ele já te i n v a d e. A palavra é essa, né. Você tem com o brasileiro sempre uma mão assim, né. [Braço estendido com a palma da mão para a frente, como se segurasse alguém que tentasse se aproximar] “Calma. Calma. Calma.” Você sempre segurando ele. No início. Depois você está sempre puxando ele. Mas no início é sempre “Calma. Calma. Calma.” Entendeu. E aqui não, aqui foi tudo meio como, vamos dizer, um balé, entendeu. Uma coisa toda, no momento certo, na maneira certa, no ritmo certo. Não teve, eu não barrei o Mathias. Em nenhum momento eu disse para ele “Agora não.” Toda vez que ele veio, eu estava pronta, tava na hora certa, eu estava esperando. [...] E isso você, o gostoso é, tem steps, né, tem passos. Você primeiro, você gosta, você olha, você gosta do que você v ê, depois do que você o u v e, depois você vai f a l a n d o, já vai tendo uma união, e aí vai vindo uma vontade de t o c a r, e vai vindo uma vontade de b e i j a r, quer dizer, tudo muito natural. Se a coisa não for nesse ritmo, aí, entendeu, freia, breca, aí não fica bom, entendeu, quer dizer é rápido demais, ou às vezes também é demorado demais. Então tem uma coisa natural do ser humano, né, essa aproximação. Você vai se chegando, né, do mesmo jeito que você o l h o u, tem um tempo para você chegar p e r t o, tem um tempo para você f a l a r, tem um tempo para contar algumas coisas. E também tem o tempo pra tocar, pra beijar, pra transar, né, que faz bem. E eu senti que ele também estava se respeitando da mesma maneira que eu estava me respeitando. Quer dizer, existe um respeito também. Não é porque ele é um homem que ele passa essas barreiras. [47-year-old Brazilian English teacher and MBA student (Bachelors degree)]

Nevertheless, as Bourdieu (2001:21) emphasizes, the sexual harassment of women by men is not only an expression of the male desire for sexual possession but also a pure affirmation of male social dominance over women, who – raised in a male-dominated context – tend to accept it and even desire it. As Juliana affirmed in her statement on page 157 and Julho in his statement on page 102, women in Brazil admire the open expression of interest by men and want to be chosen by them. The more passive posture of Brazilian women during courtship was also observed by Max. When commenting on the conduct of his Brazilian girlfriend during courtship, he noted that she was more reticent and passive during courtship, waiting for him to take the initiative. For him it was a reflex of the gender dynamic in Brazil, where men’s advances to women are more frequent and therefore women would not be sure about the other’s actual intentions and would tend not to react to all courtship attempts.

Max: Das war bei uns beim Kennenlernen auch so, bei Manu und mir, dass ich schon merkte das sie sehr passiv war und, ja, mich wirklich aus der Reserve gelockt hat das ich nun wirklich ihr mal einen Kuss gebe. Wobei, wir haben uns danach auch darüber unterhalten. Sie hatte schon gefühlt, klar, dass sie mich auch küssen will oder mich kennenlernen will, aber sie war gehemmt innerlich bzw. bewusst hat sie sich zurückgehalten um erst mal zu, weiß ich nicht, zu sehen ob ich sie anspreche oder, ich weiß nicht warum, aber.. hängt vielleicht auch damit zusammen das brasilianische Frauen ja häufiger angesprochen werden in der Gesellschaft, auf der Straße nachgepiffen oder wie auch immer, das ist in Deutschland nicht ganz so häufig und das sie sich dahingehend auch etwas zurücknehmen müssen und nicht jede Anmache erwidern müssen. Sondern sich dann eher zurückhalten um zu sehen, ob der Mann wirklich nachsetzt, nachsetzt, nachsetzt und wirklich zielstrebig auf das Kennenlernen hinarbeitet oder ob es nur.. aus Spaß ist oder einen Witz macht, oder wie auch immer, und sie nicht gleich darauf einsteigt. Aber das stimmt. Also Manu war da auch eher reserviert gewesen zu Beginn und eher distanziert. [43-year-old German bank financial manager (Ausbildung degree)]

Since individuals in Brazil have internalized the rules that orient courtship during their socialization process, they are able to play the game of courtship “instinctively” without questioning its consequences, and by acting according to those rules they corroborate each other’s identity and their own place in the group (Bourdieu 1990, 2001, 2006). As observed

above, when men tend to play the active role in courtship, women tend to play the passive one. Nevertheless, that is not all that comprises the courtship dynamic in Brazil. The following statements of Julho and Flávia help to illustrate the dynamic of “playing hard to get” that seems to orient men and women in a courtship encounter. According to Julho, while in Germany people determine fairly quickly in an encounter whether or not they are interested and prevent the encounter from developing further in the case of disinterest, in Brazil people “let themselves be persuaded” during courtship, allowing themselves to play more during the conversation and enabling something more to develop. For him, physical appearance in terms of beauty and status still plays an important role in courtship in Brazil, while in Germany due to lesser social inequality this is not the case. Julho also observed that in Germany since men tend to be slower in courtship, the women tend to show their interest more openly. As he observed, women in Germany do not tend to show many signs of interest, but when they are interested they give clear signs, not like Brazilian women who tend to pretend to not be interested even when they really are “crazy” about it.

Julho: (...) Enquanto no Brasil as pessoas são muito mais.. Se deixam persuadir muito mais, sabe. Brincam muito mais com essa conversa, com o lance da paquera. Aqui na Alemanha, as pessoas já são mais, já definem muito mais rápido “Interessou? Não. Não me interessou. Não me interessou, não adianta.” E no Brasil “Ah, não me interessou, mas vamos lá ver o que você tem para me oferecer”, sabe, tem muito disso. E é claro, no Brasil, a aparência ainda é muito mais importante. Não só do que você está vestida, mas o que você ostenta também, é muito importante. E aqui na Alemanha, onde ninguém morre de fome, e os ricos não são muito mais ricos do que a classe média, eu acho que essa ostentação é um pouco mais reduzida, menos importante. [...] Os homens aqui são m u i t o mais parados, então as mulheres demonstram muito mais nitidamente o interesse. Pode não ser tão frequente, mas é evidente. É fácil perceber “Ah, ela gostou de mim”, porque ela não vai ficar fazendo mil frescuras, como uma brasileira faria, por exemplo, “Não, não estou interessada” e na verdade ela estava louca. Mas aqui não. Se ela está interessada ela vai conversar numa boa, vai sorrir numa boa. [29-year-old Brazilian Masters student in Journalism (Bachelors degree)]

When describing the different courtship conduct of Germans and Brazilians, Flávia reported how the approach in Germany lacks something that she can hardly describe.⁸⁷ She observed with amusement that while Germans tend to look for a long time and only seldom attempt to approach someone, Brazilians tend to skip eye contact and approach the other physically and verbally. She reported with delight how a man approaches a woman in Brazil with caresses, holding her closer and attempting to persuade her verbally and physically to surrender to her sexual attraction, while the woman rejects his advances until she succumbs to them. She observed with amusement that the same game, i.e. to play “hard to get”, does not work in Germany, since German men accept the first “no” and go away.

Flávia: Não. Não dá. É diferente e não tem como explicar, porque eu também não sei. É uma falta que você não sabe. Entende? ((risos)) Então, é uma coisa que.. Nossa, o brasileiro tem um jeito de chegar. Diferente dos alemães. Aqui, você chega num bar, os alemães morre de te olhar. Olha e olha e olha, que enche o saco! Mas, chegar junto? Às vezes chega, mas até chegar você já perdeu todo o interesse. Já brasileiro não. Brasileiro você tá lá, quando você vê já tem alguém passando a mão nos seus cabelos, na sua cinturinha. Aí vem o cara e você tá empurrando “Saí! Eu não quero!” e ele “Porque não?” e puxa de volta, e você lá. Esse jogo, esse charminho, né. “Não quero!” e ele

⁸⁷ Probably the tacit spontaneity that normally attends courtship interactions between individuals from the same region.

“V e m”, aí você “Humm”, quando você vê, você tá lá. Quando você vê você já tá na cama. O alemão já é diferente com isso. Se você fala “não”, é melhor se você tiver algum interesse, você não falar não. Porque eles vão embora mesmo. ((risos)) Não é não. Se fala “não”, “Ok. Tschüss” e você “[Ãh?!”. Quantas amigas minhas foram bancar a difícil e se êneo. O homem. Interessadíssima no home. “Não”. “Ok.”. “Que disgrama! Vai embora mesmo?!”. Eu falei “Tu não tá no Brasil, que tu diz não e ele volta mil vezes”. [32-year-old Brazilian beautician (high-school degree)]

As observed previously, the focus on the exercise of feminine and masculine sexuality in Brazil seems to have increased the individual's desire to be acknowledged by one's sexiness, which consequently influences the whole courtship dynamic. As observed in the reports of respondents, individuals in Brazil tend to express their sexuality more strongly during an encounter, through body language, physical appearance and physical contact. The following statement of Patrícia helps to illustrate this. As she observed, Germans express their sexuality in public in a subtler form, while Brazilians tend to reveal it through clothes, their way of talking, or during courtship. She observed that initially she thought that the public expression of sexuality was a direct expression of the person's interest in sex, but she learned that she was mistaken, that the subtle expression of sexuality in public by Germans does not mean that they are less interested in sex than Brazilians, who tend to display their sexuality.

***Patrícia:** (...) Achava que brasileiro era muito mais ligado em sexo do que alemão. Mas eu me enganei feio, eu me enganei feio. Eu acho que aqui também. Só que as pessoas são muito mais discretas. A gente bota isso muito para fora. Ou através de roupa. Ou através da forma que a gente fala. Ou esse lance da paquera, que é muito forte, pelo menos no Rio. E aqui não. As pessoas são muito mais discretas mesmo, né. [...] Só que isso não quer dizer que o cara [na Alemanha] que não chegou em mim goste menos de sexo do que o cara que está tentando já me pegar [no Brasil]. Não mesmo! [30-year-old Brazilian primary school teacher (Bachelors degree)]*

Rosa, when reporting about kissing in Germany and in Brazil, emphasized that Brazilians kiss with more passion than Germans, whether it is just a momentary expression of interest or the initiation of sex.

***Rosa:** Ah, percebo. Percebo. Brasileiro beija com mais vontade. Com certeza. E quando eu digo que brasileiro beija com mais vontade, não é só quando ele está a fim de sexo com você não. [...] eu acho que é um beijinho mais aguadinho [na Alemanha], né. Um beijinho mais aguadinho. Eu acho, em comparação com o dos brasileiros, claro. Brasileiro beija com vontade, independente se vai rolar ou se não vai rolar, beija. Se vai beijar, vai beijar. [38-year-old Brazilian Magister student in Art History (Bachelors degree)]*

The individual's strong desire to be acknowledged for sexiness in Brazil not only encourages individuals to express their sexuality more, but also to disclose their sexual attraction for others and/or their interest in courtship. As observed in the description of courtship, individuals in Brazil tend to disclose their interest in others by making direct eye contact, approaching the person directly also without previous eye contact, asking and speaking about intimate subjects – including the relationship status of the other and paying compliments on physical appearance – and making assertive physical expressions of interest, like holding someone by the waist or arm. Karl, for example, observed how in Brazil men tend to compliment a woman's physical appearance already at the beginning of a conversation and how this is expected and desired by women, therefore leading to men's success with this tactic of seduction. Such an open expression of attraction in Germany, however, observed Karl, would be considered “non-serious and sexist and macho” and therefore an unsuccessful tactic

of courtship. Karl also mentioned a German friend who had also been to Brazil and had started to adopt in Germany the open expressions of attraction used by Brazilians; however, according to Karl, his friend is often scolded by women in Germany.

Karl: *Da ist das drin mit dem persönlichen.. dass man eben sofort über persönliche Sachen redet. Und das es die Mädels den Brasilianern auch überhaupt nicht übel nehmen, wenn sie nach drei Minuten schon sagen: "Hast du aber ein sehr enges Kleid an!". Das ist eine Sache z. B. die schon eine sexuelle Konnotation hat. Wo ich in Deutschland schon als unseriös und sexistisch und Macho und was weiß ich alles abgestempelt werde. Das kann ich nicht sagen, selbst wenn ich das (so) finde und selbst wenn sie das gerne hören würde. Das ist einfach nach drei Minuten, man kennt sich noch nicht gut genug. Wenn man was getrunken hat und so geht das ((Räuspern)). Und /ehm/.. ich kenne auch hier in Deutschland, ich habe einen Kumpel der macht das ganz genauso so, der war auch eine Weile in Brasilien ((lachen)), der war auch an der Universität in São Paulo und so, aber der kriegt eben auch regelmäßig gesagt, was er für einer ist von den deutschen Frauen. ((lachen)) [...] In Brasilien erwarten die das jetzt geradezu, also das man schon, sozusagen, automatisch mit den Mädels flirtet. [...] Also auch dann z.B. so Sachen die ich niemals sagen würde. Ich stehe mit meinem Kumpel mit drei Mädels da und wir haben halt eine Freundin von ihm getroffen und dann sagt er halt vor den drei Mädels: "Sind denn alle deine Freundinnen so hübsch?", so dass es alle hören. Und dann machen die alle ((nachahmend)): "Uhu huhu". Und finden das alle ganz toll. Hier in Deutschland, so ein Kommentar, da würden die alle machen: "Was ist das denn für einer!". Das ist diese... das ist der Unterschied im kennenlernen ((lachen)), dass man so was in Brasilien sagen kann, und muss wahrscheinlich, und das man dann auch viel schneller zu persönlichen.. sagen wir mal romantischen und sexuellen Themen kommt. [27-year-old German Masters student in Political Sciences (high-school degree)]*

Joana, when discussing courtship, noted that while Brazilians tend to make their sexual attraction explicit by telling a woman that she is "hot", Germans tend to be subtler when expressing attraction, such as by saying that the woman is "beautiful".

Joana: *... Ah, são diferentes... Por que... É, o brasileiro tem uma forma sei lá, mais direta de cantar as pessoas, os alemães não, eles são mais reservados... Sei lá, os brasileiros chegam "oi, gostosa", essas coisas assim, você está passando na rua e eles mexem com você... Aqui não, aqui... O alemão ele chega assim mais t r a n q u i l o, mais d i s c r e t o... É... Eles falam "Du bist eine schöne Frau...", são essas coisas assim, mas não tem essas coisas como o brasileiro de chegar e ser bem direto. [44-year-old Brazilian manager of a beauty parlor (Ausbildung degree)]*

Ulla reported her astonishment at the steady gaze of people in Brazil and how she perceived it as disrespectful, since she had the feeling that while women stared at her to evaluate her appearance, men stared at her to evaluate her body, which make her feel like a "piece of meat" .

Ulla: *Also die Männer [gucken] natürlich auch, logischerweise. Die vielleicht nicht so sehr auf die Kleidung, sondern mehr auf den Körper, aber die Frauen vielleicht auch auf den Körper. Aber die Männer natürlich mit anderen Hintergedanken.*

Interviewerin: *Und welche wären das?*

Ulla: *Na, mich irgendwie anzugraben. Irgendwie mich anzumachen. Die Frauen ja nicht um mich anzumachen, sondern irgendwie zu vergleichen. Und Männer eher offensiv.. Also ich habe sehr oft gesagt zu meinem Freund: "Ich habe mich heute wieder wie ein Stück Fleisch gefühlt!". Also auf die Männer bezogen.*

At another point in her interview, Ulla noticed that Brazilians also tend more to express their sexual interest verbally, by making comments when the person passes by, a conduct that for her as a German is unusual and offensive.

Ulla: [...] *Man läuft vorbei und man bekommt einen Kommentar. Das ist halt ungewohnt für jemanden von hier. Und ich fand das sehr offensiv. Sehr beleidigend. Sehr.. negativ.* [25-year-old German Masters student in Literary and Cultural Studies (high-school degree)]

Maria, when asked about courtship, reported how she met her German husband and compared it with how she had met previous Brazilian partners. She described how she and her German husband fell in love with each other when their eyes first met. According to her, while Germans look into the eyes because they want to know the person and are interested in his/her character, Brazilians look at legs and buttocks, expressing their willingness for sex. She also stated that a previous Brazilian partner admitted to have falling in love with her because of her legs.

Maria: *De flerte? O meu marido, por exemplo, nós nos flertamos por olhar. [...] E foi aquela coisa assim, que cruzou os olhares, por exemplo. Ai, quando eu terminei de dançar com o meu irmão, ele estava olhando para mim. E eu olhei para ele. E como diz ele, ele apaixonou por causa do meu olhar, ele apaixonou comigo e eu com ele. Ele olhou pra mim, foi aquela coisa assim, bateu um olho no outro, foi paixão na hora. E foi assim, foi muito engraçado, que eu senti, né. E tava muita gente dançando, e eu querendo encontrar ele debaixo das pessoas, né. De repente, você sabe quando dá aquele vaco assim? E ele também tentando me olhar assim. [...] Foi muito bom esse dia! E o brasileiro, ele está mais assim. Eu andava antigamente, eu tinha as pernas muito cabeludas e passava muito descolorante na perna. Eles falavam que eu tinha, parecia perna de pêssego, né. E um dia eu na rua, de minissaia. E os brasileiros, eles flertam olhando na sua perna, na sua bunda ((risos)).*

Entrevistadora: *O olhar não está no olho, é isso?*

Maria: *Isso. Por exemplo, esse namorado meu, eu comecei a namorar por causa das minhas perna. Ele olhou e falou assim "Eu me apaixonei por você por causa das suas pernas", por exemplo. Mas o alemão não, o alemão tá aquela coisa mais, eu acho mais forte. O brasileiro olha para você com vontade de transar com você. Ele olha a sua bunda, olha as suas pernas. O alemão não, o alemão olha dentro dos seus olhos. O alemão olha nos seus olhos. Porque o alemão, eles não tão muito preocupados com mulher que tem corpo bonito, essas coisas, isso não. Eles são preocupados com o caráter da pessoa, com o caráter da pessoa. E o brasileiro, você pode começar a namorar com um brasileiro porque ele achou a sua bunda bonita, suas perna bonita. A maioria, né. Não vamos dizer toda. A maioria.* [45-year-old Brazilian beautician (high-school degree)]

Pedro, like Jens on his statement on page 94, attributes to the gaze of Brazilians an expression of sexual desire. He described in his interview how this practice transmits the sexual tension present in the situation, and his feeling that in Brazil people tend more than in Germany to engage in this seduction game through eye contact more easily and for a longer time.

Pedro: *Bom, pessoalmente, o que eu observo são os olhos. Primeira coisa, eu acho que a sexualidade está no olhar. A primeira coisa, lá [Brasil] ou aqui [Alemanha], é no olhar que tu vê a coisa. E.. Bom, lá eu tive muito mais experiência do que aqui, né. Bem mais ((risos)). Aqui foram três alemãs, de novo, eu acho que é no olhar que a coisa. Eu acho que, bom.. Não vi diferença. Eu acho que no olhar deu para ver que a coisa encaixaria, que teria química, com as alemãs. Logo lá, claro, é a mesma coisa. Se bate o olhar, tu já sabe que é uma, é possível ((risos)) que funcione. Agora, de novo, eu acho que lá o jogo do olhar é muito maior do que aqui. Isso eu acho sim. Para mim, isto faz parte da questão sensual, erótica da coisa. Vamos botar nesse quadro. Tu vai para um barzinho no Brasil, tu vai para uma boate no Brasil, tu começa com esse jogo. Aqui a coisa é mais, aqui eu acho difícil. Se tem, é mais fugaz, é mais rápido. Porque para mim é o primeiro contato! É a primeira porta de abertura para tu fazer o approach. Aqui é muito pouco, aqui é muito pouco. Em relação ao Brasil é bem maior.* [35-year-old Brazilian PhD student in History (Masters degree)]

As observed above, the permissible and desired expressions of interest in Brazil encourage individuals to use verbal and physical strategies of seduction during courtship. In a context

where individuals are concerned about their sexiness, amorous declarations and compliments present a special lure, since they engender sympathy by corroborating one's ability to attract someone through their appearance. Julho, for example, who observed in his statement on page 149 that before he came to Germany he believed that compliments were always a successful instrument of seduction, explained further in his interview that for him compliments help to engender sympathy and to bind people, although it seems to work the other way around in Germany. According to him, since people in Germany tend to apply fewer compliments than in Brazil, they tend to be skeptical of them when coming from strangers and when they receive too many compliments in a short period of time.

Julho: [...] *Oh, quando eu não conheço alguém muito bem, eu sou muito cauteloso, porque como em terra de cego quem tem olho é rei, em terra que as pessoas não recebem elogios, qualquer elogio pode parecer uma coisa exagerada. Então, elas tendem a ter essa.. Assim, o elogio tem um caráter invertido, sabe, aqui. [...] O elogio tem a intenção de fazer a pessoa se sentir bem. De abrir portas, né, de fortalecer o vínculo entre o elogiado e quem faz elogio. E aqui, ele pode fechar portas, porque as pessoas ficam, se colocam numa posição de defesa, sabe. Ficam assim "Eh, pera aí. O que que ele quer comigo?", "O que que ela quer comigo?", "Quão sincero ele está sendo?". Porque se você não recebe elogios. Tá o tempo todo tentando provar alguma coisa e você não tem esse feedback, né. As pessoas não chegam e falam "Nossa, você é essa coisa que você está tentando provar. Eu reconheci isso em você." Quando alguém fala isso para você, sem você ter tido muito tempo com essa pessoa, você vai ficar toda na dúvida "Não, pera aí. Será que ele está falando sério? Será que ele está tirando uma com a minha cara?" Está entendendo o que eu quero dizer? [...] Então, pessoas que eu não conheço muito, eu já notei isso várias vezes. As mulheres ficam assim "Hum, muito elogio? Hum, não gosto muito." [29-year-old Brazilian Masters student in Journalism (Bachelors degree)]*

Tiago, like Julho, stated that compliments raise sympathy and charm people, and therefore he likes to use them with everyone.

Tiago: [...] *Mas acho que sim. Gente, imagina?! Eu faço isso, por exemplo, até com a minha sogra, né, com mulheres mais velhas até, eu faço um elogio, assim, "Nossa, seu chapéu é muito bonito." E eu adoro fazer um elogio, porque você ganha a pessoa fácil, entende? Você fica, aquilo assim. Não é estratégia não, mas, assim, muitas vezes você quer conversar com a pessoa e tal..*

Entrevistadora: *Você gera simpatia, né.*

Tiago: *É. Aquela coisa, então, pô, sabe, a pessoa está lá com chapéu bonito, fala "O chapéu é bonito." Qual é o problema, né? [39-year-old Brazilian visual artist (Masters degree)]*

The perspective of the one who receives compliments and amorous declarations and feels his/her identity corroborated can be seen in the following statement of Julho. When describing his last courtship interaction with a Brazilian woman, he observed how she praised him and declared her feelings for him. According to him, the woman repeatedly offered compliments on his attractiveness, something that he enjoyed, since he had not heard a compliment from his German girlfriend for months. He also observed that the Brazilian woman claimed "to like him more than she should". Further in his interview, Julho stated how it was enjoyable to have someone praising his beauty and how it made him feel "really good".

Julho: (...) *a última vez que eu fiquei com uma brasileira, é.. Ela, na paquera, ficava me dizendo que eu era lindo, lindo, lindo. Pô, minha namorada não me diz há meses que eu sou bonito. É muito estranho, né. E depois a menina fica "Nossa, eu gostei tanto de você! Gostei mais do que eu deveria. E pá-rá-rá-pá-rá-rá." [...] É, eu acho que também, eu vejo muito que essa demonstração de carinho, de afeto, de tudo. (...) Que é muito gostoso. O "sou lindo, sou lindo" me fez m u i t o bem. [29-year-old Brazilian Masters student in Journalism (Bachelors degree)]*

As an appropriate tool to engender sympathy, by corroborating one's sexiness, compliments and amorous declarations seem to have become a common verbal strategy of seduction among Brazilians, as the statements of Lina on page 102, Beate on page 103, Julho on page 149 and Karl on page 162 illustrate. Pedro, for example, when confronted with the statement of a fellow Brazilian about the more common use of amorous declarations in Brazil than in Germany, agreed with it and observed that in Rio de Janeiro it seems that amorous declarations became trivial instruments of seduction during courtship: "if it is what she wants to hear, say it!"

Pedro: *É, isso sim.. Isso sim.. Isso sim. Isso também é, falar eu te amo /ehm/ é, isso sim. Isso eu acho que. Eu diria que. Eu notei essa diferença do eu te amo no Rio de Janeiro, assim. (...) Enfim, na experiência, seis anos de Rio de Janeiro que eu tive quase, eu acho que sim, lá se fala com mais facilidade. A coisa sai, sai mais assim. Eu acho que é, talvez assim, banalizou para conquistar, entendeu? É isso que elas querem ouvir, então eu falo!* [35-year-old Brazilian PhD student in History (Masters degree)]

Ursel also observed how people in Brazil may apply amorous declarations as an instrument of seduction. According to her, Brazilians flirt more often and speak more about their feelings than Germans. However, she observed that while Brazilians may express amorous declarations more often than Germans, the former do not always really mean it, while the latter do.

Ursel: *Auf jeden Fall ((lachen)). Also ich denke.. also man kann es natürlich wahrscheinlich nicht verallgemeinern, aber.. ich meine, ein Brasilianer ist von Hause aus schon viel offener und man sagt flirty ((verlegenes Lächeln)). [...] Also sie flirten halt mehr und sind offener. Also sie zeigen Gefühle mehr. Reden vielleicht auch mehr darüber. Jetzt natürlich die Frage, wenn ein Deutscher dir sagt das er dich liebt, dann ist es... dann kann man schon fast davon ausgehen, dass es meistens auch so ist. [...] Und bei den Brasilianern, denke ich, die reden halt viel mehr und schmeißen viel mehr mit Begriffen aus der Liebe um sich, ohne das es vielleicht wirklich sehr ernst gemeint ist.* [29-year-old German conference and event planner (Masters degree)]

Although individuals in Brazil seem to use such open verbal expressions of interest more often, it does not mean that they tend to engage in long conversations, as already observed in the description of courtship. The increasing individual demand to be acknowledged for one's sexiness seems to put body language in the foreground during courtship. Rodrigo, for example, in observing how the expression of interest and artifice of seduction in the two regions are different, noted that while a Brazilian woman would make her interest clear through her look, a German woman would tend towards a more "formal", "subtle" expression of interest, like inviting the other for conversation or for some activity together. According to him, Brazilians make their interest more evident, and "there is not much to talk about... it is something more about touch" .

Rodrigo: *[...] Eu acho que uma brasileira ia jogar todo um olhar, todo um charme, uma s e d u ç ã o, né, uma situação, assim, você está em um bar e aí... você ia perceber, você percebe pelo olhar, né, que a pessoa está... te dando condições de uma proximidade. Eu acho que aí no caso, a alemã, já ia te olhar, daí ia... ela de repente ia buscar um outro subterfúgio, que ia te convidar para "olha, senta aqui", ou "ah, vamos fazer uma coisa juntos, vamos...". Eu acho que seria uma coisa mais... formal do que o brasileiro, acho que é mais na cara, né, mais... não tem muita, muita, vamos dizer assim... não tem muito o que o falar. É mais do tato, seria mais uma coisa do tato. O alemão seria uma coisa mais do... da sutileza, da sutilidade, de você, né, jogar um charme, mas com muita sutilidade, com muita, é... cuidado.* [41-year-old Brazilian journalist (Bachelors degree)]

Tiago, when discussing courtship, observed that in Brazil when a woman engages in a conversation it already means that at least a kiss is going to happen; therefore, according to him, the body language during the prelude phase is so important in Brazil. In Germany, on the other hand, he noticed that the body language in the prelude phase is restricted to a tilt of the head to the side. According to him, conversation in Germany is really important in courtship, since women evaluate whether the man can communicate. He also observed that if a German woman in the middle of a conversation loses interest in the admirer, she just excuses herself and goes away. A Brazilian woman, however, observed Tiago, would maybe give the man a consolatory kiss before making an excuse to leave, like saying that she needs to go to the ladies' room.

Tiago: (...) *E quando você começa a conversar com, numa situação de paquera que você começa a conversar com uma brasileira, aquilo já está muito claro. Entendeu? Já está absolutamente claro que dali, no mínimo, um beijo sai. Entendeu? Quando você começa a conversar e a conversa rola. Já está claro. Então, quer dizer, o verbal não é tão importante, o importante é mais o visual. É a linguagem corporal, visual. E na alemã, não. Bateu a cabeça, assim, deu aquela batida de cabeça, ok, tem uma abertura para conversar. Aí você vai entrar no verbal, que é o segundo passo. Que é super importante para elas. Se você sabe falar, se você sabe conversar, quem você é, o que você faz. Entendeu? Você vai ter que passar a ficha toda para ela. ((risos)) E se ela desistir no meio do caminho, ela não tem o menor, assim, não tem. No momento que ela sentir que ela não quer mais, ou que ela estava com uma ideia falsa de quem você é, o que você é e tal, ela fala assim "Ah, dá licença, eu preciso sair." Assim, não tem melindre, entendeu? Não vai te dar um beijinho para você não ficar chateado. [...] A brasileira de repente vai te dar um beijinho para você não ficar chateado. Entendeu? E aí depois ela vai embora. Fala que vai no banheiro e some. ((risos)) [39-year-old Brazilian visual artist (Masters degree)]*

As observed in the description of courtship, in comparison to individuals in Germany, individuals in Brazil seems to be in a "hurry" to engage in physical intimacy. They tend to engage sooner in physical contact by touching already at the beginning of courtship [see page 106] or by engaging sooner in kissing [see page 109]. As Jens observes in his statement below, in Brazil people get to physical contact more quickly than in Germany and that while in the latter country it is necessary to hold a conversation first for a long time before getting physical – as he previously mentioned in his interview [statement on page 108] – in the former it is not. Jens also observed that people in Brazil are not concerned about determining whether the other is an interesting person or not; it is first of all a matter of "personal appearance", i.e. sexual attraction.

Jens: *Ja. Punkt. Genau. Körperkontakt geht schneller. .. Man muss sich nicht.. Scheiß Ausdruck Aber es wird nicht bewiesen, dass man auch sonst noch ein interessanter Mensch ist. Erst einmal geht es mehr um Äußeres vielleicht.*

Interviewerin: *Könnte man denken, dass das mehr in die sinnliche Erfahrung geht?*

Jens: *Ja, das erste ja. [28-year-old German Masters student in Sociology (high-school degree)]*

The following statement of Patrícia helps to illustrate the importance of physical contact during courtship in Brazil and its role in corroborating the individual's identity, i.e. one's sexiness. In her statement, Patrícia describes her expectation of kissing her long-distance German friend the first time they met in a real encounter, i.e. when she picked him up from the airport. Since he made no move to kiss her during the first day they spent together, she became insecure about his attraction for her and decided to confront him about it and

demanded a kiss from him. According to her, he would have had no problem postponing the kiss to another day, which for her was inconceivable. She also mentioned further an “unsuccessful” courtship encounter he had had earlier in his life with a Brazilian woman, because he believed that postponing physical contact to a later day would be a meaningful expression of interest. However he found out that the exchange of telephone numbers and the mention of a later date was not regarded by the woman as a significant sign of interest and he found her later in the evening kissing another man.

***Patrícia:** [...] Bom, o Oliver, eu tive que atacar. Eu tive que subir em cima do Oliver para dar um beijo nele. Eu fui buscá-lo no aeroporto, nós já estávamos bem avançados no Chat, a gente fala muito de sexo, tinha os desejos explícitos “eu estou louca para te ver, te dar uns beijos, agarrar.” Eu achava que a gente ia chegar no aeroporto e ia ser uma agarração só. Nada! O Oliver me viu, eu olhei o Oliver, beleza. Tinha primeiro aquela checada, vamos ver se é igual na foto. Quando ele chegou, eu não soube se ele me achou bonita ou feia. De tão fechado que ele era. E eu achei ele lindo e falava “Nossa! Você é muito bonito, mais bonito do que na foto!”, eu já escancarei. Chegamos em casa, nós bebemos, nós fumamos maconha, tipo tava tudo já encaminhado e nada. E normalmente eu não espero tanto. Eu peguei e falei “Olha só, a conversa está muito boa. Mas tem como a gente dar um beijo? Né, não estou entendendo, você não gostou de mim e tal?” Aí rolou um beijo. Então, eu acho que para o Oliver, não teria problema se nós tivéssemos acabado na night sem nos beijarmos e de repente rola no outro dia. Para mim não. E ele diz isso, que quando ele estava lá no Brasil, ele conheceu umas gatinhas. Tadinho! Ele não sabia que era para beijar na primeira vez, ele perdeu as gatinhas. Ele disse que tinha uma garota super interessada nele e tal, aí ele pegou o telefone, se mostrou interessado, mas do jeito alemão. Aí quando ele foi ver na night, a garota já estava beijando outro, porque ele demorou muito. E aí ele disse que não entendeu absolutamente nada, que aquilo foi uma confusão na cabeça dele. Então, claro, óbvio, a gente beija muito mais do que eles. Sem comparação! ((risos)) [30-year-old Brazilian primary school teacher (Bachelors degree)]*

In a context where sexiness has become an integral part of one’s identity, courtship becomes an appropriate means of corroborating it and consequently individuals seem to engage more often in courtship by initiating or being receptive to those who attempt it. As the reports of respondents suggest, it seems that individuals in Brazil tend to engage more often in courtship than individuals in Germany, and some may also engage in courtship with more than one person in one evening. Beate, for example, in her statement on page 112, reported about female friends in Brazil who went out and kissed more than twenty men in one evening. Patricia, after reporting her surprise upon learning that her German husband was choosy in his search for a mate [see her statement on page 149], observed that the way and frequency with which men in Brazil approach women suggest that their barrier to selection is quite low. She observed that in Brazil men may approach women by already attempting to kiss them, or embracing them around the waist, and that even when no sign of interest on the part of the woman is shown, men may still assume that something is going to happen between them. For her, men in Brazil are more in search of sexual partners than men in Germany.

***Patrícia:** Bom, do jeito que eles [Brasileiros] chegam nas mulheres, eu acho que o critério deles é muito pouco. Porque eu acho muito agressiva a chegada brasileira. Muito. Os caras realmente vêm com biquinho, querendo te beijar. E olha que eu não vou para micareta, eu detesto essas coisas. Mas, eu acho que os caras são mais folgados sim. Já chega com a mão na cintura. Às vezes não tem nada a ver, você fala “de onde você tirou essa ideia de que ia rolar alguma coisa?”. Mas eu acho sim, que eles estão mais na busca sim. [30-year-old Brazilian primary school teacher (Bachelors degree)]*

At another point in her interview, after declaring that she was never faithful to her boyfriends, Patricia explained that she realized recently that she always needed to have someone “in reserve”, which she believes had to do with a fear of being alone, although she observed that she had never been alone since she was 16 years old. Further she observed in her interview that she did not like being harassed by men on the street in Brazil, but that she enjoyed seducing men who were her type. According to her, unlike her Brazilian female friends, she always liked to be the “hunter” and not the “prey”, and therefore she had never had reservations about approaching men. She stated finally that she had been lucky to find her German husband, who is more passive and prefers to be approached by women.

Patrícia: (...) *Eu nunca fui fiel. Nunca consegui ser fiel. [...] Eu gosto de ter alguém no banco de reserva. Eu cheguei a essa conclusão há muito pouco tempo. Eu sou uma pessoa que precisa de alguém na reserva. Eu não sei se é medo que eu tenho de ficar sozinha. O que é incabível, porque desde os 16 anos eu nunca fiquei sozinha, mas vai explicar! [...] E o reserva. Eu adorava! De ser cantada, não. Eu detestava ser cantada na rua, esse negócio de mandar beijinho, eu tinha ódio disso. Mas eu gostava de atrair a atenção de caras que faziam o meu tipo. Porque eu nunca gostei de. Eu gostava de conquistar os caras que faziam meu tipo. Eu nunca gostei de ser presa, eu sempre gostei de caçar. Por isso que eu sempre chegava em homem. Eu nunca, porque eu vejo muita menina, as minhas amigas paulistas daqui, todas elas nenhuma chega em cara na night, elas gostam de ser, que o cara toque elas. Eu falei “Gente, para mim é totalmente o contrário. Eu gosto de escolher, decidir a hora e eu vou lá e corro o risco do não, sem problema.” E ele também é assim, o Oliver, ele é mais passivo. Ele gosta de mulher que vem. Foi sorte encontrar ele, é meu irmão gêmeo assim em relação a isso. [30-year-old Brazilian primary school teacher (Bachelors degree)]*

As the report of Tiago on page 166 indicates, while women in Germany may not react well to courtship, women in Brazil tend to be friendly also when not interested in the man. Karl, when explaining the difference in courtship in Germany and in Brazil, observed that approaching a woman in Germany is riskier than approaching a woman in Brazil. According to him, while in Brazil it is easier and more “natural” to come into contact with someone and to engage in a conversation, in Germany the person is never sure about how the other is going to react when being addressed. For Karl, a person must be braver in Germany when approaching a woman than in Brazil, since while in Brazil women tend to be friendly also when they are not interested in the man and to dismiss him in a subtler fashion, in Germany women tend to be unfriendly when they are not interested in the man, like by asking him directly “what do you really want from me?”], making the man feel that he has done something wrong.

Karl: (...) *Also wie gesagt, dass man viel schneller ins Gespräch kommt. Das man auch. wie soll man sagen.. da ist nicht so eine große Mauer, so eine virtuelle Mauer, wenn ich eine Brasilianerin anspreche als wenn ich eine Deutsche anspreche. Ein deutsches Mädels anzusprechen, da ist so ein großes.. da könnte ich hingehen und sie könnte denken „was ist das für einer?“. Man weiß nie genau was einen erwartet. Man muss viel mutiger sein. In Brasilien habe ich das Gefühl, man geht hin, es ist was Natürliches. Man spricht an, wenn es nicht klappt halt, schön, dann geht man zum nächsten. Sie sagen ja einem auch nicht so direkt und zeigen einem nicht so direkt, wenn sie einen nicht mögen. In Deutschland kriegt man das ja sofort so ((sich auf die Schenkel klopfend)).. "Was willst du eigentlich von mir?", weißt du, so extrem unfreundlich sofort. Wo man dann denkt, oh Gott, was habe ich nur getan. Nicht ganz so extrem aber es ist doch schon ein Stückchen weit (so). Und in Brasilien, selbst wenn sie einen nicht mögen, dann bleiben sie freundlich und versuchen eben die Situation irgendwie anders zu regeln. Das ist eine Sache. Dann, wie gesagt. wenn die Leute miteinander ins Gespräch kommen, reden sie total schnell über persönliche Sachen. [27-year-old German Masters student in Political Sciences (high-school degree)]*

Pedro brought up the same point as Karl in his interview. According to him, Germany is different than Brazil, where women, when approached by a man, tend to react in a friendly fashion, by smiling back or by keeping up a conversation even when they are not interested in the man or by dismissing him in a gentle way. Further in his interview, he observed that people in Germany are less open to being approached than people in Brazil. He described how returning a bottle that a woman accidentally dropped is already enough in Brazil to ask to see her again. A woman in Brazil may reject such an invitation, but she would do it in a nice way, like saying "No, thank you", while a woman in Germany, observed Pedro, tended to take the invitation as an offense. As he noted, in Germany it is necessary to develop a conversation first, before a person attempts such an invitation.

***Pedro:** Eu acho que no Brasil tu está num barzinho, está numa boate, está num show, está num parque, tu pode falar "oi", tu pode sorrir, sorrir de volta. Mesmo que lá a mulher não queria, em geral, ela vai conversar contigo. Vai te dizer um não de uma forma mais ok. "Não valeu, 'brigado tchau", sorrindo numa boa. Aqui não ((risos)). Aqui o chute é mais.. [...] Aqui esta abertura não vem tanto, eu acho. Assim como o approach é mais fechado, o feedback não tem. A abertura para conhecer alguém não tem. A dinâmica aqui, eu acho difícil. Ai, tu conhece alguém, fala uma coisinha ali. No Brasil, sei lá, tu está num parque, tu juntou a garrafa que ela deixou cair. Tô falando agora de uma mulher. Já é gancho para tu falar: 'Pô, a gente pode se encontrar de novo.' Mesmo que tome um não! 'Não, obrigada.' Aqui? Eu acho que a coisa é meio. Se tu fala isso, já é não! Já ofende! Isso já passou do limite um pouco. Para chegar e fazer este tipo de convite, tu tem que conversar, tem que.. A dinâmica eu acho aqui mais lenta também, agora é muito no papo! Pra chegar 'Pô, vamos sair de novo', tu tem que ter um pouco mais de conversa. [35-year-old Brazilian PhD student in History (Masters degree)]*

Nevertheless, one must say that the openness of individuals to courtship in Brazil relies not only on their attempts to corroborate their sexiness, but also on the substantial inequality between the sexes and the persistence of traditional gender identities which prescribe women as feminine, i.e. friendly, submissive and beautiful, and men as masculine, i.e. womanizing, dominant and assertive. As Bourdieu (2001:66) observes, it is not only that individuals act as socially prescribed, they also tend to perceive themselves as the other sees them. As the following statements of Detlev and Julho illustrate, women in Brazil also tend to see themselves as needing a man to rely on. Like Julho in his statement on page 152, where he observed that women in Germany act more autonomously than women in Brazil during an encounter, and that while the former evaluates whether the admirer has something to offer, the second seems to evaluate whether or not she should trust the admirer, Detlev, when speaking about the expectations of women during courtship, also noted that German women present themselves more autonomously than Brazilian women. According to him, German women are more interested in getting to know the person first, to know whether they like the other's social attributes before engaging in a relationship, while in Brazil he had the impression that women were looking for protection, for emotional security. He observed that while German women seem to be more [emotionally] independent, living their own lives and searching for a companion, in his three relationships with Brazilian women a desire for emotional security was always present.

***Detlev:** Sim, eu percebia assim. Tem todo esse lado intelectual, né. Pra conhecer intelectualmente a pessoa, o que ela pensa. Ai o contato físico e tudo mais pode esperar um pouco. Porque com quem você não se entende, se você não gosta da vida social dele, as pessoas não querem se aproximar tão rápido. Isso é a minha impressão. [...] Eu acho que [no Brasil] elas querem uma*

peessoa perto, uma pessoa que ofereça talvez proteção. É, um pouco mais nesse sentido. Eu não posso classificar isso de maneira clara, é tão suave, tão sutil. Mas eu vejo uma certa tendência sim, sinto uma tendência em da mulher buscar, busca muito mais, aí busca alguma coisa, busca segurança, eu acho que é isso sim.

Entrevistadora: *Mas essa segurança é o que? Emocional? Econômica?*

Detlev: *Primeiro lugar emocional, econômica também. (...) Mas segurança emocional nos três casos sim, eu senti nos três casos. (...)*

Entrevistadora: *Mas e essa necessidade de segurança emocional, você não percebia nas alemãs?*

Detlev: *Não percebo à primeira vista. À primeira vista não. Eu acho que qualquer relacionamento tem esse foco, né, de ter alguém para se apoiar. Isso todo ser humano quer, isso é inerente a uma relação assim amor o s a, de afeto. Mas é uma questão de prioridade. Nós estamos falando de tendências e prioridades. Eu acho que as alemãs, em relação às brasileiras, elas são bem mais independentes, fazem a vida delas e querem um complemento. [37-year-old German higher-education teacher (PhD degree)]*

The increasing individual desire to be acknowledged for one's sexiness in Brazil seems to have charged the social space sexually and turned courtship into a common form of social interaction. As observed in the report of Pedro on page 91 and of Juliana on page 91, in Brazil courtship seems to occur in all social contexts. As Karl observed in his statement on page 156, men flirt automatically with women and women do not expect anything different. Ursel brought up the same point as Karl by mentioning that when Brazilian men are introduced to a woman the first thing they tend to do is to make a compliment, something that a German man would never do so soon. According to her, Brazilian men immediately begin to flirt.

Ursel: *(...) Und Männer natürlich, wenn du.. jetzt mal außerhalb einer Beziehung, andere Brasilianer kennenlernenst, die jetzt nicht wissen das du verheiratet bist oder so, dann ist natürlich, was fragen die zuerst? [...] Ja, die machen dir natürlich erst mal ein Kompliment oder so was. Und das würde ein Deutscher nicht sofort machen. [...] Die [Brasilianern] fangen sofort an zu flirten. [29-year-old German conference and event planner (Masters degree)]*

As Pedro suggested in his interview, sexuality is more "in the air" in Brazil than in Germany. For him, Brazilians have a sensual game of showing, exposing it. As he observed further in his interview, while in Brazil he allows himself to express his sexual interest for an admired person sooner in an encounter, in Germany he observed that it is necessary for a while to keep up a "pleasant conversation" without expressions of sexual interest. For him, the public space in Germany is less erotic than the public space in Brazil.

Pedro: *Contato corporal. (...) eu acho que lá [Brasil], acho que a coisa é mais, está mais no ar. A coisa se mostra mais. Acho que para mim, eu não acho que é clichê. É clichê, mas também é realidade esse, esse jogo sensual brasileiro de se mostrar, se exhibir. [...] Aqui [Alemanha] se tu sai, se tu vê uma alemã que te interessa. Claro, o contato é visual. Depois tu vai conhece. Eu acho que no Brasil a gente se permite a mostrar mais rápido que está com desejo. Desejo no sentido sexo. Lá se permite, eu me permito, muito mais rápido, lá se mostra que está com desejo. Aqui, talvez, como eu sei como é o jogo, eu entro um pouco mais no ritmo, vamos dizer assim. Tu vai, tu sabe, né: mostrar como que tu é, o que que tu gosta. A nice talk, né. Tu tem que conversar um pouco. É por aí. Acho que aqui demonstra um pouco. Eu não acho, vamos dizer assim, no lugar público, eu acho aqui pouco erótico. [35-year-old Brazilian PhD student in History (Masters degree)]*

At another point in his interview, Pedro argues that eroticism is more present in women in Brazil than in Germany. According to him, women in Brazil attempt to seduce men and enjoy it as a game, while women in Germany would only engage in a more erotic interaction if there is "chemistry" between the parties.

Pedro: *Eu acho que.. A sedução, o erotismo está mais presente, acho eu, na brasileira. Desde o começo, né. Aquela coisa de se mostrar erótica. Assim, digamos assim, vamos, ok, vamos nos seduzir, né. Com a alemã, aqui, acho que reage mais na base, de como reage mesmo. Talvez até mais assim, se o organismo reage, então vai em frente ((bate uma mão na outra)). [...] São formas diferentes de sedução. Agora.. Eu acho que é assim, é, do que eu vi com a alemã foi isso assim, no momento que rolo a química, a coisa 'puff'! Foi, né. Não teve.. Enfim, não teve que precisar de nenhum tipo de joguinho a mais ou a menos. Com a brasileira em geral. Claro, que tem isto isso aí também, quando tem química, tem química. Não muda! Porém, eu acho que há uma certa. A brasileira, eu acho que ela gosta assim de se mostra. Ela gosta da.. Ela gosta de jogar mais, né. Gosta de ser seduzida, talvez de seduzir. Há um pouco mais de erotismo neste caminho até o, até chagar no finalmente [sexo]. [35-year-old Brazilian PhD student in History (Masters degree)]*

The many reports of Brazilians going out to *ficar* – i.e. to engage in kissing with someone without further commitment – including with more than one person in an evening [see the statements of Julho on pages 111, Heiner on page 111, Beate on page 112, Marcelo on page 115, and Juliana on page 131] also suggest that courtship has not only become a common form of social interaction between the sexes in Brazil, but it also seems to have become a legitimate leisure activity. The search for events for singles during the field research also corroborates this. While the search for an event for singles through the world wide web and the consultation of individuals living in the city led in Germany to a singles party with the slogan “with us it’s all about love”⁸⁸ and where individuals go in order to seek a partner – as informal interviewees reported – in Brazil searches on the world wide web led to night clubs advertising a good evening for singles and the consultation with locals led to an event that promises “flirting and beautiful people”⁸⁹ and is regarded as a good place to “catch someone” – i.e. to *ficar*, as informal interviewees reported. The following statement of Detlev also illustrates this point. He observed that in Brazil people tend to meet at “programmed situations” and described his astonishment at the first time he went out in Brazil. He was in a “decent” pub in Brazil, but after midnight many people in the place were kissing. He observed that in Germany people do not tend to engage in physical affection in a bar as quickly as Brazilians tend to do. He also noticed that to find a mate/sexual partner is a more day-to-day subject in Brazil than in Germany.

Detlev: *[...] O que eu presenciei com os outros, né, que eu observei, que aqui muitos se conhecem em bares, em situações quase programados. A primeira vez que eu, depois de duas, três semanas no Brasil, me assustei num bar. Porque, até meia-noite tava tudo tranquilo. A meia-noite e meia todo mundo tava se beijando lá dentro. Um bar descente! Nada de espelunca. Ah, isso foi meio assustador à primeira vista. Aí, as situações eu acho que são diferentes, de como as pessoas se encontram. Aqui, encontrar uma pessoa, é um assunto mais cotidiano. Aqui já é um.. [Na Alemanha] Envolva mais, como já falei, né, uma pessoa completa, então você não se joga numa noite num bar tão facilmente. Na tendência. [37-year-old German higher-education teacher (PhD degree)]*

Further in his interview, Detlev observed that Germans tend to regard physical attraction as not being sufficient before having sex and that people like to date and to get to know each other first before involving themselves physically and affectionally with someone, as a way to protect their hearts. In Brazil, on the other hand, he observed that sex seems to be regarded as an acceptable form of recreation that may happen sooner in courtship and that it seems to

⁸⁸ According to a banner hanging in the building of the event.

⁸⁹ Information available on the event’s webpage.

have more importance for Brazilians, for their self-esteem – as the statement above from Patrícia on page 167 also suggests. Detlev observed further that since in Germany people get to know each other's personality and values before they kiss, the kiss communicates their willingness to engage in a relationship with that person. He also observed that he would not involve himself physically with someone whose values he does not share, and mentioned how he was surprised in Brazil with the common behavior of people of getting involved physically with strangers "like having a beer and a woman on a Friday night".

Detlev: Tem. Porque é mais cedo que começa o contato [no Brasil]. [...] Como eu falei. Eu falei que comunica uma atração corporal. E claro, da pessoa também. Não é só corporal. Você tem uma pessoa que você acha legal e tudo, mas é uma.. é uma imagem. No início de um relacionamento, você adora, idolatra uma imagem. Né? Você não conhece a pessoa. Você se faz uma imagem. Fisicamente você pode olhar, você pode ver. "Ah! Isso é bom!" E a pessoa como fala, né. Os gestos. E aí você gosta disso. Você não sabe o que na vida, de onde ela vem, para onde ela quer ir. Você não sabe de nada disso. Isso, para uma alemã, a tendência seria, não ainda suficiente para se meter corporalmente com a pessoa. Né, aí ela quer esperar com estes gestos. Ela quer ir pro cinema pra ver, pra conversar um pouco, pra conhecer. Aí depois, mostrar, né. Se abrir, né. F i s i camente para se envolver, com o coração. Isso é uma forma de proteção também. E aqui, como o corpo tem mais a ver /ehm/ a diversão, né, sexual também, é uma coisa que pode.. que pode começar mais cedo, que tem mais importância na vida, na autoestima e tudo. Se divertir. Aí, acho que em contrapartida de fazer significa outra coisa. [...] [O beijo na Alemanha] Não é para casar ainda, caramba não. Mas é pra você, você diz "eu quero". Como eu te conheço melhor, já começo a conhecer a sua personalidade, não apenas o seu corpo, a sua fala, os seus gestos, mas a sua personalidade, os seus valores, aí eu quero os seus valores. Isso eu gosto. Né, isso envolve, né. Tudo isso. Porque uma pessoa cujos valores você rejeita, dificilmente você vai para a cama com ela. Isso. É, dificilmente, eu falo, né, na minha visão de alemão. Eu não faria. Eu não tiraria prazer. Mas eu sei dos amigos aqui, agora de homens, né. Eu fiquei assustado no início, né. Porque, eu não entendia por que. Para mim sexo não é uma diversão com tomar uma cerveja e uma mulher na sexta à noite. Isso, eu sei que isso no mundo inteiro existe. Mas, nos meus amigos, lá na Alemanha, ali não existe isso. [...] Na Alemanha as pessoas buscam primeiro conhecer o outro, e depois dessa admiração do outro como ele é, com a personalidade que ele tem, é que talvez se abra para o contato físico. [37-year-old German higher-education teacher (PhD degree)]

As Pedro revealed in his interview, the lure of the seduction game in Brazil goes beyond a real interest in finding a mate. According to him, while in Germany people are pretty clear about their feelings and intentions when they engage in courtship, by asking the person directly about their intentions for the relationship or admitting that they want an affair, in Brazil men and women, even when not interested in the person or not wanting a relationship, tend to seduce each other. As Pedro observed, Brazilian men do so to prove that they can conquer, and Brazilian women do so because they enjoy the game.

Pedro: Eu acho que aqui são muito direto. 'O que que tu espera do relacionamento?' Isso eu ouvi há pouco tempo de uma alemã. 'Então, o que que tu espera? O que que tu quer?' Aí, eu fiquei 'Pô, o que ela está pensando? Que eu vou querer já, sei lá, relacionam e n t o?' Daí ela falou 'Não, eu não estou falando em casa, ter filho e tal. Eu sei o que eu quero contigo. Eu quero passar um bom verão contigo.' Esse, esse sentido direto, assim [bateu uma mão na outra]. Isso acho que elas são muito sinceras assim. Eu acho que aqui.. Bom, uma análise aí leiga do negócio, eu acho que aqui eles são muito sinceros com que sentem, né. Se não sente, não sente. [...] Eu acho que lá [no Brasil], tanto homem quanto mulher, tem uma. Por exemplo, o homem tem que, mesmo se não sente, tem que, tem que, tem que provar que conquista. A mulher, se não sente, gosta de manter talvez um jogo de sedução um pouco m a i o r, assim. Eu que acho que, tem um pouco. Talvez este jogo lá é maior do que aqui. [35-year-old Brazilian PhD student in History (Masters degree)]

Heiner, for example, observed in his interview how women in Brazil may approach a man and start a conversation and ask for his telephone number even when he is wearing a wedding ring.

Heiner: Wo ich sagen würde, hier in Brasilien.. selbst, wenn man seinen Ehering anhat, die Frauen relativ offensiv auf einen zukommen und fragen "Como você está? De onde você está?" und so Smalltalk machen und doch /ehm/ ja, am Ende eine Telefonnummer zu bekommen oder so. Also erfahren wo man her ist und.. versuchen Kontakt aufzunehmen. ((lachen)) [31-year-old German MBA student and engineer (Masters degree)]

João, when discussing the courtship behavior of women in Germany and in Brazil, observed that only once in Germany did he see a woman behave like a Brazilian. As he reported, he was in a bar in Germany and a woman started to look at him and to smile while his wife was beside him. Because of her behavior and dark skin, João believes that the woman was not German. According to him, the open behavior of looking and smiling or pinching someone who passes by is common for women in Brazil but not for women in Germany.

João: Ok. Uma vez, aqui na Alemanha, a gente tava num bar e tinha uma menina. Eu estava até com a minha mulher. Mas ela estava muito olhando para mim rindo o tempo todo. E eu estava com a minha mulher do meu lado! Eu acho que ela não pode ser alemã! Parecer ela não aprecia, cabelo preto, morena. Com alemã, nunca aconteceu! Mas no Brasil, muito parecido, da menina ficar olhando, ficar rindo ou te pegar e te beliscar passando. [...] Ainda mais com esse olhar, que você não sabe o que significa. [30-year-old Brazilian journalist (Bachelors degree)]

It seems that the sexual emancipation achieved in Brazil in a context still ruled by traditional gender identities and marked by increasing individualization seems to have boosted sexuality and the individual demand to be acknowledged for one's sexiness. The enduring traditional gender identities seem to sustain further the conquer–surrender dynamic of courtship, but with both men and women more engaged in seducing each other, especially through body language. The consequently increasing individual demand to be acknowledged for one's sexiness seems to lead individuals in Brazil to favor physical intimacy over subjective intimacy on the path to an intimate relationship. Since the expression of sexuality remains necessary to corroborate individual identity, it still seems to binds individuals together in Brazil. Nevertheless, as the frequency with which individuals engage in courtship and the lack of commitment between the parties suggests, sexuality seems increasingly to become a matter of self-realization, with the other person only a means to an end.

As observed above, the different trajectories of democracy, the welfare state and the feminist movement in Germany and in Brazil seem today to sustain particular dynamics in courtship and to encourage different paths to an intimate relationship. Nevertheless, in a world of increasing individualization, the establishment of an intimate relationship whether in Germany or in Brazil is becoming an increasingly arduous task, as will be observed next.

6.3. Conflicts in courtship

The decline of tradition through modernity has been furthering the individualization process and leading individuals to define themselves based on the increasing and diverse prescriptions

offered by the cultural industry. Modern values such as liberty, equality, justice, autonomy, self-realization, communication, authenticity, rationality and sexiness have been disseminated by cultural productions and have oriented individuals' lives, thus leading to transformations of the meaning of love and amorous interactions – as described in the theoretical chapter on love and observed above in the analysis of the courtship process in Germany and in Brazil.

The increasing individualization process furthered in modern society by different social changes has been pushing individuals to focus on their subjective world and to develop singular personalities. Nevertheless, the more individuals concentrate on their private world, the more their need for an understandable and close reality increases, and the more their demand for an intimate relationship increases, for a partner who enables them to corroborate their identity and perception of the world. If on the one hand individuals are intrinsically motivated to establish an intimate relationship, on the other hand they are oriented by social values and prescriptions of the self and identity that not only do not encourage the establishment of relationships, but also engender social tensions, ambivalence and contradictions that lead individuals to suffer – as noted in the theoretical chapter on love and observed here in the reports of respondents.

As observed previously, in Germany the advanced democracy and welfare state and the lower level of inequality between the sexes, due to a strong and active feminist movement, enable men and women to enjoy a higher degree of autonomy [i.e. self-governance] than individuals in the context of a moderate democracy and welfare state such as Brazil. More aware of liberal democratic discourses and experiencing their effects more strongly in daily life, individuals in Germany are more concerned about the boundaries between selves and the limits of each other's freedom than are individuals in Brazil. Regarding courtship practices as movements into one's private sphere, individuals in Germany seem to assume a defensive position during courtship in order to be prepared to defend themselves against any threat to their autonomy. In conjunction with this, the feminist critique of traditional gender practices has left individuals in Germany unsure about how to act during a courtship encounter. The discourse of the exaltation of the mind over the body has led individuals to reject sexuality as a form of bond and to favor subjective intimacy as the path to an intimate relationship. But how to engage in subjective intimacy when individuals are in a defensive mode to protect their private sphere? The following quotation from an article helps to illustrate this difficulty. The text presents the statement of a female visitor to the singles party investigated in this study. The woman reported that she had not found a man on that evening but had not given up the search for a partner and would come back another day. According to her, the singles party is the appropriate place to get to know someone in the city, since when one approaches someone at the street or at a pub, they "look at you like you're crazy" .

"Man weiß nie, ob jemand wirklich frei ist und es ernst meint", sagt Betty. Trotzdem gibt sie die Hoffnung nicht auf. Sie wird auch weiterhin kommen. "Wo soll man denn sonst in der Stadt jemanden kennen lernen", sagt sie. "Wenn man jemanden auf der Straße oder in der Kneipe anspricht, wird man doch gleich doof angeguckt." (Putz 2000)

As the report above suggests and as observed in this study, it is not only that individuals in Germany seems to be less willing to be approached by strangers [page 89]; those who are looking for a mate in Germany must deal with the risk of being rejected and criticized as intrusive, disrespectful, macho or uncultivated when expressing their interest in another person during an encounter. Like Lina on her statement on page 138, Jens also observed in his interview the contradiction experienced in Germany during courtship with a stranger. As he states, although the only available characteristics of another at the beginning of courtship are the physical appearance and body language of the person, those must not be mentioned in Germany, since to do so is negatively regarded. However, as he observed, when people are strangers, you cannot praise someone's intelligence. So the question remains, how should one approach someone?

Jens: [...] Was man beim Kennenlernen .. Die einzigen Infos die man hat, sind ja eigentlich nur das Äußerliche. Und der Habitus. Und eigentlich ist es auch logisch und ehrlich zu sagen 'Ok, auf das Äußere oder auf den Habitus kann ich ja erst einmal nur mit Beschreibung des Äußeren reagieren'. So wie 'Du bist schön!' Ich kann ja nicht sagen 'Du bist schlau!'. Von daher sind bestimmt Komplimente, die dieses, also Komplimente die nur auf Schönes und Äußeres. [28-year-old German Masters student in Sociology (high-school degree)]

As Karl noticed in his interview, it is hard to find the balance in Germany between giving a compliment without giving offense. He observed that a compliment in Germany, like praising a person's clothes – i.e. his/her physical appearance – tends to be interpreted as an expression of sexual interest or machismo, especially when it comes from a stranger, while in Brazil it is taken literally – i.e. individuals do not look for hidden implications – and enjoyed.

Karl: In Deutschland hat man ja sowieso immer, das ist ja hier eine schwierige Sache, als man das Problem, dass wenn man ein Kompliment bei einer Frau macht, dass es dann immer so dieses schnulzige und dieses Machogehabe ist oder so. Das ist dieser Feminismus, diese Feminismus Bewegung ja manchmal ein bisschen übertrieben wird und dann ist es in die Richtung gemacht wie ein Kompliment. "Das meint der sowieso nicht ernst. Was ist das denn?" Und schon gar nicht in Deutschland, wenn man die Frau noch nicht kennt, also, wenn man zum Beispiel jetzt, man lernt jemanden kennen im Club und geht mit ihr aus. Und dann, auch wenn man nichts von ihr will, man einfach nur feststellt, dass sie ein schönes Kleid hat. Das dann gleich so rein interpretiert wird "Ach, jetzt will er das". Und dann kommen tausend andere Sachen mit. In Brasilien ist es einfach nur eine Aussage. Ein schönes Kleid, da freut sie sich und dann ist Schluss. Und das ist leider hier in Deutschland nicht mehr so. Meiner Meinung nach extrem kompliziert hier in Deutschland. [...] Das Gleichgewicht zu finden zwischen, ja, das zum Ausdruck bringen. Dass man das eben toll findet, ohne diesen Eindruck zu machen, dass Machoidioten, der eben gleich so.. und dann fünf Hintergedanken hat und solche Sachen. [27-year-old German Masters student in Political Sciences (high-school degree)]

Volker also observed that it is harder to conduct courtship with women in Germany, since, in contrast to women in Brazil, they do not engage in flirtatious interactions and tend to regard expressions of affection or attraction as sexual advances, although that may not be the intention behind them. Volker observed that he likes to flirt, and that he did not regard it as a means to an end – i.e. sex – but as a playful interaction, which is easier to conduct in Brazil than in Germany – as Pedro also stated in his statement on page 170. According to him, in Germany such playful interaction is only possible with old friends who know each other well and are sure that there is no sexual interest behind it.

Volker: [...] *É mais difícil flertar com as alemãs, brincando, e testando... do que com as brasileiras. As brasileiras imediatamente vão entrar nesse jogo, muitas vezes, eles entram nesse joguinho, e flertam também, aí elas mostram se tem alguma afetividade, ou não... alguma atratividade. E as alemãs, muito rápido, eles "nossa, esse cara só quer uma coisa". Então acaba muito rápido e você nem tinha pensado nisso ((risos)), mas você percebe que "ah, ela pensa que você só quer uma coisa", né. E aí acaba muito rápido esse joguinho do flertar... e eu gosto muito de flertar. Mas eu não preciso... em muito poucas coisas, muito poucos casos, eu teria mais interesse do que só flertar. Para mim é suficiente brincar com, até com amigas só, direto, flertamos, digamos, sem ter nenhuma coisa atrás. [...] Eu posso... ah, sim. Eu posso brincar com elas a noite toda, uma festa, um barzinho, alguma coisa, e até depois dormir na mesma cama com elas [...] aí sem acontecer nada e sem eu ter alguma expectativa. É bem normal para mim. Eu não teria nenhum problema com isso, eu não preciso, não é uma coisa de "já investi muito em flertando, então eu preciso algum retorno". Essa expectativa, nunca tenho. E essa coisa, acho que é... esses... flertar é mais, e esse jogo, é mais fácil fazer aqui no Brasil que na Alemanha. Na Alemanha você só consegue fazer isso com... muito... bons amigos. Amigas de longo tempo, que você conhece muito bem, que foi já, falaram muitas vezes "ah, mas nunca vai rolar", só até um certo ponto, ficamos amigos e tudo bem. É uma coisa combinada. [46-year-old German manager of research and development (PhD degree)]*

As observed previously, the higher concern for protecting one's autonomy due to the advanced individualization process in Germany, combined with the feminist critique of traditional courtship practices, seems to leave men and women unsure about engaging in courtship. Lina, for example, when describing courtship in Germany and in Brazil, observed that in Germany people take a longer time to approach one another because they fear being rejected, while in Brazil people come into contact fairly rapidly since it is regarded as an entertaining interaction.

Lina: *Ah, okay. Flirtsituation. /ehm/ Ich glaube das war das was ich eben schon angesprochen habe. Also, ich glaube eine Flirtsituation bevor man tatsächlich miteinander redet dauern in Deutschland ein bisschen länger. Also, z.B. auf einer Party da sind die Leute ja oft auch in Gruppen unterwegs und man sieht irgendwie eine Person und denkt „Mhm, okay“. Und dann können Freunde losgeschickt werden ja auch. Irgendwie, ne. Oder guckt sich halt an oder fängt vielleicht auch an zu tanzen. Das dauert ein bisschen bis man miteinander redet. Flirtsituation in Brasilien ist eher auf einer Party usw. „Ah, da hinten steht jemand. Komm wir gehen mal hin“ und dann ist man ganz schnell da und blabla und dann geht es schon los. Also, es geht schneller. [...] Na ja, sie [die Deutschen] problematisieren das. ((lachend)) Doch meine ich Ernst. „Ach Flirten“ und „ich habe Angst“ und „ich könnte eine Absage bekommen, ich könnte einen Korb bekommen“ und „Nein. Was mache ich dann“. Viel Angst irgendwie dabei so. /ehm/ In Brasilien nicht. da ist irgendwie „Ach, gehe ich mal hin“. Gucken. (Es) ist eher Spaß und so haben. [25-year-old German Bachelors student in Music (high-school degree)]*

Afraid of being negatively regarded by women when courting, men in Germany seem to hesitate in approaching them and may opt to let the women take the initiative, as observed in the report of Jens on page 99. On the other hand, if a woman does not grant a man enough signs of interest, or does not take the initiative to approach, both may spend the whole evening only exchanging glances, as the statements of Patrícia on page 98 and Ruth on page 99 indicate.

Those individuals who reach the approach phase, however, seem to have found a way to minimize the risk of being rejected and criticized, by concealing their interest. However, this subtlety makes it difficult to evaluate someone's interest during courtship. In some cases, the expression of interest is so subtle that the person's courtship attempt is not taken seriously, as the following statement from Ursel illustrates. She describes a situation that she shares

with other female friends in Germany, that a male friend reacted unpleasantly when she introduced a boyfriend and later confessed that he had always wanted to be with her. This situation happened twice with Ursel and she observed that either the men never made their intentions clear or she never interpreted their behavior as a courtship attempt because it was just too “unclear” .

Ursel: Es passiert halt auch oft, das habe ich auch von anderen gehört, dass jetzt Freunde, wo du denkst das sind nur Freunde von dir, Deutsche, du bist mit denen befreundet und alles schick und du bemerkst gar nicht, dass die irgendwie vielleicht mehr von dir wollen. .. Also mir ist es halt jetzt gerade auch mit ihm so gegangen. Ich war dann irgendwann mit ihm zusammen und meine Freunde von früher, also es waren jetzt speziell zwei davon, haben mir dann zu verstehen gegeben, also die waren halt dann irgendwie total.. gekränkt oder wie auch immer oder überhaupt nicht glücklich damit, weil sie wären halt auch gerne mit mir zusammen gewesen. Die haben mir das aber nie zu verstehen gegeben oder ich habe das halt nie.. die Annäherungsversuche nie als Annäherungsversuche gesehen, weil es halt einfach zu.. ja, war halt zu undeutlich ((lachen)). [29-year-old German conference and event planner (Masters degree)]

It seems that in the face of the feminist critique of traditional courtship practices, the hesitance of individuals to take the initiative and the act of concealing interest, engaging in courtship in Germany seems to be a difficult endeavor or, as Jens affirmed in his statement on page 143, courtship has become “too complicated” .

The difficulty in engaging in courtship in a real encounter in Germany may not only be a reason for the increasing popularity of online-dating platforms,⁹⁰ but it also seems to further the use of socially accepted drugs such as alcohol and cigarettes, which tend to be used to overcome the “distance” between the parties during a conversation – as mentioned by Anika and Lina on their statements on page 153. Since individuals attempt to conceal their interest in courtship, to ask for a cigarette or to “casually” meet at the bar become useful ways to approach someone without disclosing interest. Moreover, the overuse of alcohol offers the perfect alibi to reveal one’s interest without being held responsible. As observed in the descriptions of courtship, the behavior known as *Rumknutschen*, i.e. to kiss someone without further commitment in Germany, was usually related to the use of alcohol, which seems to serve as a means of overcoming the fear of rejection and as an alibi for engaging in physical intimacy. Sybille, for example, who already in her statement on page 115 observed that the exchange of passionate kisses in Germany happens in the public space usually under the influence of alcohol or in the context of a party, observed further in her interview the important role of alcohol in the process of courtship in Germany, since according to her the substance helps to reduce the inhibition to kiss. As Sybille observed, all the couples she knows came together under the influence of alcohol.

Sybille: [...] Und währenddessen ist der Alkohol sehr wichtig dann. [...] Also, ich habe auch eigentlich. .. Ich kenne keine Freunde, die ihre Freunde nicht in einer alkoholisierten Situation kennen gelernt haben. Also, deswegen muss man eigentlich immer ausgehen oder so. Also, dass

⁹⁰ As the report “Der Online-Dating-Markt 2014-2015” of Singlebörsen-vergleich shows, since 2003 the number of members on online-dating platforms in German-speaking countries increased eleven fold, i.e. from 9.7 million members in 2003 to 107.8 million in 2014. And surveys show that 30% of contemporary relationships were initiated on the internet, i.e. one in three relationships in Germany started online. The report can be found under: <http://www.singleboersen-vergleich.de/studien.htm>.

man in einem Park sich näherkommt, das passiert eigentlich nicht. Weil die Situation dann halt nicht gelöst ist, genug. Diese Zufälligkeiten sind dann zu auffällig. [25-year-old German Masters student in Law (high-school degree)]

Nevertheless, it is not only that individuals in Germany must reconcile their desire for a close and comprehensible reality, i.e. for a relationship, with the fear of rejection in engaging in courtship; they also have to reconcile it with the social desire for autonomy. The increasing weakening of traditional gender identities in Germany has helped individuals to free themselves from the social demand to corroborate one's identity by having a sexual partner. The increasing individual autonomy due to the advance of democracy and the welfare state has enabled individuals in Germany to survive with or without a partner. Consequently, the social pressure on individuals to engage in a relationship decreases and remaining single becomes an increasingly acceptable lifestyle. Moreover, the decline of gender roles and the instability of marriage, in conjunction with high individual autonomy, have encouraged the goal of independence in the lives of men and women. No longer able to rely on the stability of a relationship and the everlasting support of a partner, each individual struggles to become emotionally and financially self-sufficient. Consequently, singlehood seems to have become not only a more acceptable lifestyle in Germany, but also a desired one, since the absence of a relationship helps to corroborate one's self-perception of self-sufficiency. The following statement of Volker helps to illustrate this. He mentioned in his interview how women in Germany tend to affirm in public that their happiness does not depend on a relationship, although they admit to their closest friends how they suffer without one. In Brazil, on the other hand, he observed, women in Brazil tend to speak openly about how a relationship is important for them and to describe their lives according to the relationships they have had.

Volker: ... Alemã, finge... de ser bem mais independente ou de, a felicidade dela é mais independente de um relacionamento amorosa, do que uma brasileira. Uma brasileira abertamente fala que "não, eu acho muito importante ter uma relação amorosa, não sei o que, "tãããã". Ah! Agora faz não sei quantos meses que não tive um relacionamento, "blábláblá" ". Ou até o sexo mesmo, também, uma alemã, ela vai falar "não... eu posso estar feliz também sem isso, agora faz dois anos que eu não tive sexo e nada, e nenhum relacionamento, mas seria bom algum dia, mas tem que ser um cara muito bom". M a s, eles fingem de ser feliz sem isso.

Entrevistadora: Ok, você não acredita então que elas sejam felizes sem isso? ((risos))

Volker: Não, não ((risos)). Que as minhas, eu sei, as minhas amigas que contam também a parte íntima delas, e tudo isso, eu sei que elas também estão sofrendo. Mas elas não mostram para fora. [46-year-old German manager of research and development (PhD degree)]

However, it seems that it is not only that singlehood is becoming a more acceptable and desirable status in Germany, but also that choosing a mate is becoming a difficult task in a context of advanced individualization, where men and women are granted high autonomy and where individuals are encouraged to focus on their subjective world. As Volker illustrated in his interview, the greater individual autonomy enjoyed by women in Germany allows them to be as choosy as men in their choice of a partner. Volker observed that criteria such as physical appearance and age play an important role for women in Germany, and that while they tend to dismiss men who are overweight or much older than them, women in Brazil tend to have no problem in accepting such men – since as observed previously, women in Brazil enjoy much less autonomy and still see themselves as needing a man in their lives [page 169]. He also

noticed that women in Germany have no inhibitions in telling men why they do not fulfill their criteria.

Volker: *Si m, eu acho... brasileira muito mais proativa. Uma alemã, é também bem mais, ela tem uns critérios. Tem que funcionar assim, assim, assim. O jeito. E também a sua estrutura física, e tudo, tem que encaixar o que ela quer. E se você não encaixa porque você é mais velho, por exemplo, ah, idade também é uma coisa muito importante. Porque para brasileira, não, aqui é muito fácil ter um namoro de... com diferença de dez, quinze, vinte anos, uma coisa dessas. Na Alemanha, se é mais diferença de cinco anos, é um critério negativo para não namorar com o cara. Isso me contou também essa mulher que eu contei antes, que eu me aproximei dela. Aí contou "não, eu pensei que você tem oito anos mais, você é oito..." é, oito... acho que nove anos, ou uma coisa dessa. "Mais anos que eu, então para mim era não, isso é velho demais. Muito velho". E...*

Entrevistadora: *Então você acha que as alemãs elas têm mais critérios de seleção, é isso?*

Volker: *Ah, sim, bastante. E se você não encaixa, isso é um problema para elas. Elas sentem uma certa... atratividade, e tudo, mas racionalmente, elas são muito racionais, "ah não, mas esse cara é velho demais". E aqui a idade... não é tão importante. É outros critérios. Ou também se você tem barriga ou não. É mais outras coisas. Se eles se sentem muito bem com uma pessoa, rola. Na boa. Mas uma alemã sempre vai falar "ah, mas... você é muito gordo". Até elas falam direto, também. [46-year-old German manager of research and development (PhD degree)]*

Nevertheless, it is not only a matter of the degree of individual autonomy. As Illouz (2012:19) observes, in a context oriented by liberal democracy, the exercise of choice embodies the exercise of three modern values: freedom, rationality and autonomy. In a context of advanced democracy as in Germany, the individual's claim to exercising choice is consequently high, making individuals "choosy" in the selection of a mate. As Patrícia observed in her statement on page 149, appearance was not enough for her German husband to choose a woman.

Beyond that, with increasing "subjectification" – i.e. the tendency of individuals to focus on their subjective world, on their own interests, to construct a unique individual self – to find a partner who shares elements of one's subjective perception of the world and who is able to corroborate it becomes increasingly difficult. Individuals' identities become so intertwined with their ideals, that to accept someone who does not share one's values seems to become a denial of oneself, as the statement of Detlev on page 172 illustrates, in which he stated that he would not have sex with someone whose values he does not share.

In Brazil, on the other hand, as the statement of Volker on page 178 already illustrated, individuals are more oriented towards relationships. The perseverance of traditional gender relations and the emphasis on sexuality still encourage individuals to corroborate their identity by having a sexual partner, and the lower individual autonomy still sustains the individuals' dependency on a partnership in order to survive. Thus, singlehood in Brazil is a less acceptable and desirable lifestyle, especially for women, in the face of the substantial inequality between the sexes, as already observed in the statement of Jens and Julho on page 137. Lina, for example, reported in her interview how the social pressure on women to engage in a relationship or to marry is much higher in Brazil than in Germany. According to her, singlehood in Germany is a tolerated lifestyle, while in Brazil everyone will one day be married and until this occurs they live with their parents.

Lina: (...) Und sonst glaube ich das /ehm/ in Brasilien so der, der gesellschaftliche Druck einen Partner zu finden und auch dann halt irgendwann zu heiraten "casar" höher ist als hier. Also, ich glaube hier wird Singledasein eher toleriert als Lebensform. Also, dass habe jedenfalls so wahrgenommen in dem Kontext. Also, irgendwann sollte jedes Mal verheiratet sein in Brasilien und so lange wohnt die Person dann auch noch bei den Eltern, ne. [25-year-old German Bachelors student in Music (high-school degree)]

Ulla also stated that to have a partner in Brazil is really important and that to be single in Brazil is difficult and rare. According to her, there is always a demand to be in a relationship or in an affair in Brazil. Whether male or female, Ulla observed, the person must have a partner or a possible partner or an affair, and when the person does not have one, he/she is asked why not, while in Germany, people just accept it when someone declares that they are single.

Ulla: .. //mm// Also ich glaube in Brasilien ist es sehr wichtig, immer einen Partner zu haben. .. Also Single in Brasilien zu sein ist, glaube ich, schwierig und selten. Weil es gibt irgendwie dieses .. man muss immer irgendwas haben. Und wenn es nur eine Affäre ist. Zumindest ... //hmm// zumindest bei Männern. ... Na doch, nein auch bei Frauen. Also es wird einfach immer vorausgesetzt, dass man irgendwie einen Partner hat oder so einen zukünftigen potentiellen Partner oder eine Affäre oder so. Und wenn nicht, dann wird immer gefragt, warum nicht. Und in Deutschland halt nicht. So: "Ah, ich bin Single!" - "Aja, ok!" [25-year-old German Masters student in Literary and Cultural Studies (high-school degree)]

Karl, when discussing relationships, stated that in Germany a relationship is regarded as private and people do not show it in public, while in Brazil it has something "magic" about it. According to him, people in Brazil are happy for someone to be in a relationship; they celebrate it rather than regarding it only as an economic association.

Karl: Hm. /ehm/.. Ich habe das Gefühl das hier in Deutschland so Liebesbeziehungen und wirkliche..... Dadurch das so privat ist und die Leute sich nicht öffentlich zeigen und dann.. dass es endromantisiert ist. Also so in Brasilien hat das was.. wie soll man sagen, etwas Magisches oder das die Leute "Ach das ist aber schön" und dann freut man sich für die Leute das sie so toll in einer Beziehung sind oder irgendwie so. Man zelebriert das auch. Nicht jetzt das man da eine Party macht aber man redet so darüber und so, gerade in der Familie und so, dass es eben nicht nur eine Wirtschaftsgemeinschaft (ist). ((lachen)) [27-year-old German Masters student in Political Sciences (high-school degree)]

It seems that individuals in Brazil, in contrast to individuals in Germany, are more oriented toward the establishment of relationships, and consequently they are more open to interacting with others and to engaging in courtship, as observed previously [see page 167]. Nevertheless, they also have to reconcile their desire for a close relationship with other social demands that do not necessarily encourage the development of a relationship.

Individuals in Brazil may engage more easily in courtship, the open and desired expression of interest by men and women in Brazil may leave no doubts about each other's interest in courtship, and the increasing individual desire to be acknowledged for one's sexiness may lead them to engage sooner in physical intimacy; nonetheless, although Brazilians may indeed kiss sooner, as observed in the description of courtship, this tends to be regarded above all as a momentary expression of sexual and/or affectional interest for the other and does not carry with it any implicit promise to develop further into a more intimate relationship. The lack of openness and commitment of the parties after physical intimacy and the casual nature of courtship in Brazil [as observed previously on page 171] seems to make it difficult to take courtship further into the development of a relationship.

In a context where sexual identity and sexiness rule and where the exercise of sexuality is regarded as an expression of autonomy – as the statement of Volker on page 155 well illustrates – courtship becomes an instrument for corroborating one's identity. The lure of courtship leads individuals to engage in it more often [as observed previously on page 167], and consequently not to concentrate on the establishment of a relationship, as the statements of individuals going out to *ficar*, also with more than one person in an evening, suggest. Pedro, for example, when speaking about courtship in Germany and in Brazil, described the lure of courtship in Brazil. He stated that since it is easy to meet people in Brazil and to experience sexuality, people can enjoy greater eroticism without commitment in Brazil, while in Germany courtship is related to finding a partner.

Pedro: Por isso que a questão do casal fica assim. Porque, claro, no Brasil tu encontra alguém. Agora tu pode, daqui a algum tempo encontrar um outro alguém. Porque, afinal, já que está ali, pode experimentar ((risos)). Tu pode aproveitar mais o erotismo todo. Acho que é um pouco mais por aí que a gente pensa. Uma visão bem masculina, claro. [...] Claro, pensando como brasileiro que sou e assim cresci ((risos)) Chega um ponto do relacionamento que a pessoa tem que querer decidir. Saiu aquela parte da química, da paixão, do sexo. O amor vira uma questão. Ok, nós não vamos ter isso como tínhamos, como teve no começo. Então a gente decide, pô, vamos fazer alguma coisa juntos. Só que esta decisão de "pô, vamos fazer alguma coisa junto", aqui já é, em princípio, desde o começo. [35-year-old Brazilian PhD student in History (Masters degree)]

Detlev stated that the issue of finding a partner is more common in Brazil than in Germany. However, according to him, in Germany people search for a possible partner and not for just anyone and therefore they do not engage so easily in courtship in a pub like people in Brazil tend to do. For Detlev, people in Germany engage more often in courtship during their daily social activities than night-time ones.

Detlev: (...) Air, as situações eu acho que são diferentes, de como as pessoas se encontram. Aqui [Brasil], encontrar uma pessoa, é um assunto mais cotidiano. (...) [Na Alemanha] Envolve mais, como já falei, né, uma pessoa completa, então você não se joga numa noite num bar tão facilmente. Na tendência. Além disso, né. Fora isso, eu acho que. Claro, as pessoas se encontram e flerte num bar. Além disso, na vida mais social, vamos dizer do que a noturna, eu penso assim. [37-year-old German higher-education teacher (PhD degree)]

The widespread perception of courtship as a leisure activity in Brazil makes it an arduous process for those looking for a stable relationship and may be a reason for the increasing popularity of online-dating platforms. The following statements of Lucia illustrate the difficulties which arise in actual encounters for those searching for a partner. She explained first in her interview her surprise when she learned that her German boyfriend had been divorced for 12 years and that he had not been in a relationship for two years before they met. According to her, he is more selective in his choice of a partner than Brazilians and was in no hurry to enter into a relationship, as a Brazilian would be. She observed that for him people do not seem to be as disposable as they are in Brazil. Further in her interview, she reported her happiness at meeting her German boyfriend, who admitted openly to having the same wishes as her, to find a partner and to establish a relationship. Lucia observed that she had the feeling that she could not admit in Brazil that she was interested in those things or the men would run away, thinking that she was desperate to find a partner. She reported further how exhausting courtship is in Brazil, where she needed to strategically deny what she

wanted in order to be successful and that with her German boyfriend she can be authentic because he wants the same thing.

Lucia: (...) Mas parece que ele, ele me diz que passou acho que dois anos sem se relacionar, ele estava separado há 12 anos. Ele me parece mais seletivo, entendeu. Ele escolhendo mais. Não tendo essa pressa de se relacionar, essa. Como é que eu vou dizer? As pessoas, parece pra ele, não são descartáveis como são aqui, né. [...] uma mesma direção. A gente quer a mesma coisa. A gente não está brigando por coisas diferentes. Então, parece que a gente tem uma, uma, um desejo em comum, vamos dizer assim, né. Então não tem que lutar muito. Então foi muito bom encontrar uma pessoa. Que eu me sentia assim, eu não podia confessar muito aqui no Brasil que eu queria ter um relacionamento sério, entendeu. Porque os homens fogem. Eles acham que você está enalhada. Eu não tô enalhada, entendeu. Eu tenho uma casa bonita, eu não sou tão feia assim, entendeu. Mas eu não queria ficar passando de homem em homem em homem, entendeu. É muito desgastante. Muito sofrido, né. Então eu queria um relacionamento sério. E eu acho que é por isso que eu casei várias vezes, porque eu não gosto muito de relacionamentos, né. Eu gosto de me dar, de me entregar, de ter uma relação. E aí, ele não, ele encara isso numa boa, ele acha isso bom, ele acha natural, e me senti mais à vontade pra não ter essas mentirinhas, joguinhos, entendeu. Que eu fazia no Brasil. Está sempre dizendo que eu não quero, que não gosto, que não sei. E ao mesmo tempo armando, entendeu. Com ele não. Com ele eu sou bem espontânea, né, eu sou mesmo quem eu sou, e eu não tenho vergonha dos meus sonhos, né, ele vai junto. Então, assim, muito bom. Ele também fala isso pra mim. É impressionante, né. Ele dizer que ele quer encontrar alguém, que ele quer viver com alguém, que ele sonha isso. Também, aqui no Brasil tá muito difícil encontrar alguém que falasse isso. [47-year-old Brazilian English teacher and MBA student (Bachelors degree)]

To sustain a relationship becomes a challenge also in light of the lure of courtship in Brazil, as suggested by the statement of Lucia on page 159 about how during courtship women resist men's advances and later in the relationship they try to hold them near, or the statement of Patrícia on page 168 about her unfaithful behavior in Brazil, or the statement of Heiner on page 173 about women in Brazil ignoring a wedding ring.⁹¹ It seems that if on the one hand individuals in Brazil are intrinsically and socially pushed to engage in a relationship, on the other, the social demand to prove one's identity by expressing their sexuality drives them to reject the establishment of a relationship.

As observed in this chapter, the different socio-historical trajectories of democracy, the welfare state and feminism in Germany and in Brazil have produced different dynamics of courtship, which seem to lead the two regional groups to favor different techniques of seduction, to follow different paths to an intimate relationship and to deal with different dilemmas and conflicts during courtship.⁹² It seems that the modern dilemma between individuality and intimacy has only increased in late modernity, while adopting particular

⁹¹ The high level of participation of Brazilians in the online Married-Dating platform Ashley Madison also corroborates the unfaithful behaviour reported by respondents in Brazil. According to a chart published by Dadaviz, São Paulo is the city with the most members globally, and Rio de Janeiro and Brasilia are in the top 25. The graphic can be found in <http://dadaviz.com/i/4763>.

⁹² Although this analysis was drawn from different sources of data – observations of events for singles, questionnaires of high-school students and interviews with individuals who are or were in a bi-national relationship – the scope of this investigation remains limited to its sample. The courtship dynamics observed here in Germany and in Brazil must be regarded as one among many other possible configurations.

forms in each nation due to their particular socio-historical trajectories. The next chapter regards the influence of cultural capital on love.

7. Love and cultural capital: the impact of the level of education on the experience of romance

Cultural capital is accumulated knowledge (Bourdieu 1997:50, 2008a:53-54; Setton 2005:79). It exists in three states (Bourdieu 1997:47): objectified, i.e. in the form of cultural goods, such as books, pictures, machines; embodied, i.e. in the form of lasting mental and bodily dispositions, like fluency in a foreign language or athletic skills; and institutionalized, i.e. in a particular form of the objectified state that confers original and enduring qualities to the cultural capital, such as educational certificates [e.g. high-school certificate, Bachelors of Arts, Masters of Business and Administration, PhD degree].

Cultural capital in its objectified state can be acquired in two forms: material and symbolic (Bourdieu 1997:50). The first consists in the right of property, which has an economic character, like owning books or paintings. The second consists in the knowledge that is related to this, and therefore its “consumption” or “use” depends on the embodied cultural capital one has, such as being able to read and to assimilate the knowledge in one’s book.

The acquisition of cultural capital in its embodied state occurs through two learning processes: family transmission and schooling (Bourdieu 2008a:53-54). Those processes differentiate themselves by how the knowledge is acquired, the access to it and how the individual familiarizes him/herself with it (Setton 2005:79). The family transmission process takes place in the domestic space and happens in a tacit form, which means that the individual is not completely aware of it, and therefore it has a stronger influence on the individual’s behavior and tastes; it starts at birth and may extend itself through a long period of life. The schooling, which is a formal and methodical transmission of knowledge, takes place in educational institutions, with the individual completely aware of it and therefore able to refuse it.

The modes of acquisition of embodied cultural capital will engender differences in the competencies and manners of applying the knowledge (Bourdieu 2008a:65-66). While institutionalized learning involves rationalization and is experienced and practiced by the individual as a prescription, the unconscious knowledge acquired by family transmission engenders the “connoisseur”, is perceived as a “talent” or “gift”, and enables the practical mastery of it.

The process of accumulation of capital in its embodied state involves the work of memorization and assimilation of information, which demands a long investment of time, renunciation and sacrifice. The embodied cultural capital – and its institutionalized form – cannot be transmitted by gift, purchase or inheritance. The only state in which cultural capital may be in part inherited is in its simple objectified state, such as books and pictures (Bourdieu 1997:48).

There are two factors that determinate the chances of accumulation of cultural capital in its embodied form. First, the singular biological constitution of the individual, i.e. his/her cognitive capacities (Bourdieu 1997:49). For example, individuals who do not have one of the

five senses have their opportunities for learning restricted. The second factor is the individual's economic and socio-historic conditions (Bourdieu 1997:49). The long time necessary for the acquisition of cultural capital in its embodied state creates a positive relation between culture capital and economic capital. Individuals born into wealthy families have more chance to extend their schooling period than individuals born to poor families, who must start work earlier in order to guarantee their own subsistence or the subsistence of their family. Moreover, individuals born into families with a high concentration of cultural capital probably begin the assimilation process at an earlier point at home and at an earlier age than individuals born into families deprived of cultural capital. As Bourdieu (1997:49) describes it, the cultural capital embodied in the entire family will influence the acquisition of cultural capital by its descendants, since the accumulated cultural goods have educative effects on them. And depending on the quantity of cultural capital accumulated by the family, the assimilation of it can be extended throughout the entire socialization period.

The institutionalized state of cultural capital tries to neutralize the biological limitations present in the retention of knowledge. An educational certificate is a formal legitimation of the educational qualification of its holder, which certifies for the rest of his/her life his/her cultural competency (Bourdieu 1997:50-51). As Bourdieu (1998:22) effectively illustrates it, academic titles are the modern titles of nobility. They allow the individual to practice a particular profession and, therefore, guarantee him/her a particular income level and access to a particular social group. The system of education makes it possible to evaluate and compare the certificate holders, and to establish conversion rates between cultural capital and economic capital. But the conversion of institutionalized cultural capital into economic capital involves some risks. The acquisition of an educational certificate involves a great investment of time and economic means, but the symbolic and material profit that an educational certificate may provide depends on its scarcity in the labor market, so it may be that the costly investment will not bring the expected return (Bourdieu 1997:51).

Bourdieu (2008a:13) also refers to cultural capital in its institutionalized form as academic capital or educational capital. According to him, as an objective reference to the duration of schooling and the acquired educational qualification, educational capital serves as an unequally adequate indicator of accumulated cultural capital. Educational capital is a reference for the number of years of schooling, which guarantee to a greater or lesser extent the transmission of cultural capital, depending on whether it is inherited from the family or acquired at school (Bourdieu 2008a:13). Therefore, the higher the educational capital of an individual, the higher the chances that he/she is familiar with the legitimate cultural capital.

Bourdieu (2008a:82-83) does not ignore the existence of discrepancies in cultural capital between individuals with the same educational qualification, especially in recent decades with the expansion of educational institutions – composed of different educational systems, different teachers promoting different methods and theories, and different requirements – which have enabled individuals from different social groups to gain access to secondary and higher education. However, for him, considering that the prolongation of the schooling process involves a great investment of time and money, the educational capital of an

individual at a given moment expresses, among other things, the economic and social level of his/her family of origin (2008a:104-105). In other words, the higher one's educational capital, the higher one's original economic and social status is likely to be.

As observed in the chapter *The socio-historical construction of love*, suggesting that love has been appropriated by the market in modernity, Illouz (1997:285) argues that only those who have the economic and cultural resources to consume amorous commodities are able to experience romance in late modernity. According to Illouz (1997:286), one's educational level stipulates the "romantic competence" of individuals in contemporary society, i.e. the higher the individual's cultural capital, the higher his/her tendency to avoid common market prescriptions of romance, i.e. clichés, and the higher his/her tendency to create singular romantic experiences.

According to Illouz (1997:262), the high cultural capital of her respondents who had earned degrees beyond the college level, professionals as well as cultural specialists, is expressed not necessarily in the form of "high" culture, as is more likely to be true in Europe, but in common abilities such as "choosing a tasteful greeting card, writing a love note in clear but moving prose, carrying on an 'intelligent' conversation, avoiding clichés, and so on" (Illouz 1997:262). The greater attention of those individuals to "taste" and self-expression leads Illouz to conclude that "middle-class respondents are less dependent on the industry of romantic cultural than working class respondents" (1997:262). Their higher cultural competence, observes Illouz (1997:286), enables middle- and upper-middle class individuals to create experiences of romance other than the clichés promoted by the sphere of consumption, engendering romance even from moments that do not depend on the leisure market.

The conduct of her high cultural capital sample, suggests Illouz (1997:286), is a source of strength. Their rejection of common market prescriptions of romance – i.e. clichés – and their possibility of using the more "upscale" ones – i.e. the market prescriptions of romance that demand greater expenditure of time and/or money and/or cultural competence – provide them a sense of security derived from their compliance with cultural standards. At the same time, she observes, their "non-cliché" romantic experience provides them with the psychological certainty that their experience was "special", "creative" and "unique", which enables them to enjoy a sense of autonomy and individualism.

Nevertheless one may consider that Illouz's positive evaluation of the behavior of her higher cultural capital sample seems to be influenced by her affinity, as a scholar, to this group. Illouz seems to forget that the low cultural capital sample may not share the ideologies of more educated individuals who are more concerned with the confirmation of their individuality through their "intellectuality", and thus that their experience of romance would not be hindered by criticism of romantic clichés and would not depend on creative and unique expressions and experiences of romance. In other words, individuals with low cultural capital would have the same chances to experience romance as individuals with high cultural capital, since they share different ideologies. Simply because less-educated individuals may buy a card and more-educated individuals may handcraft one, does not make the experience of the

former less romantic than the experience of the latter, since the former, for example, may not share the same opinion of romantic commodities as the latter.

Regarding Illouz's suggestion that one's level of education influences one's chances to experience romance, the present study attempted to ascertain this by analyzing individuals' reports on the subject. As observed in the chapter *The research: epistemological and methodological standpoints*, the cultural capital of the respondents was evaluated through their level of education and current educational activity, and they were classified into two groups: group A, individuals who were concluding or had already concluded at least one tertiary educational degree and therefore had the higher cultural capital of the sample; and group B, individuals who did not have any tertiary education and therefore had the lower cultural capital in the sample. Group A consisted of 13 German and 10 Brazilian respondents and group B of 3 German and 6 Brazilian respondents. The conclusion from the analysis of the reports of respondents on romance is presented next.

7.1. Romance and cultural capital

In the interviews, respondents not only described personal experiences, but also described what they regarded as romantic. Despite the singularity of their reports, some symbols appeared frequently in their descriptions of romance, such as "sunset", "candlelight", "dinner", "wine", "travel", "gift", "red roses", "hearts", "fragrance" and so on. Those shared symbols belong to mass cultural prescriptions of romance, i.e. clichés, and could be observed in the reports of individuals from both cultural capital groups. For example, Flávia, a Brazilian beautician (high-school degree), as well as João, a Brazilian journalist (Bachelors degree), mentioned the preparation of a candlelight dinner or a gift as romantic. When describing how her German husband creates romantic moments, Flávia mentioned dinner with candles everywhere, and her anniversary, when she is treated like a "princess" and her husband does everything the way she likes, preparing all the meals, cleaning the house and bestowing her with many gifts throughout the day.

Entrevistadora: O seu marido já tentou criar alguma situação romântica?

Flávia: Várias. ((risadas)) [...] Humm.. Sim. Às vezes, jantarzinho com velinhas pra todo lado. Tipo, no aniversário é muito marcante. [...] O dia do aniversário é o dia da princesa, ou do príncipe. [...] Tipo, o meu aniversário, ele já começa a olhar a partir das 12 da noite. Por 24 ele tá me mimando. Presente? Ele nunca compra um. Ele sempre tem um batalhão, escondido, escondido, em tudo que é buraco tem presente. E a casa, ele bota perfeita, justamente como eu gosto. Ele faz tudo exatamente como eu gosto. Air às vezes eu vejo que, a gente tá com pouco dinheiro, mas eu quero uma coisa, ele vai lá, se mata, mas ele pega. Tipo, no Natal eu queria muito um computador. Eu liguei pra ele, falei "Olha Amor, a gente tá sem dinheiro, porque a gente quer ir pro Brasil. Não pega, não faça." Cheguei no Natal, o computador estava lá. Ou seja, essas coisas. Às vezes ele deixa de comprar uma coisa legal que ele quer pra ele, mas ele compra pra mim. Pra mim ele nunca olha o preço de nada, pra ele, ele olha. Sempre compra o barato, pra mim não importa. Eu acho muito romântico no aniversário. Ele passa o dia fazendo tudo. Se eu falar assim "Se joga na lama.", ele se joga. "Você pode tudo hoje." Então é muito gostoso. Mas quando é a vez dele, eu já não gosto de fazer tudo isso. Ele faz o café da manhã, e é muito bonito, com flores, não sei o que, pega as melhores canecas, faz tudo do melhor, não economiza em nada, os melhores queijos. Apesar de que eu não gosto. O primeiro presentinho à noite. Air pela manhã tem o café, aí já tem outro presentinho. Dez horas tem outro. Meio dia ele faz um almoço, ele prepara. Nesse aniversário ele

fez sushi. Uma mesa de sushi. Tem fotos de eu me acabando ((risadas)). Air sempre, o último, o presente grande, fica mais pra noite. Air tem o presente grande. Mas sempre tem muita coisa pequena, assim, tipo, um anelzinho, uma florzinha, tem um livrinho, tem uma coisinha. Eles têm muito isso. [32-year-old Brazilian beautician (high-school degree)]

João described as a romantic moment a trip he made with a girlfriend at the beginning of their relationship in which they escaped from the heat of the city by traveling to the mountains. When asked if he had ever attempted to create romantic situations, he said yes and mentioned preparing dinner and giving gifts, which he also regarded as romantic when coming from his German wife.

João: *Ah. Acho que na primeira viagem com ela. Tipo, uma serra nos arredores de Fortaleza. Isso eu achei bem romântico. Minha primeira viagem com ela. Estávamos juntos há menos de um mês. No friozinho da serra, saindo do calor de Fortaleza. Isso eu achei bem romântico!*

Entrevistadora: *E você já tentou produzir uma situação romântica?*

João: *Sim, sim, já. Preparando um jantar, velas. Esse tipo de coisa. Presentinho.*

Entrevistadora: *E funcionou?*

João: *Sim, sim. Funcionou. [...]*

Entrevistadora: *E a sua esposa, ela já tentou produzir uma situação romântica?*

João: *Sim, também. Fazendo jantar. Esse tipo de coisa. Preparando surpresa. Sei lá. Presentinhos. Esse tipo de coisa também. [30-year-old Brazilian journalist (Bachelors degree)]*

Lina, a German Bachelors student (high-school degree), as well as Wulf, a German medical computer scientist (PhD degree) also reported dinner, candles and a trip as romantic. When describing a personal experience, Lina mentioned a trip at night to the beach, where she and her boyfriend were alone, but also a candlelight dinner, or celebrating something with food, wine and chocolate. In order to create a romantic moment on the anniversary of their relationship, Lina mentioned having prepared a surprise candlelight dinner, although she does not like to cook. As she described, she “strove” to make a good dinner by lighting candles, placing wine on the table, writing a card, slicing tomatoes in the shape of a heart. Another romantic situation she created, observed Lina, was to give her boyfriend a video that she posted on YouTube and in which she wrote the text of a song for him.

Lina: */ehm/ Mhm. /ehm/ Wir waren nachts am Strand. Einen Ausflug gemacht. Also, /ehm/ als am Strand da niemand mehr war. Irgendwie mit einem Motorrad dann da eben einige Stunden am Strand verbracht haben nachts. Oder. Was war noch romantisch? Also, romantisch /ehm/ ((lachend)) Candle- Light Dinner machen. Genau. Also, für den anderen irgendwie ein Schönes. Oder auch zusammen. Essen bereiten und dann das zelebrieren. Also, gut Essen mit Wein und Schokolade und ja.*

Interviewerin: *Okay. Und hattest du schon probiert nach romantischen Situationen zu bauen?*

Lina: *Zu bauen? Ja. Als Geschenk so zu sagen.*

Interviewerin: *Und wie war das? Konntest du das erzählen. Was hast du gebaut, um eine romantische Situation zu produzieren?*

Lina: */ehm/ ((lachend)) Also, die letzte. Wo ich mir wirklich Mühe gegeben habe, das war /ehm/ ein Essen habe ich gemacht. ((lachend))/ehm/ Ja, es ist mir gelungen. Ein Essen habe ich gemacht als wir zweijähriges Zusammensein- Jubiläum hatten mit meinem Freund. Und ich habe gesagt: Heute möchte ich für dich Essen machen. Und /ehm/ das war schon insofern wichtig, als ich nicht gerne koche und er das sonst immer macht für uns beide. Und dich habe da nicht so Lust drauf und deswegen war das schon wichtig und romantisch und dann habe ich halt gekocht, mir Mühe*

gegeben, den Tisch schön beleuchtet, habe Kerzen angemacht. /ehm/ Und habe Wein aufgestellt und habe eine Karte geschrieben und die auf den Tisch gelegt und den Salat, die Tomaten habe ich als Herz ausgeschnitten und dann das halt vorbereitet als er nach Hause kam. ((lachend)) Da habe ich eine romantische Situation gebaut und das hat auch geklappt. Das war auch romantisch.

Interviewerin: *Sehr schön. Okay. Sehr gut.*

Lina: *Genau. Und romantisch was habe ich noch gemacht oder gebaut. Das war keine Situation, aber ein romantisches Geschenk. Ich habe zum Geburtstag ein Lied gedichtet und ein Video aufgenommen und das auf „YouTube“ gestellt und dann angerufen und gesagt: Guck mal auf „YouTube“ unter dem Stichwort. Und ja. [25-year-old German Bachelors student in Music (high-school degree)]*

Wulf, when describing what he does to create romance mentioned that he likes to organize something at home, like cooking a good meal, lighting candles, giving a nice gift, drinking a good wine. However he also observed that to organize a nice trip to a distant place or to look for a good restaurant are also ways of producing a romantic situation.

Wulf: *[...] Na, wenn ich sie selber baue, dann geht es mehr um zu Hause. Etwas Schönes kochen, Kerzen aufstellen. Licht ist wichtig, ein schönes Geschenk, ein guter Wein. Und das andere um Romantik zu bauen ist eben, ja, einen schönen Weg zu suchen wo man hinfährt, wo man lang fährt. Ein schönes Restaurant zu suchen. Da mach ich mir schon Gedanken, ja. [47-year-old German medical computer scientist (PhD degree)]*

As can be observed in this study, independent of one's cultural capital, all respondents seem to make use of clichés in order to communicate their intent to generate a romantic experience, and those mass cultural prescriptions of romance also help them to understand their partner's intentions when attempting to do the same.

Some male respondents also stated how they deliberately applied romantic clichés to seduce women. Guilherme, for example, a Brazilian fight tutor (high-school degree), stated that he does not consider himself a romantic person and that he does not like many romantic symbols, like flowers and candles, but that he tends to use them at the beginning of a relationship in order to win over women. Later in the relationship, he observed, he no longer uses those symbols, because they are not romantic for him. According to Guilherme, a romantic situation is “to make out in the rain”, to see the sunset, to sit, talk and drink a wine together. He observed further that his German wife regards candles at dinner as romantic, but he thinks that they are “tacky” and “dumb”, since one cannot see the food clearly.

Entrevistadora: *Você já tentou produzir uma situação romântica?*

Guilherme: *Eu acho que o homem está sempre tentando. Eu sempre tive tentando produzir uma situação romântica, mesmo sendo um tanto direto, conforme eu sou.*

Entrevistadora: *Você teria um exemplo de uma situação que você tentou produzir?*

Guilherme: *Eu não gosto de dar flores, né. Dou flores poucas vezes. Mas quase sempre no início de uma relação, você leva um buquê, uma coisa assim. Então, eu estou produzindo uma situação romântica. Não quer dizer que eu seja romântico. Mas eu estou produzindo pra.. Pegar a chave da porta. Ai, depois que eu pego a chave da porta, eu jogo as flores fora.*

Entrevistadora: *Então você quer dizer que essa postura romântica é uma tática de conquista?*

Guilherme: *É uma tática de conquista. É uma tática de conquista. Ah, mas é uma tática de conquista, que depois de conquistado, não é uma coisa que eu dê importância, que eu ache romântico. Eu não acho flores romântico. Eu acho outras coisas, como namorar na chuva, ou ver um pôr do sol, e sentar para conversar, tomar um vinho e não necessariamente num bar, né. Isso é romântico. Vela? Vela é romântico? Detesto vela. E faz uma mesa bonita, faz um jantar e põe a luz*

de vela. Acho cafona, idiota. Não dá para ver a comida. Mas a mulher, a grande maioria das mulheres acha isso romântico. Então, na minha situação, é produzir uma situação romântica. Porque para a minha pessoa, não tem nada de romântico. [41-year-old Brazilian fight tutor (high-school degree)]

When questioned about a romantic experience, Heiner, a German engineer and MBA student, seemed embarrassed and unsure about how to answer the question. He reported then observing a difference in this regard between Brazilian and German women. According to him, his Brazilian wife is more active in sexual interactions than German women, who need and want more to be seduced. By relating romance with sex, Heiner suggested like Guilherme that the first would be a technique of seduction to achieve physical intimacy.

Interviewerin: *Hätten Sie schon eine romantische Erfahrung?*

Heiner: *Eine romantische Erfahrung mit?*

Interviewerin: *Mit einer Frau. ((lachen))*

Heiner: *((lachen)) Ja. ((lachen))*

Interviewerin: *Könntest du mir das beschreiben bitte?*

Heiner: *((lachen)) /ehm/ Inwiefern? ((lachen)) Ne... ((lachen)). Was erzählt man da am besten? ((lachen)) Also wie wir vorher schon gesagt haben, ich würde schon sagen das es gewisse Unterschiede gibt.*

Interviewerin: *Okay.*

Heiner: *Es ist einfach... wie gesagt, Paula jetzt zum Beispiel als Brasilianerin ist halt offener, sagen wir mal so. Die deutschen Frauen brauchen ein bisschen und wollen mehr geführt werden. Also haben weniger eigenen Antrieb unbedingt sexuelle Sachen zu machen. [31-year-old German MBA student and engineer (Masters degree)]*

Respondents may apply clichés to generate a romantic situation or to seduce someone. Nevertheless, a more accurate analysis of their reports indicates that those romantic symbols appear as allegories for two types of experiences that seems to constitute romantic moments: the experience of realizing how much one is cherished or how much one cherishes the other, and the experience of communion.

The reports of respondents on romantic moments that emphasize tokens of love coming from their partners, like attentiveness, solicitude, efforts to please or amorous declarations, were regarded here as the experience of realizing how much the partner cares about one. Flávia, a Brazilian beautician (high-school degree), for example, who in her statement on page 187 mentioned how romantic it was at her anniversary, since her German husband attempted to do everything to please her, noted at another point in her interview that he is more romantic than all her previous Brazilian partners. She explained that he is more romantic because although they have already been together for eleven years, he is still “adorable”, he prepares breakfast and brings it to her in bed, and when he is away and sees something that reminds him of her, he buys it. According to Flávia, one can see how his eyes shine from happiness when he notices that he pleases her.

Flávia: *[...] Mas é, porque do mesmo tempo que eles são fofos, românticos, são mais românticos. O alemão, quando ele está apaixonado, ele está apaixonado. Pelo menos o meu! Eu tenho 11 anos com ele, ele é muito fofo.*

Entrevistadora: *O que ele faz, que você diz que ele é mais romântico?*

***Flávia:** Bem, pelo menos mais do que os brasileiros que eu conheci. Não todos os brasileiros, porque eu não namorei todos. ((risos)) Me aposentei! Mas, tipo assim, eu tenho 11 anos, ele leva flores sempre. Eu acordo pela manhã, o café está sempre prontinho, na bandejinha, fofinha, leva no quarto. Sempre quando está passando numa loja, alguma coisa, ele lembra e traz uma coisinha. E todas essas coisinhas. Quando ele faz alguma coisa que eu tô feliz, o olhar dele brilha. O olho dele, que ele tem um olhão, faz ‘pruhuhuh’. Você vê aquela felicidade de estar me agradando. [32-year-old Brazilian beautician (high-school degree)]*

Lucia, a Brazilian English teacher and MBA student, when reporting about romantic moments highlighted the attentiveness of her German boyfriend. According to her, whereas in her last long relationship in Brazil her partner only arranged dinner once because she asked him to do it since she was working late and tired, her German boyfriend already in the first months they were together announced while she was working that he was cooking them dinner. Lucia also reported that he always wants to give her gifts also when they are apart, that he was in a Christmas market in Germany while she was in Brazil and he bought some things for her; that he organized on his own a trip for them to a place he knew she liked, something that her last Brazilian husband had never done, since she was the one who always organized their romantic trips; that her German boyfriend not only gave her a book about a subject she likes, but also read it together with her; that he beautifully contributed to her blog; that he sent her flowers twice from Germany, on Valentine’s Day and on their four-month anniversary, when he sent her four roses. According to Lucia, her last Brazilian husband only sent her flowers on important dates like their anniversary or when he did something wrong and wanted to apologize, which she regarded as really sad. She noticed that while her ex-husband let his secretary arrange the flowers and used to say to her to choose something and that he would pay for it, her German boyfriend invests time looking for what she likes. Further in her interview, Lucia stated that she believed that Germans, unlike Brazilians, regard simple things as romantic and reject ostentatious displays of romance. According to her, while Germans tend to handcraft gifts, like writing a card or baking bread, Brazilians tend to buy presents instead of making them by hand and therefore to value the gift according to its price. For her, bought presents do not “come from the heart”. Lucia also highlighted the creativity of her German boyfriend as romantic and how he taught her to do the same. She mentioned that she always posted photos from the internet on her blog and that he suggested that she post her own photos to express herself, which she did, for example, by posting a photo of his favorite place in her house with the objects that he used and the vacant seat to express how she was missing him. She observed further that he has been beautifully contributing to her blog and that once he reported the first time they met at her home and she was surprised to notice that he remembered the detail of her dress that evening, which had a heart shape in the back and which he described as being the wings of an angel. Lucia also reported a trip they made together through northern Germany as beautiful and really romantic.

***Lucia:** [...] E eu vi assim, eu estava trabalhando muito e o Mathias falava assim “Tô fazendo um jantar para você aqui.” Cara? O cara me conhece há 4 meses e pouco, quer dizer, o meu ex-marido fez isso uma vez, entendeu, e eu pedi, cheguei a pedir “Poxa, tô trabalhando, tô muito cansada. Você já chegou aí, organiza alguma coisa.” Não. E ele, sem eu pedir, ele já fez, entendeu. Ele já. Lá a gente ia no supermercado, ele queria comprar coisas pra mim. Agora mesmo ele falou “Ah, eu fui numa feirinha de Natal aqui, estou levando coisas para você.” Entendeu. Quer dizer, a gente vê que ele. Na primeira vez que veio, ele trouxe, ah, ele mesmo reservou um hotel em Visconde de Mauá*

para a gente, entendeu, uma pousada ou um chalé, porque ele soube que eu gostava, e aí com ofurô, entendeu. Quer dizer, é muito mais gostoso quando você vê que aquilo que está acontecendo não foi você que fez, entendeu. E com o Brasil era sempre, sempre tinha sido eu, sempre, cem por cento das vezes. E aí ele dizia “Ah, que legal eu vou.” E ele não, ele trouxe um livro para mim de palavras mágicas, Magic Words, porque ele sabia que eu gostava de coisas mágicas, né, e a gente ficou lendo. Quer dizer, tem t o d o um romance. Como eu falei, o blog, eu criei o blog. Então, ele, n o s s a, ele faz coisas lindas, entendeu, no blog. Assim, demonstrações que eu nunca tive. Ele mandou flores de lá duas vezes para mim, no dia dos namorados, no dia que a gente fez quatro meses, ele mandou quatro rosas, né. Coisas lindas. E assim, o meu ex-marido era uma dificuldade, entendeu. As meninas até riam no trabalho, porque quando mandava flor às pessoas já diziam “Qual foi a merda que ele fez?” A verdade é essa, o que é que ele fez de errado, né, porque ele estava se desculpendo com as flores, o que é muito triste. Ou então, claro, uma data, né, ou é teu aniversário, uma data de aniversário de casamento é meio assim, obrigação, sabe, hoje é o meu dia. Ou talvez até a secretaria comprasse. E aqui não, eu vejo que pô, o cara procurou a bruxinha que eu gosto, marcador de livro para o livro Magic, entendeu, o cara teve um tempo ali para fazer aquilo. [...] É, ele te conhece, ele vê o que você gosta e faz e tal. O meu ex-marido já falava assim “escolhe uma coisa que eu pago”, entendeu. Então é muito diferente. É muito diferente. [...] O que é romântico? Eu acho que eles, a coisa mais simples os satisfaz romanticamente. Eles gostam muito da coisa simples. Eu acho que eles têm um certo pavor da pompa, entendeu. Uma certa aversão a tudo que é, entendeu. E o brasileiro não, o brasileiro já vai “Vamos para uma s u í t e cinco e s t r e l a s.” Entendeu. Tudo o m á x i m o, né. Então isso para o brasileiro é o “Ah!”. Talvez por causa de todo o nosso passado, de toda a nossa colonização, porque nós somos um povo ainda mais empobrecido, né. Então tudo isso ainda é muita v a n t a g e m pra gente falar pros amigos, entendeu. E eles não, né. É a coisa simples mesmo. Isso eu também aprendi na Suíça, que eles davam presentes de Natal, eles faziam um pão, eles faziam alguma coisa com trabalhos manuais e ofertavam para os amigos, né. Enquanto que aqui a gente vai pelo valor do presente, é tudo comprado, ninguém faz nada, ninguém faz um cartão, né. Quer dizer, nada é dado com o coração. Então para eles eu sinto isso, o romance do que é feito com as mãos, o que você faz, da simplicidade das coisas, né, para eles é mais romântico. O que é muito bonito, acaba sendo muito romântico. Porque não é uma coisa fabricada, né. Até eu, por exemplo, eu botava, postava no blog, fotos que eu às vezes pegava da internet, e ele falou para mim “Faz isso não. Quando você quiser expressar alguma coisa, fotografa você.” Eu nunca tinha pensado nisso. E engraçado como eu consegui expressar tanta coisa através de fotografias, né. Por exemplo, quando ele foi embora, eu expressei a minha solidão, a minha saudade, com aquele banco ali. Fotografei ele sozinho, porque ele está sempre ali, ele adora aquele lugar, né. Porque para ele essa coisa de um espaço aberto, né, é muito importante, porque lá é frio, né, então fechado. Então ele está sempre ali. Ele fuma, fica tudo ali, entendeu, a canequinha dele, ele tava sempre ali. Então quando ele foi embora, ali, sabe, é que eu fotografei e botei no blog, né, mostrando assim a falta que ele faz. E eu achei legal esse toque que ele deu, porque eu realmente consegui expressar o meu sentimento através da minha fotografia, né, sem usar uma coisa de outra pessoa. [...] Agora com o Mathias tem vários momentos românticos, esses momentos de flores. O blog é extremamente romântico, as coisas que ele coloca. Eu lembro que a primeira vez que ele veio aqui eu estava com um vestido preto, que tem um coração atrás assim (...) eu não tinha percebido que ele tinha notado tanto isso, ele escreveu que parecia as asas, entendeu, como se fossem as asas de um anjo, entendeu, atrás de mim e tal. Ele é muito assim, ele saca muito, ele vê muito as coisas. Então, é essa viagem também pro norte da Alemanha foi muito romântica, uma viagem muito romântica, muito bonita. [47-year-old Brazilian English teacher and MBA student (Bachelors degree)]

Vanessa, a Brazilian housewife (high-school degree) reported in her interview two romantic situations in her relationship with her German husband that showed how much he cherishes her. First, during the first year of their relationship, when they were still living in different cities, he lost his mobile and with it her telephone number. So he drove in the evening to her city and appeared unexpectedly on her door so that he could have her telephone number again. When confronted with the statement of other respondents that affirmed that their German partner tends to “exert” themselves when generating a romantic moment, Vanessa agreed with it and stated that none of her former Brazilian partners invested so much in a

relationship as her German husband, who always invested time and reflected about what to give her. For example, observed Vanessa, when he is away, he thinks of a gift for her that means something for both of them. Based on this observation, Vanessa reported the second romantic situation with her German husband, that he gave her the same ring three times. He gave her a ring from a German jeweler for Christmas, which she forgot once in a restroom. So when he was in Germany he bought her the same ring and gave it to her when he came back to Brazil. She forgot the ring once again in a restroom and although he said that if it was another person, he would never speak to her again, he forgave her and later gave her the same ring for the third time.

Vanessa: *Ah, tá. Ah, sim. Uma vez eu estava na minha casa, e ele tinha perdido, eu estava morando em Natal, e ele tinha perdido o meu telefone. Porque na verdade ele perdeu o celular dele. Acho que o carro passou, quebrou, alguma coisa assim. Ele não tinha o meu número. Aí ele teve que viajar de Recife, onde ele estava, até Natal, para me achar. Ele sabia onde eu morava pelo menos, né? E... ele... a estava namorando, assim, tinha um ano de namoro, eu acho, só, logo bem no início. Eu estava em casa, já era noite, e eu falei. As meninas "ah, vamos sair", era uma sexta-feira, eu falei assim "ah, não estou a fim de sair, não", a gente ficou conversando, daqui a pouco, tipo dez e meia da noite, meu pai falou assim "o Jann está aí?". "O Jann está aí?", eu disse "como, gente? Ele nem me ligou!". Assim, ele veio, né, essa distância toda, porque ele não tinha o meu telefone. Ele falou que ficou procurando, pelo nome, ficou desesperado. Aí teve que pegar o carro e ir atrás ((risos)). Eu acho isso super romântico ((risos)). [...] Eu acho, o Jann, igual você falou, gasta a energia, o tempo dele, pensa, por exemplo, quando ele vai para um lugar, ele pensa, procura um presente para mim, que significa para nós dois, entendeu, que faz sentido para mim, ele pensa, ele está... está... eu acho muito menos do que eu já tive relacionamentos que, com brasileiros que nunca investiu tanto assim, como ele investiu comigo. Eu lembro que ele me deu um presente de Natal, um anel, que ele comprou aqui, em, em... você conhece Charlotte? Essa coleção de joias Charlotte, que tem, bem conhecida alemã? Ele me deu de Natal de presente, tá. Depois de um tempo, eu estava usando o anel, e nós fomos no cinema, e eu tirei o anel no banheiro do cinema para lavar as mãos e esqueci. E quando eu estava, fui no carro, no estacionamento "Ah, Jann, esqueci meu anel!", a gente foi, voltamos nós dois juntos, e chamamos aquelas... já era onze horas da noite, um final assim, e a gente não encontrou o anel. Pegamos com uma pessoa no shopping, essas que faz limpeza, tudo, entrar em contato se achasse o anel, nunca apareceu o anel de novo, infelizmente. Ele comprou o mesmo anel ((risos e bate palma uma vez)). Todo igual e me deu. É, aí pela segunda vez eu esqueci no banheiro de novo, no restaurante. Gente... ele falou assim "eu não falo mais, olha, fosse outra pessoa, não falava mais com você. Você sabia...", não sei o que. Ele me deu de novo o mesmo anel. Três vezes ((risos)). [...] Gente... aí ele me deu o anel de novo, ele veio aqui na Alemanha ((risos)), comprou o anel e me deu de presente. Então eu acho que... é ((risos))... [40-year-old Brazilian housewife (high-school degree)]*

Ulla, a German Masters student (high-school degree), regarded as romantic the attentiveness of her Brazilian boyfriend to her needs and illustrated this by describing that once they walked the whole day so that her feet ached and she became unpleasant, and he freely offered to give her a foot massage when they arrived at home, a promise that he kept.

Ulla: *Na z.B. ist es in der jetzigen Beziehung.. kommen solche ... kommt von der anderen Seite viel mehr Aufmerksamkeit. Also, dass viel mehr meine Bedürfnisse erkannt werden. //ehm// Was weiß ich, z.B.: Wir waren mal, als Migui hier war, sind wir ganz viel rumgelaufen den ganzen Tag, und dann taten mir irgendwann die Füße weh. Und dann hat er einfach gesagt.. Und dann war ich halt so ein bisschen schlecht gelaunt, weil mir die Füße weh taten und da hat er gesagt: „Na komm, wenn wir nach Hause kommen, dann massiere ich dir die Füße!“ Also einfach so von sich aus dann zu sagen, und das hat er dann auch wirklich gemacht. Das fand ich ziemlich romantisch. Und also das ist.. Weiß ich jetzt nicht, ob das jetzt mit ihm zu tun hat, weil er Brasilianer ist, oder ob das nicht auch von einem Deutschen hätte kommen können. Das würde ich nicht ausschließen. [25-year-old German Masters student in Literary and Cultural Studies (high-school degree)]*

When reporting about romantic moments, Ursel, a German conference and event planner (Masters degree), stated that the last romantic moment she and her husband Carlos had was to have breakfast at a lake. She also considers romantic how she and her Brazilian husband became a couple. They had gotten to know each other a year earlier, and Ursel liked him then, but at the time he had a girlfriend and she did not want to come between them. Then one year later, she was in the bus traveling to Portugal, when a friend called her to say that Carlos would call her and had asked if he could pick her up from the bus station. Ursel was surprised that he knew where she was and that he was also in Portugal. She knew that Carlos lived in Portugal, but she thought he was temporarily in England, and only because she was sure they would not meet by chance, she decided to go to Portugal. But Carlos called her and although she was unsure about it all, she accepted his invitation to pick her up at the bus station. Ursel explained that she had cried in the bus, because she did not know what to do; she wanted him, but not when he had a girlfriend. Carlos was at the bus station when she arrived and told her straight away that he was now free and asked her if she still wanted him. Ursel answered him that only if it was all or nothing, i.e. if he wanted to be with her, he should move to Spain with her. So they stayed the week in Portugal to see how it worked and when she went back to Spain, he went with her. For Ursel the fact that Carlos found out where she was and went after her in the bus station – an expression of how much he liked her – was romantic. She observed that it was a full moon that evening, which was also romantic for her. According to Ursel, many things are romantic, especially involving immersion in nature, like going for a walk on the beach, or camping; activities that are not at all regarded as romantic by her Brazilian husband, as she observes, but that he goes along with out of love for her.

Ursel: ((lachen)) Es kann ganz verschieden sein. Romantisch kann für mich sein, also wir haben letztes zum Beispiel am See gefrühstückt. Und das ist für mich.. hat schon irgendwas, also für mich schon romantisch irgendwo. Dann... für mich war es auch irgendwo romantisch wie wir zusammengekommen sind. Und zwar wir kannten uns schon, haben uns dann ein Jahr später wieder getroffen, weil damals hatte er noch eine Freundin und ich hatte da keine Lust mich irgendwie dazwischen zu drängen und das war eigentlich auch klar das dann... Auf jeden Fall haben wir uns wieder getroffen ein Jahr später. Ohne dass ich ihn wieder treffen wollte. Also für mich war es halt so, okay, er hat eine Freundin. Fertig. Ich habe mein eigenes Leben. So, und ich war auf den Weg nach Portugal, er hat damals noch in Portugal gelebt, und ich saß schon im Bus und mich rief eine Freundin an. Und sie meinte: „Ja, Carlos ruft dich gleich an. Er wird dich fragen, ob er dich vom Busbahnhof abholen kann.“ Und ich so, um Gottes Willen! Woher weiß der wo ich bin und woher weiß der, dass ich jetzt nach Portugal fahre? Weil für mich war der in England. Also ich wusste, dass er nicht in Portugal ist, sonst wäre ich wahrscheinlich nicht hingefahren, weil ich wollte... Weil wir hatten uns damals kennengelernt und ich mochte ihn schon sehr gerne. [...] Und ich wollte mich von irgendwelchen Gefühlen fernhalten irgendwo. Und er hat dann angerufen, hat gesagt: „Kann ich dich abholen?“. Dann habe ich natürlich gesagt, ja. Ich saß im Bus und habe geheult, weil ich nicht wusste was ich machen sollte. Ich wusste, okay, wenn er eine Freundin hat, ich will da nichts mit ihm zu tun (haben). Aber mal gucken was er zu sagen hat so. Und dann bin ich halt in Portugal angekommen und er hat mich vom Busbahnhof abgeholt und hat halt gesagt: „Ich bin frei, willst du mich noch?“. ((lachen)) [...] Damals konnte ich noch nicht so viel verstehen. Portugiesisch. Muss ich ehrlich sagen. Ich habe halt verstanden, dass er nicht mehr mit seiner Freundin zusammen ist und so und jetzt eine Weile in England war. Und.. ja, ob ich denn mit ihm zusammen sein möchte. [...] Und ich so, ja, wir können es probieren. Also wir kannten uns ja schon irgendwo, wir wussten schon, dass es eine Basis gibt. Und ich habe dann gesagt: „Ok. Aber ganz oder gar nicht, also, wenn dann musst du auch mit mir nach Spanien gehen.“ Klar, wir waren dann erst mal eine Woche zusammen in Portugal und haben halt geguckt wie es läuft und so was. Und das war aber irgendwie der Moment, einfach das er mich da von diesem Bahnhof abholt und irgendwie halt vorher

rausgefunden hat wo ich gerade bin. Dass ich auf den Weg nach Portugal bin. Und das war für mich eine romantische Situation zum Beispiel. [...] Und es war halt auch gerade Vollmond an dem Abend. Und das... ja, das war romantisch. Oder auch so einfach... also für mich ist vieles romantisch. [...] Am Meer spazieren gehen. .. Für mich ist auch sehr romantisch irgendwo zu zelten. Was natürlich gar nicht sein Ding ist. ((lachen)) [...] Deswegen kommt das eher selten vor. Also Romantik hat bei mir auch viel mit Natur zu tun. [...] Was für ihn weniger... also.. für ihn ist so ein bisschen irgendwie Natur, also jetzt gerade, oder ich bin gerne in der Natur und gerne auch lange in der Natur und das ist für ihn schon wieder so eine Art sofrimento. ((lachen)) Also zu lange in der Natur sein, zu lange ohne Dusche, ohne Küche, also das ist für ihn schon wieder so.. hat vielleicht für ihn nicht so viel mit Romantik zu tun. Für mich aber schon. Deswegen macht er es mir zu liebe. .. Also.. doch, bei mir ist Romantik sehr viel mit Natur verbunden irgendwo. [29-year-old German conference and event planner (Masters degree)]

Patrícia, a Brazilian primary school English teacher (Bachelors degree), observed that she is not a really romantic person, since she never waited for romantic presents like flowers and cards, and also never gave much attention to them when she received them. Nevertheless, she could easily report romantic moments, which in her case are usually tokens of love. With her German husband, for example, a romantic moment was when he wrote with rose petals on the floor “I love you” on one of her birthdays. A Brazilian boyfriend, observed Patrícia, used to make public amorous declarations, like once they were in a hair salon and the hairdresser asked him who she was and he answered that she was the woman of his life, the one he wanted to marry. Patrícia also observed that her Brazilian boyfriend used to give her presents, that when he was away and thought of her, he would buy her something, which she regarded as really romantic. She observed that she often gave him a sweet he liked. According to her, to know what someone likes to eat or so is a “serious proof of love”.

Patrícia: *Sim. O Oliver, no meu aniversário, ele me fez uma surpresa, ele escreveu no chão “te amo” com pétalas de rosas. Foi bem. Eu não entendi nada. Vindo dele?! Mas eu descobri que ele tinha um lado romântico forte sim. E do Marcelo direto. Nossa, muito. Mas eu não sou muito romântica não, assim, de receber flores e tal. Eu meio que não demonstrava essa necessidade, sabe. Eu não ficava dando saltos de alegria quando recebia uma carta, ou cartão. Eu não escrevia também cartão, sabe. Então, romance assim, os caras de repente sacavam que não era muito a minha, o meu fraco. Mas eu já vivi assim coisas românticas.*

Entrevistadora: *Você já citou o que o Oliver já fez, mas o que um brasileiro fez de romântico? Você lembra de alguma situação?*

Patrícia: */ehm/ Menos óbvio assim. O Marcelo, que não foi meu namorado sete anos, o outro, ele era mais romântico, ele falava muito mais coisas românticas, assim. Eu não lembro muito bem, não sei citar exatamente o que ele falava para mim. Mas um dia eu tava cortando cabelo e ele me chamou para ir lá, e ele falou para a mulher “Ah, essa é a sua namorada?”, “É. Essa é a mulher da minha vida e que eu queria casa. ”, assim, mais dessa forma, entende? Com menos gestos.*

Entrevistadora: *Declarações públicas?*

Patrícia: *Declarações públicas, exatamente! Isso ele fazia muito. E ele também comprava presentinho e tal. Não era me encher de presente não. Era uma coisa que dava até muito mais valor por ele não me encher de presente. Mas ele comprava “Ah, eu lembrei de você.” Eu acho isso bem romântico, você trazer alguma coisa para o outro porque você lembrou. Para mim é bem romântico. Eu dava muito brigadeiro para ele, brigadeirão. Eu sempre comprava para mim. Isso é prova de amor muito séria, você saber o que o outro gosta de comer e você pensar numa bobeira desta. Eu dou muito valor para essas coisas. Mas assim, esse romance de pétalas de rosa só foi do alemão. [30-year-old Brazilian primary school teacher (Bachelors degree)]*

Although the German engineer and MBA student Heiner considered in his statement on page 190 that romance was a means towards sex, further in his interview he discussed emotional

moments in his relationships, which according to him could be described by some as romantic. For Heiner such emotional moments are moments in which one realizes how much one cares about the other. With his Brazilian wife such an emotional moment happened just before a trip he needed to take and that would interrupt their dating. As Heiner reported, he was really busy handling two jobs at the time he met her by chance at a party. They started to exchange SMSs and to date; however the vacation he had booked before meeting her came and they would have to be apart for three weeks. According to Heiner, the day of their farewell was really emotional. They ate something together, went to the place they usually met, where they had first kissed, and said words of farewell. He brought her home and gave her something he had handmade for her specially. According to Heiner, in that moment he realized how special she was for him. Another emotional moment in his life, observed Heiner, was with a German girlfriend, also at the beginning of their relationship. Not only was their first encounter by chance, at a party, but also their second, in which they met at a county fair and walked through the place together and went to his favorite restaurant-pub, where they exchanged their first kiss.

Heiner: ... Sagen wir mal so /ehm/.... Ist schwierig zu sagen. ((lachen)). Es gibt natürlich Momente, in jeder Beziehung, in allen Beziehungen die ich gehabt habe, wo ich mich heute noch daran erinnern kann an die Momente und wie ich mich emotional gefühlt habe. [...] Kann man einen romantischen Moment nennen. Wie gesagt.. ist Definitionssache. Aber.. einfach.. auch diesem Moment, ein emotionaler Moment, ein Moment wo man weiß, ich liebe die Frau. Sagen wir mal so. [...]

Interviewerin: Und diese beeindruckenden Momente, könntest du mir ein von diesen beschreiben, (im welche) du hast dieses starke Gefühl von Liebe?

Heiner: /ehm/ ... Also bei Paula jetzt war es eigentlich schon.. eigentlich relativ früh, weil ich..... Ich habe sie kennengelernt, war eigentlich eine relativ stressige Zeit für mich, weil ich für zwei Firmen gleichzeitig gearbeitet habe und es meinen Vater nicht gut ging, deswegen musste ich bei meinem Vater aushelfen und noch halt parallel meine Arbeit gehabt habe, und habe sie kennengelernt. Eher durch Zufall auf einer Party. Und.. habe mit ihr viel SMS geschrieben, weil ich halt nicht da war und hab sie dann wieder getroffen. Ich habe sie dann ein paarmal getroffen und dann musste ich aber wieder nach.. dann /eh/.. hatte ich eine Reise gebucht, drei Wochen nach Indien. In der Zeit wo sie noch da war. Und wir hatten relativ wenig Zeit. Und.. wie gesagt, in dem Moment der Trennung dann, wie gesagt, habe ich ihr ein Geschenk gebastelt und alles und es war halt sehr schön. Man hat halt sehr viel daran gedacht. Wie es halt ist und ob es vielleicht auch eine Zukunft hat und was weiß ich was. Ja, eigentlich der Moment der Trennung, eigentlich nur für diese drei Wochen, war eigentlich ein sehr starker emotionaler Moment, wo ich, wie gesagt, ein bisschen was essen gegangen und sind dann an einen Ort gegangen wo wir uns immer getroffen haben, am Rhein, am Fluss, und haben uns dort halt tschüss gesagt und geküsst und was weiß ich was. Dann habe ich sie nach Hause gebracht und habe ihr das übergeben. Wie gesagt, eigentlich der ganze Tag war für mich ein sehr emotionaler Tag. In dem Moment wusste ich das sie was Besonderes für mich ist. [...] Und... bei.. meiner zweiten Freundin in Deutschland war es eigentlich so, dass ich sie.. ja, ich habe sie eigentlich nur kennengelernt, rein durch Zufall.. und.. wo wir uns das erst mal getroffen haben, weiß ich zwar auch noch, aber wo wir uns das zweite Mal getroffen haben waren wir auf einer Feier, oder auf einem großen Jahrmarkt, und haben halt zusammen /ehm/ sind halt über den Jahrmarkt gelaufen und das war eigentlich sehr..... Und sind danach noch in eines meiner Lieblingsrestaurants oder Restaurant-Bar-Kneipe gegangen. Ich habe da halt meinen Platz gehabt und so. Wir haben uns dort getroffen und in dem Moment haben wir uns das erste Mal geküsst und so. Das war für mich der stärkste Moment, wo ich mit meiner zweiten Frau zusammen war. [31-year-old German MBA student and engineer (Masters degree)]

But not only moments of realizing how much one is cherished or how much one cherishes the other were described as romantic by respondents. It seems that moments in which partners

experience communion, i.e. in which partner experience a great intimacy and connection, seem to constitute romantic moments. Communion seems to happen on the one hand in the form of intimate communication, i.e. a willing exchange or sharing of thoughts and emotions, and on the other hand in the form of participation in each other's life by sharing or holding something in common, such as special experiences and moments, or interests and aims.

Thorsten, Paulo, Beate and Rodrigo, for example, similar to Heiner in his statement above on page 196, highlighted as romantic the moment when the couple got to know each other, to open themselves to the other, i.e. to engage in intimate communication and to share experiences. Thorsten, a German electrician (*Ausbildung* degree), reported that a romantic feeling is when you meet someone with whom you quickly become familiar and with whom an emotional closeness arises that is not common in other relationships. Further in his statement, he observed that romance is the moment when two people come closer and the context doesn't matter, whether on a park bench or in a restaurant. When attempting to describe further a romantic situation, Thorsten observed that such moments of unexpected and rapid intimacy happen seldom in life and that it reflects on the context and makes everything extraordinary.

Interviewerin: Okay. hattest du schon eine romantische Erfahrung? Etwas das du erlebt hast, dass du gedacht: Das war nett. Das war für dich romantisch oder ein starkes Gefühl?

Thorsten: Na, das war der Beginn der Beziehung. ...

Interviewerin: Könntest du etwas beschreiben. Was in die Situation romantisch war?

Thorsten: Ja. ... Ich versuche das mal. ... Ja, was ist romantisch, eigentlich. Was ist da. Was beschreibt man romantisch?... Na, das Gefühl einem Menschen begegnet zu sein mit dem man einige Stunden vertraut wird. Innerhalb kurzer Zeit und sehr /ehm/ und sehr emotional nahe kommt mit einer Distanzlosigkeit, die /ehm/ die merkwürdig anders ist als mit /ehm/ .. gewöhnlichen Beziehungen. [...] Was ich /ehm/ als romantischen Moment empfunden habe. Das ist also der Moment des sich näher Kommens. Ob das jetzt eine Parkbank ist oder /ehm/ ein Restaurant. Das spielt glaube ich keine Rolle.

Interviewerin: Okay. Und es gab einen Aspekt von Außergewöhnlich. Oder? Du hast gesagt, dass etwas nicht Gewöhnliches ist.

Thorsten: Ja, weil da passiert etwas, was /ehm/ wo, wo. Eine Art Funke überspringt ja. Und/ehm/. Das auf einer Gegenseitigkeit. So. ...Das passiert glaube ich nicht allzu häufig im Leben. Jedenfalls wenn man ernsthaft /ehm/ .. unterwegs ist. Auf/ehm/ .. Partnersuche. .. Ich denke vielleicht diesen Moment von Romantik /ehm/ .. /ehm/ .. der beinhaltete ein /ehm/. So 2 bis 3 -stündigen Aufenthalte in einem netten Lokal mit plüschigen Teppichen und einer Tiefhängenden Decke und einem Kronleuchter. Dazu ein gutes Essen und ein Glas Wein, so. Und dann der Effekt sich .. /ehm/ .. sich über den .. geistigen Austausch und auch über Mimik, Gestik sich sehr nahe zu sein. Sehr schnell nahe zu kommen. Da ist im Vorfeld natürlich schon einiges passiert. Da wurde schon eine Spannung aufgebaut und dann gibt es eben praktisch diesen Blitzschlag. oder so. [48-year-old German electrician (*Ausbildung* Degree)]

Paulo, a Brazilian Masters student in German Studies (Bachelors degree), reported that the moment he met his German girlfriend was romantic. According to him it was like a "fairytale", because he thought such things did not exist, that romance was an illusion, and suddenly he was experiencing it. He believes that the moment was romantic because it was so "naive", because he was surprised by it. He reported that everything in the moment was great, from the place they were to what they did and said, that everything, together with the spontaneity of the interaction, created an extraordinary situation. Further in his interview, Paulo observed

that he also conducted common romantic activities like preparing a meal or giving gifts the other likes, but for him the most significant romantic moments were the moment he met his girlfriend – i.e. a moment of intimate communication – and the day of their engagement – i.e. a moment in which they decided to share a life, to create a further history together.

Paulo: /ehm/ Acho que sim. Na verdade /ehm/ eu acho que quando eu conheci a minha namorada atual, eu acho que foi muito bacana. Eu acho que foi o mais próximo de algo, como os alemães falam tipo märchenhaft. Tipo, um pouco mais, como.. meio uma coisa que eu falei “Nossa! Isso está acontecendo? Eu pensei que não, que realmente não existisse, que a vida não era”, entendeu? Eu acho que a maneira como a gente se conheceu, foi, foi um pouco, é.. me deu essa ilusão, né, na verdade. Que na verdade eu achava que era uma ilusão, mas aconteceu. Então, parou de ser ilusão naquele momento. Então, eu acho que foi. Eu acho que esse momento foi, talvez, foi romântico. Mas, é, eu não sei se eu entendi muito bem a ideia de romântico? Eu acho que foi, foi romântico assim. [...] Eu acho que é porque ele foi m u i t o ingênuo na verdade ((risos)). Acho que por isso ele foi muito romântico. Assim, foi romântico. Tem um ‘que’ de ingenuidade, de.. É de ingenuidade assim. Uma crença, como eu te disse, é uma, aquilo que eu sempre pensei que era uma ilusão, de repente, por alguns, sei lá, por dois dias, parecia que “Nossa! Tá acontecendo.” Sabe? E, por isso, eu me senti muito crente naquilo, naqueles dois dias. E parece que eu, eu me senti também ingênuo, né, olhando hoje, né. Eu falo “Nossa!”, parecia uma criança, né, sentindo naquele momento. Eu acho que isso seria um romantismo, sei lá, um momento romântico, talvez. [...] Ahh! ((suspirou alto)) Foi tudo, na verdade legal. Foi. Começando do lugar onde a gente tava e terminando pelas coisas que a gente fez e falou, e conversou e tudo mais. Eu acho foi, toda a situação foi legal. Pelo inesperado, pela espontaneidade em certa medida, pelas coisas que. Sei lá, tudo isso pra mim foi extraordinário, né. Saiu da, do dia a dia e foi bem outra coisa. [...] Claro, claro que com a minha namorada eu já fiz aquelas coisinhas, tipo, ah, fiz o café da manhã e ela achou super legal, fiz coisas que eu gostava, comprei coisas que ela gostava, e ela achou o máximo. Mas eu não sei se isso seria t ã o, assim, uma situação romântica como um jantar e tudo mais. Que isso, a gente já fez também. Não sei se isso se encaixa como uma situação romântica. Eu tô vendo uma coisa maior assim, tipo ah, no dia que a gente se conheceu, no dia que a gente noivou, sei lá. Isso seria pra mim uma situação mais romântica do que. Tá bom. É, não sei. [27-year-old Brazilian Masters student in German Studies (Bachelors degree)]

The German language teacher and PhD student Beate reported how it is romantic when a couple sits together until morning, chatting and drinking wine, talking for a long time in dim light. According to her, such moments can also happen at the beginning of the relationship, when the attraction between partners starts to arise and one realizes how great the other is – i.e. when one realizes how much he/she cares about the other.

Beate: Ok. ...Ich würde sagen, das waren eigentlich sogar... ähnliche Sachen, z. B. ich weiß nicht, man sitzt irgendwie bis morgens um fünf zusammen und unterhält sich und trinkt einen Wein und redet ganz lange und es ist irgendwie so Kerzenschein dabei und so. Das ist eigentlich... Oder man sitzt irgendwie... Vielleicht auch noch so, eigentlich bevor man so zusammen ist, so diese Momente. Also in denen es sozusagen so knistert und man eigentlich so hofft, ,oh der ist ja toll und so‘. /ehm/ Aber das würde ich sagen, ist das relativ ähnlich. Also gerade wenn man eben lange Unterhaltungen hat oder man so im Halbdunkel zusammen irgendwie zusammensitzt und sich eben auch unterhält. .. Das würde ich als romantisch einstufen. /ehm/.. Auch wenn es erst mal nicht so romantisch klingt, aber.. und das habe ich aber, sowohl mit Deutschen als auch mit Brasilianern gehabt. [27-year-old German language teacher and PhD student in Linguistics (Masters degree)]

Rodrigo, a Brazilian journalist (Bachelors degree) reported how romantic a trip was that he and his German wife made to the mountains at the beginning of their relationship. He described how the day was cold and they drank beer and spirits together, that there was a festivity in the city and how they laughed together at his funny remarks. According to Rodrigo, at this moment they were getting to know each other more and it is was “really cool”.

Entrevistadora: *E se a gente pensar com a Janine, por exemplo, teve alguma situação romântica com ela? Alguma situação que para você foi marcante?*

Rodrigo: *Ah, teve, teve... ((risos)). A gente estava em Mauá, você conhece Mauá?*

Entrevistadora: *Sim, sim.*

Rodrigo: *Eu levei ela um dia para conhecer (...) um vilarejo próximo de Mauá, e na época estava muito frio, estava um dia nublado, frio para caramba, e tal, e nós fomos para lá (...), né, e acabou que a gente ficou tomando cerveja e umas cachacinhas, né. E... foi interessante porque estava tendo uma festa da cidade (...). E chegou um ponto que foi muito engraçado, que estava... é... tocou um axé, né, e a Janine ria muito, porque... antes dela estar morando aqui, ela morou (no Nordeste), então ela conviveu com, né (...). Então foi um dia muito marcante, porque depois, a gente voltando para, para minha casa, né, eu alugo um chalezinho (por lá), eu brinquei com ela, que a gente estava indo, passando por Maringá, né, e eu achei que a gente tinha que fazer alguma coisa lá, não é que tinha que fazer alguma coisa, tinha, sabe, tipo assim, “ah, vamos comprar um, sei lá, alguma coisa no mercado”, aí eu falei, aí fiquei brincando com ela assim, “olha, eu não parei eu o carro, né”, eu ficava, e ela foi rindo, eu falei assim “olha Janine, a última chance. Aproveita agora que eu estou indo para casa” ((risos)). E ela achou muita graça disso, ela ficou rindo bastante, então foi um momento também muito marcante da nossa relação assim, né, do... que também era um processo em que a gente estava também... se conhecendo m a i s, né, estava começando, né, início de namoro... foi muito maneiro. [41-year-old Brazilian journalist (Bachelors degree)]*

Karl, a German Masters student in Political Sciences (high-school degree), also highlighted intimate communication as romantic, like the respondents above, but in the everyday life of a relationship – like Guilherme in his statement on page 189 and Beate in her statement on page 198. He stated that for him romantic situations happen when the couple spends an evening together and eats something, but as he observes, not eating as “energy intake”, but as a moment of conversation and an exchange of each other’s daily activity – i.e. to engage in intimate communication. Karl observed further in his interview that for him the context plays an important role in generating a romantic situation, like eating outside on the balcony in summer – which, due to the climate in Germany, is regarded there as an extraordinary event. As he says “it is extremely romantic when you experience together something beautiful”. Further in his interview, Karl observed how his four-month trip through Brazil with his Brazilian girlfriend, during which they experienced many new things together, was romantic. He also noted in his statement that for him it is also romantic when he observes that his Brazilian girlfriend shares with him the same interest in music and art. Spontaneity is also an important element of romance for Karl. He stated that he does not like scheduled romantic activities and reported how it was romantic for him to receive an unexpected call in Germany from his Brazilian girlfriend in the morning – when it was still night in Brazil. When asked further in the interview if he had ever arranged a romantic situation, Karl reported that since for him a romantic situation has to do with a sensory experience like a meal, a view, a smell, i.e. with a special situation, he would attempt to generate an atmosphere that involves sensory experiences and he would do it without previously telling the partner in order to surprise her. He observed that he had done so once when he lived in France, that when his girlfriend at the time came home, he told her they were leaving without explaining where they were going. He drove them to a mountain near their house, where no one used to go, and they sat and ate and admired the view. According to Karl, she liked it and he was happy to please her.

Karl: *Für mich sehr romantische Situation sind z. B. oder waren immer, wenn man sich zusammen den Abend gestaltet und wenn dann so Essen dabei, aber nicht Essen als, wie in Deutschland, als*

Energieaufnahme, sondern Essen als zusammen reden über den Alltag und solche Sachen. Und wenn diese Situation so eintritt, dass sie nicht so geplant ist. Nicht so, heute machen wir einen ganz tollen Abend zusammen, sondern dass man einfach.. man isst zusammen und dann entsteht eine romantische Situation, weil man zusammen isst und weil man miteinander erzählt. Das empfinde ich als sehr romantisch. Für mich gehört auch in der Umgebung sehr viel dazu, also z. B. ich finde es toll auf dem Balkon zu sitzen im Sommer und dazu essen und dann zu sehen. Das finde ich tierisch romantisch. Wenn man dann zusammen ein schönes Erlebnis hat. [...] Also wenn man.. romantisch z. B. auch ((Räuspern)).. /eh/ ich bin ja sehr.. das war ja eigentlich der Hauptgrund warum ich mit nach Brasilien bin, wegen der Musik und wegen dieser ganzen Künstlersachen und so was alles, und ich bin sehr bewegt bei bestimmten Sachen, wenn ich die höre und ich finde das total faszinierend und wenn ich feststelle das meine Freundin genauso fasziniert ist davon und auch so diese Bewegung hat, das finde ich romantisch. Wenn man eine Begeisterung teilt für eine Sache. [...] Romantisch ist z. B. für mich auch spontane Kontaktaufnahme, also z. B. ich freue mich tierisch, wenn ich einfach so irgendwie so... ja, morgens um sieben (Uhr), ich stehe auf und sie weiß halt, dass ich um sieben (Uhr) aufstehe aus irgendeinen Grund, ich habe ein Termin, sie weiß, dass ich einen Termin habe und ruft mich beim Frühstück an, also jetzt aus Brasilien sozusagen und ich kriege den Anruf und dann freue ich mich wenn ich beim Frühstück mit ihr reden kann. Und sie weiß eben das ich da um sieben (Uhr) sitze und ruft mich dann an. Das empfinde ich als romantisch dann. Wir haben unglaublich..... Wir sind jetzt vier Monate, ach, vier Wochen durch Brasilien gereist und so. Wir da in Ceará, Fortaleza die Strände hoch und so was. Also wir haben unglaublich romantische Situationen erlebt. Dinge die wir beide nicht kannten, also die sie genauso wenig kannte wie ich und die wir eben dort gesehen haben und toll fanden und langgelaufen sind. Wie gesagt, nicht solche geplanten Sachen. Das finde ich immer nicht so romantisch. Also dieses heute, unser Abend, mit dem und dem. Ich finde das mehr.. so diese spontanen Sachen, jetzt gehen wir mal dort hin, und dann geht man dort hin und es ist echt toll, beide finden das toll. Das finde ich romantisch. [...] Also für mich haben romantische Situationen immer mit Sinneserfahrungen zu tun. Das habe ich ja schon gesagt mit dem Essen, mit dem Ausblick, mit dem Geruch, mit einer speziellen Situation usw. Ich würde bei mir in einer romantischen Situation also versuchen, ein Klima, ein Umfeld zu schaffen, in der es irgendeine Sinneserfahrung gibt. Also dass man z. B. /ehm/.. und dass es überraschend ist. Dass ich also nicht schon drei Tage vorher ankündige sondern an dem Abend spontan sage: "Komm, wir fahren mal weg!". Und dass ich ihr vielleicht auch nicht erzähle wo wir hinfahren, sondern sie steigt einfach mit ins Auto und wir fahren an einem Platz wo ich weiß, dass sie da gut finden wird. [...] Also /eh/.. als Beispiel, als ich in Frankreich gewohnt habe, da war ich jetzt nicht mit einer Brasilianerin zusammen aber /eh/ da habe ich in der Nähe von so Bergen gewohnt. Und da gab es eben einen Punkt, der total verlassen war und wo nie Leute waren. Da konnte man hinfahren mit dem Auto und dann konnte man sich so hinsetzen und da essen und dann konnte man über die g e s a m t e n Berge gucken. Es war Wahnsinn! Mit Sonnenuntergang und so. Schon alleine ist das ja eine tolle Erfahrung und zu zweit ist da eine tierisch romantische Erfahrung. Und das ist dann z. B. für mich eine romantische Erfahrung plane, das ich dann sage: "Komm wir waren jetzt mal wohin" und dann fragt sie: "Wohin?", "Ja, wirst du ja sehen". Und dann fahren wir los und dann kommst sie da an und findet das eben auch toll und /eh/.. ich freue mich, wenn sie sich freut. [27-year-old German Masters student in Political Sciences (high-school degree)]

Other respondents also reported like Karl that romance was the sharing of a special moment, i.e. a moment beyond the usual, or a moment of relaxation, or a beautiful and joyful moment. Joana, for example, a Brazilian manager of a beauty parlor (Ausbildung degree), described, like many other respondents, a trip as a romantic moment. She remembered a weekend in which her partner rented a house on the beach and arranged everything for them. She reported further in her interview that a romantic situation for her would be for example a trip to Paris, "the city of love", to take a walk, to have breakfast together, and as she observed at the end "to do it all without worrying about the world".

Joana: Ah, com um brasileiro, por exemplo, com meu namorado com quem eu fiquei uns dois anos no Brasil... É... O que eu achei romântico foi que ele me chamou um final de semana pra gente ir pra uma praia em Genipabu, aí ele alugou um c h a l é... Aí arrumou a c a m a... Foi um final de

semana assim, romântico, eu nunca tinha tido, e foi... Gostei. Agora, com alemão... O que é que foi romântico... Não, com alemão não tive nada assim que eu achasse "ai, que lindo...", não. ((risos)).

Entrevistadora: *E se você pudesse viver uma experiência romântica, o que seria isso pra você? Se você pudesse decidir: "Eu vou fazer uma experiência romântica, e eu gostaria que fosse assim"?*

Joana: *Ah, sei lá, talvez um final de semana em Paris, na cidade do amor... Passear... Tomar café da manhã... Sem se preocupar com o mundo... [44-year-old Brazilian manager of a beauty parlor (Ausbildung degree)]*

Rosa, a Brazilian Masters student in Art History (Bachelors degree), also reported a trip as a romantic moment. She described how they spent the whole day together, that it was a sunny day in a beautiful region and that they saw the sunset from the mountain in each other's arms. When they returned to the city where he lives, he showed her his favorite restaurant, which according to her was really simple, but with a fantastic meal. As Rosa observed, there were no candles or perfumes, but the romantic atmosphere was present the whole day.

Rosa: */ehm/ Sim, com certeza. Mas o que eu posso descrever assim com detalhes é. Teve uma aqui, experiência romântica, que eu acho que já foi romântico quase o dia inteiro, foi uma viagem que eu fiz na fronteira da Holanda com a Alemanha, quando eu estava em Aachen, e foi um dia muito bom, porque estava bastante sol e tal. E quando a gente estava voltando para Aachen, a gente parou num lugar que é chamado de Drei Ecke, que é a fronteira da Alemanha, com a Holanda e com a Bélgica, e é um parque, muito bonito e tal. E nós fomos bem lá em cima, onde dá para ver assim, tem um panorama bem legal. E tava um pôr do sol, assim, lindíssimo. Então ali para mim já foi o momento, apesar de não ter velas, candelabros, cheiros e tal, foi um momento muito romântico. E apesar de estar em público, a gente estava abraçado e tal. Então realmente foi uma coisa diferente do que se esperava. E dali, quando a gente chegou em Aachen, pra mim aquilo ali foi romântico, porque a gente foi num restaurante de comida típica de Aachen, que ele mais gostava. Era o restaurante preferido dele, que na realidade, se você ver, não era nem um r e s t a u r a n t e, era um Gasthaus da vida, mas com uma comida maravilhosa. Não tinha, ela não tinha nada, mas foi muito romântico. Eu acho porque o clima já vinha durante o dia, assim, bastante romântico. [38-year-old Brazilian Magister student in Art History (Bachelors degree)]*

Tiago, a Brazilian visual artist (Masters degree), also reported that romance for him is to enjoy something together, to enjoy the moment, a moment of relaxation, a beautiful moment. According to Tiago, a romantic moment has no specific place to happen, although for some, he observed, it may be related to consumption, like a trip to Paris and drinking champagne on the Eiffel Tower.

Tiago: *[...] Eu acho assim, que a minha noção de romântico é quando você está curtindo, sabe? Então você está curtindo com uma pessoa, para mim isso é romântico. Não curtindo assim no sentido de a p r o v e i t a r, t e s ã o, não é isso. Tá curtindo aquele momento que você está vivendo, que é gostoso, que é descontraído, que é leve, que é um momento saudável, que é um momento bonito. Isso para mim é romance. Agora, como é que vai ser? Se vai ser numa sala cor de rosa cheia de cachos de u v a, ou se vai ser numa grama no meio do mato com um monte de vaca em v o l t a, entendeu? Assim, eu não sei avaliar, né, o que é romântico. Essa ideia de romântico também não está muito associada a uma ideia de um padrão de consumo. Você está entendendo? Eu não sei avaliar isso assim, eu acho que sim, que romântico para muita gente é fazer uma viagem para Paris, ir na Torre Eiffel e subir não sei aonde e tomar uma Chandon, isso é romântico. [39-year-old Brazilian visual artist (Masters degree)]*

Max, a German bank financial manager (Ausbildung degree), reported that for him romance always involves a moment of intimacy like watching the sunset in each other's arms. Further in his interview, Max described a romantic situation that he had arranged, in which he lighted some candles, dimmed the lights and spread rose petals over their bed while his Brazilian wife

was in the bathroom. According to him, his wife did the same on another occasion, but she also likes to light scented candles or leave messages on the mirror.

Max: *Also für mich ist ja romantische Erfahrung, also romantisch ist immer alles was im Grunde dann intim wird. Ob das nun ist, dass man in den Sonnenuntergang schaut, sich dabei in den Armen hält oder..... Also so was wäre ja dann romantische. Ja klar, hatte ich.. reichlich. ((lachen)) [...] Beispielsweise wenn ich abends dann auf dem Bett, sie war noch im Bad, ich war schon im Schlafzimmer gewesen, hab dann einige Kerzen angezündet, habe schönes Licht angemacht und dann hatten wir noch Rosen gehabt die schon am Abblühen waren. Und dann hatte ich diese ganzen Rosenblütenblätter genommen und aufs Bett gestreut. Und das war eine romantische Situation. Und sie hat das in ähnlicher Weise auch schon gemacht in Brasilien. Häufig. Das sie dann mit Kerzen, mit Duft, mit.. weiß nicht /eh/.. ja, schöne Sachen auf den Spiegel geschrieben usw. [43-year-old German bank financial manager (Ausbildung degree)]*

The Brazilian housewife (high-school degree) Vanessa, who in her statement on page 193 reported the tokens of love of her German partner as romantic, at another point in her interview mentioned that with a Brazilian boyfriend she also had romantic moments like the times that he cooked for her or the motorcycle tours they made.

Vanessa: *É, já... com brasileiro, eu... situação romântica com um brasileiro? Já, de passear na praia, viajar final de semana para um lugar... é, eu tinha um namorado que era de Curitiba. Era bacana ((risos)). [Barulho externo]. Ah, você sabe, quando você fica com um relacionamento tão grande, você vai esquecendo das coisas passadas que você já teve, aí eu estou tentando lembrar agora, eu já tive... por exemplo, esse meu namorado de Curitiba, ele era descendente de italiano, ele adorava cozinhar. É, ele cozinhou para mim, aí uma vez ele fez um jantar para mim. É, legal... é, o que mais? Ele gostava de passear comigo, tinha moto... o Jann já não cozinha. Então é, essas diferenças, assim, eles gostam, acho. [40-year-old Brazilian housewife (high-school degree)]*

The German Masters student in Literature and Cultural Studies Ulla, who in her statement on page 193 reported the attentiveness of her Brazilian boyfriend as romantic, mentioned at another point in her interview that she had already had many romantic moments, which for her are usually simple things like cooking together and lighting a candle on the table. According to Ulla, she is an “unromantic” person, since she regards the full romantic program of roses and tacky music in the background as excessive and “corny”. For her, joint activities that further the couple’s relationship, that bind them together, are romantic.

Ulla: *Das sind ganz viele Dinge, eigentlich. Also einfach so Aufmerksamkeiten im täglichen Leben. Das.. //pfff// Das sind echt ganz viele. Einfach //ehm// meinetwegen man kocht irgendetwas zusammen .. und einfach nur die Geste, meinetwegen, dass er dann, wir wollen halt zusammen essen, dass er dann einfach eine Kerze auf den Tisch stellt und die anstellt. Also es muss jetzt nicht das volle Programm sein mit Rosenblüten und irgend so einer kitschigen Musik im Hintergrund. Das ist mir dann auch zu viel. Also, ich glaube, ich bin eigentlich eher, wenn man es so sieht, also, wenn man es von der Warte sieht, ein unromantischer Mensch. Weil ich brauche, ich finde das auch schnell zu kitschig. Also so mit Rosenblüten und irgendwie so Musik, das würde mir halt einfach nicht gefallen. .. Also ich weiß, da gibt es andere Frauen, die da anders darüber denken. Die würden das total toll finden, aber ich würde mich wahrscheinlich totlachen, oder so. Ich weiß nicht, ich bin da einfach.. Das ist mir persönlich einfach nicht.. () Oder zusammen kochen finde ich schon romantisch. Einfach gemeinsame Sachen unternehmen, zu zweit. Die irgendwie die Zweisamkeit verstärken. Die einen zusammen verbinden. Also romantisch ist natürlich schon immer an alleine sein gebunden. Also irgendwie schon auf die eigenen vier Wände sozusagen. Aber da dann eigentlich fast alles was man gemeinsam miteinander macht. [25-year-old German Masters student in Literary and Cultural Studies (high-school degree)]*

Like Ulla, the German medical computer scientist Wulf, who in his statement on page 189 reported that when he arranges a romantic situation he tends to cook a dinner at home, to

give something special, to organize a trip or to look for a good restaurant, mentioned at another point in his interview that romance for him is “to be a couple”, to spend time with each other, to walk on the beach together or drink something or to go window-shopping, to touch each other, to be physically near. Wulf observed that for him to be away with a partner is really romantic, like to go to the beach or to visit a restaurant or to make a trip.

***Wulf:** Zeit haben um miteinander spazieren zu gehen am Strand, hier was zu trinken, Schaufenster zu gucken, ein Paar zu sein, sich anzufassen, physisch beieinander zu sein. Ja. [...] Für mich ist das zusammen unterwegs sein sehr romantisch. [...] Ja, irgendwo zu sein, irgendwo hin zu gehen, also am Strand zu gehen oder Essen zu gehen oder zu reisen. Auf den Weg zu sein mit jemanden, nicht alleine, sondern mit einem Partner. [47-year-old German medical computer scientist (PhD degree)]*

The Brazilian English teacher and MBA student (Bachelors degree) Lucia, who on her statement on page 191 already regarded a trip with her German boyfriend through northern Germany as romantic, reported at another point in her interview about other romantic moments in her life that had to do with sharing aims, interests and ordinary life experiences. She reported first about the house she bought in the mountains with one of her Brazilian husbands at a time where they both were starting their careers and therefore did not have much money. For her it was romantic how they both invested their time and finances in that house and worked on it together like by painting it and doing the garden. Other romantic moments with this Brazilian partner, observed Lucia, were their trips into the Brazilian outback in old sport utility vehicles and old clothes, in which they stopped in small towns and tasted the local distilled spirits. Lucia observed that with her last Brazilian husband she also attempted to do the same, however he was so competitive all the time and so concerned at always having the best, like the most expensive car or the most expensive camera, and concerned that everything should be chic that it deprived the situation of all its allure.

***Lucia:** É, eu tive alguns momentos românticos. Agora deixa eu me lembrar... A compra da minha casa de Friburgo, eu acho que foi muito bacana, mas aí foi com esse ex-marido, né. [...] Eu comprei uma casa, um chalé de madeira. Quando a gente se conheceu, eu era professora e ele era engenheiro, mas a gente não ganhava tão bem, eu morava num apartamento alugado, a gente conseguiu comprar um apartamento e tudo. E depois a gente ficou numa situação bem melhor, e foi quando a gente começou a comprar coisas diferentes e a gente gostou de Nova Friburgo e a gente comprou um chalé de madeira e a gente, quando ele foi entregue, foi montado lá e tudo. Eu me lembro que a gente pintava, a gente mesmo fazia, porque a gente não tava mais com muita grana, que a gente investiu tudo ali. E plantava, e era muito romântico, era muito bacana, tudo aquilo era muito legal, né. Esse é um dos momentos assim eu acho mais romântico. Esse cara também, eu adoro fazer viagens para o interior do Brasil, tipo assim, off-road e com carro 4 por 4. Eu gosto muito dessa coisa simples de roupa velha, pro interior. E ele comprou jipes e a gente foi, entendeu. Até mesmo o meu ex-marido chegou a comprar também, mas o meu ex-marido ele tinha uma coisa de sempre ser o melhor, o carro mais caro, a câmera mais cara, entendeu, de competir, que tirava todo o tesão, entendeu, da coisa. Que o legal para mim era isso, o meu segundo marido, era um carro jipe mais velho, mas a gente ia parando, tomava aquela cachacinha, entendeu, curtia aquilo, e ele não. O outro tinha uma necessidade muito grande de contar e estar fazendo tudo chique, o melhor e o, entendeu, era mais, né. E eu não gostava muito. Mas esses foram momentos romântico, né. Esse segundo marido ele era romântico, ele fazia isso. [47-year-old Brazilian English teacher and MBA student (Bachelors degree)]*

At another point in her interview, Lucia reported further about the lack of romance in her relationship with her last Brazilian husband, who was never moved by anything and although they were in many beautiful places and had many beautiful moments together he never

reached the same point as her to declare his love. With her German boyfriend, observed Lucia, it is different, since during their trip through northern Germany, in the same places where she was emotionally touched he was too. Since her German boyfriend also expressed his emotions, she had the feeling that her love was being reciprocated, that it was true.

Lucia: [...] Mas parece que para o homem brasileiro é um sinal de fraqueza dizer eu te amo, entendeu. Ele fala aquilo assim, ou no momento do sexo. Eu, por exemplo, tinha uma vontade enorme de estar num lugar lindo. Eu viajei muito com o meu ex-marido, Patagônia. Então, eu tinha uma necessidade enorme de estar num lugar maravilhoso daquele com o meu marido, entendeu. E trocar essas palavras de amor. Mas isso não vinha. E gerava sempre uma discussão, porque ele não conseguia. Ele dizia que ele falava no momento dele, mas esse momento dele não chegava. Era mais o momento do sexo de repente, entendeu. Mas ele não conseguia se comover com nada. Às vezes você está na própria casa, você chegou da praia, você está num almoço ali, escutando uma música, um negócio, sabe, super bacana, e você tem vontade de dizer, mas não vinha nele, entendeu. E no Mathias, ele já consegue fazer isso. Eu estava em Berlim, a gente foi para o norte da Alemanha, a gente viajou, e realmente naqueles lugares que eu senti emoção, ele também sentia, e é uma coisa que fica marcada e que foi muito bacana isso, ele poder expressar. Isso para mim vale muito. Porque, de novo, não era uma coisa conquistada. Era uma coisa natural. Eu sinto assim, que o que eu estou sentindo, está sendo correspondido. Eu sinto que aquilo é verdadeiro, né. E com o brasileiro eu ficava muito insegura, porque será que ele está sentindo mesmo isso? Entendeu. Ele não conseguia expressar. Então só no momento que você vai embora, é que ele consegue expressar. Então eu não acho que seja legal isso. Eu acho que tem que, que isso tem que ser como uma planta, né, que a gente molha. Não pode molhar de mais se não mata também, né, mas tem que cuidar. [47-year-old Brazilian English teacher and MBA student (Bachelors degree)]

Volker, a German manager of research and development (PhD degree in Biology), like Ursel on her statement on page 194, observed that for him a romantic situation involves immersion in nature. He reported that the most beautiful moments in his life were when he discovered new paths in the wilderness, and the most beautiful of them happened when he and a partner, after three days walking in the forest with rain and hunger, found themselves alone, beside a beautiful waterfall and under a group of furry spider monkeys. Volker noticed that he is also able to have romantic moments alone, when he is by himself and experiences something beautiful; nevertheless, he observed that with a female partner by his side the experience is “more complete”. Volker, like Lucia in her statement above, cautioned that a romantic moment can only arise if the other person feels the same at the same moment, i.e. if the parties share the same interest, being able to enjoy the same moment together.

Volker: Sim... e... uma coisa romântica para mim quase sempre está associado com natureza. Os momentos mais românticos da minha vida, com uma mulher, sempre era quando eu conquistei não a mulher, mas algum... caminho na natureza. Chegamos a um ponto maravilhoso, no meio mato, depois de três dias de andar, com barro, chuva, e não sei o que, e sem comer, aí de repente estamos embaixo de um grupo de muriquis. Né, esse primata, esse macaco maior aqui na Mata Atlântica... junto com essa mulher, ao lado de uma cachoeira bonita, no meio do mato, e nenhuma pessoa não aproxima. A coisa mais maravilhosa da minha vida. E... não existe um momento melhor. É completamente satisfação, é um orgasmo total. Para mim é o momento mais bacana do mundo, não pode ser um momento melhor que eu possa passar com uma mulher. E... (sozinho?) também? Eu me amo também. E aí eu posso passar esses momentos também românticos com a natureza, eu chego em um lugar, “nossa uma maravilha, que inacreditável, ()”, não sei o que. Aí é quase um sentimento parecido, mas não tão completo. Se teria uma mulher a meu lado, seria completo.

Entrevistadora: Ok, tá. Mas não depende da presença dessa pessoa?

Volker: Hum-Hum ((expressão afirmativa)). E... mas tem que ser uma pessoa, que realmente sinta a mesma coisa, no mesmo momento. Se eu vou qualquer uma mulher a um lugar bonito, maravilhoso, não sei o que, eu sei que ela é uma mulher da cidade, muito urbanista, não sei o que,

ai não dá para sentir esse momento romântico com ela. Ai melhor com uma mulher que é mais de um ambiente urbana, passar um momento romântico, esses clássicos. Mas para mim não é tão satisfatório, não é tão romântico. É romântico por definição do ser romântico, né, um restaurante com vela, comida bacana, eu acho também bacana, gosto muito de comer bem. Não muito, mas bem. E se a qualidade, o ambiente, é perfeito, música e tudo, e se a conversa é bacana, acho romântico. Mas não é satisfatório. Acho bem mais romântico e emocionante em algum buraco do mundo. [46-year-old German manager of research and development (PhD degree)]

Detlev, a German higher-education teacher (PhD degree), like Volker and Lucia, also reported that the partners must be on the same wavelength to experience romance. When reporting about romantic moments, Detlev first observed that his concept of romance is different from the majority, since he does not believe in fairytales. He assumes that he feels romantic when watching the sunset with girlfriends, however for him romance has to do with something more simple, like spending time together at peace. For him, romance happens when he feels “a mental and physical balance with the other”, which is not easily achieved in everyday life, since people are usually concerned about ordinary matters. Nevertheless, observes Detlev, the moments when the couple forgets their problems, just enjoys the bird on the tree, are romantic.

Detlev: Ai, experiência romântica, eu acho que eu realmente eu tive dificuldade em achar experiência romântica plástica, porque, pra mim, talvez o meu conceito de romantismo seja diferente. Eu não sou muito de boneca e príncipe e tudo isso. Claro que eu já fiquei.. com a minha esposa, companhia brasileira num lugar de pôr do sol e tudo. Isso foi romântico mesmo. Eu senti isso romântico. Mas o meu romantismo é um mais cotidiano. É quando tem um, qualquer.. não precisa ser um pôr do sol. São horas, passar horas juntos com tranquilidade isso é. Um equilíbrio, quando eu sinto um equilíbrio mental, corporal com o outro. E o outro também sente isso. Essa junção de equilíbrio, de tranquilidade. Que não tem todos os dias. Claro, a gente pode ficar tranquilo, mas sempre tem coisa pra fazer. Mas os momentos, nos quais os dois esquecem de certas coisas chatas. Só olham os pássaros numa árvore, num barco, ou em qualquer lugar, ah isso é romantismo. [37-year-old German higher-education teacher (PhD degree)]

As the descriptions above of experiences of communion indicate – especially those from Volker, Lucia and Detlev – at such unique moments, couples seem to be able to ignore ordinary problems, to enjoy the moment, to engage in intimate communication and consequently to create their own parallel reality, that enables them to separate themselves from the broader social world. The following statement of Jens helps to illustrate this even better. When discussing romance, Jens, a Masters student in Sociology (high-school degree), mentioned that in those moments the couple is on the “same wavelength” that enables them to communicate without words and to create a shell around them, separating them from the rest of the world. As Jens stated, romantic moments are moments in which there is a lot of trust and intimacy between the parties, although they may be in a public place. Nonetheless they are able to communicate or to perceive the strength of each other’s feelings, their happiness or also their sexual attraction. Jens noticed that he experienced many such romantic moments with his girlfriend in the middle of the day, or in the car, and it had nothing to do with sunsets. When reporting about his previous relationship, Jens observed that in romantic moments it is like the couple is able to construct a cocoon around themselves and that the outside world loses its significance. As Jens described, it is a moment of complete trust, in which people come really close to one another, but not, as he observed, in the sense of physical closeness, of sex, but of an emotional closeness, in which people express their

emotions freely – i.e. a moment of intimate communication. A moment, as he observed, that can take place in public spaces, since on that occasion the public no longer has any significance for the couple, or it can also be a trip to a hidden place because one desires the other only for oneself.

Jens: ... Romantik? Das sind vielleicht. Romantik ist dann immer ... Romantik? .. Das sind vielleicht Momente oder Räume in denen man untereinander sehr viel Platz für Vertrauen und Intimität hat. Obwohl man im öffentlichen Raum ist. Aber dass man sich gewissen Blick zuwerfen kann, oder weiß, der andere spürt gerade sehr viel, vielleicht. Und das hatte ich mit meiner jetzigen Liebe habe ich das sehr viel. Oder sehr viel gehabt. .. Also mitten im Alltag. Mit dem Auto. Es ist jetzt kein Sonnenuntergang, aber es hat eine ..

Interviewerin: ..Sintonie? Ist es das?

Jens: Ja, eine Sintonie für das gleiche Erlebnis.. Für das gleiche Spüren im gleichen Moment. Ja, eine Sint.. Ja. Und das kann dann im Auto sein, oder in einer Bar, dass beide gleichzeitig in sich kommen und sich angucken und Gleiches spüren und man so sehr glücklich ist. Freude. Oder dann auch Begierde. [...] Auch mit der letzten Beziehung, die so acht Monate ging, auch einfach, wo man es schafft im Alltag wie eine Glocke um sich zu bauen. Das heißt im Zug, auf einmal, oder wo.. Romantik schlechthin. Dass man die Anderen nicht mehr.. Dass das die Bedeutung des Drumherums verschwindet. Nicht mehr so eine Bedeutung hat. Und das hatte ich hier auch mit der Beziehung. Dass man dann volles Vertrauen.. Man kommt sich sehr nah. Es muss ja nicht Sex sein. Nicht irgendein Tabu. Muss ja nicht Sex im Bahnhofklo.. Davon spreche ich jetzt nicht, aber, dass man dann seinen Gefühlen freien Lauf lässt, vielleicht auch was in der Öffentlichkeit sagt, weil die gerade überhaupt keine Bedeutung mehr hat. Oder weniger. .. Oder man Lust hat auf versteckte Orte. Weil man Lust hat auch auf diese Person. /ehm/ Und dann auch an stille Orte fährt. .. Vielleicht ist das romantisch. [28-year-old German Masters student in Sociology (high-school degree)]

As the reports of respondents in this study suggest, the educational level does not seem to stipulate the “romantic competence” of individuals. As observed above, not only do both cultural capital groups apply clichés to communicate their attempts to engender romance, but their experiences of romance do not seem to diverge.⁹³ Respondents with high and low levels of education described romance as the experience of realizing how much one is cherished or how much one cherishes the other, and the experience of communion. Therefore, to depart from Illouz’s assertion, regardless of an individual’s cultural or economic capital, romance remains in modernity a possibility for everyone.

In her study, Illouz (1997:253) states that the disdain of the middle- and upper-middle-class respondents was expressed not only toward romantic conventions and the consumption of romantic products but also toward emphatic expressions of emotion. Alluding to Bourdieu, Illouz (1997:253) observes that emotional distance to aesthetic forms is a common attitude among individuals with high cultural capital, and therefore, in contrast to the least formally

⁹³ Also in regard to courtship practices, no significant difference between the amorous experience of the more educated and less educated respondents in the regional samples could be observed. Although individuals from group A expressed themselves more eloquently in the interviews than individuals from group B, the content of their reports on courtship experiences did not diverge from the courtship dynamics of the regional groups identified in the previous chapter. For example, Julho, a journalist, described like Flávia, a high-school graduate, how women tend to play “hard to get” in Brazil – see page 72; and Max, a holder of an Ausbildung Degree, described the same dynamic of “concealing interest” during courtship as Sybille or Karl, both Masters students – see page 58.

educated classes, who tend to make emotional-based evaluations of romantic products, the middle and upper-middle classes tend to favor “objective” evaluations of those.

Although one may expect that those who are or were in an academic institution have learned to regard cultural productions as aesthetic forms that can be analyzed, and therefore to regard them critically and with emotional distance, it must be observed that the reports of respondents on romance in this study, independent of their cultural capital, did not lack emotion. The different conclusions observed in this study and Illouz’s study may lie in the methodology, since while Illouz’s sample was above all from the academic milieu, and she sought opinions of cultural products commonly regarded as romantic, such as images, cards and stories, the reports of the present study were based on personal experiences, and although most of the respondents have a tertiary education, many of them do not work in academic institutions.

In focusing on the relationship between love and the market, Illouz (1997) seems to have overlooked the fact that what makes an experience romantic is not the consumption of amorous commodities in itself, but the meanings individuals attribute to commodities and their consumption, or the individual ability to turn common situations into special ones, by allowing themselves to disconnect from ordinary matters and to enjoy the moment. Therefore, a meal on a balcony may be more romantic than a meal in a chic restaurant; a cheap gift that has more meaning for the couple may be more romantic than an expensive one; a book may be a nice present, but it becomes a romantic one when it involves a special subject for the person and even more romantic when the giver reads along; and a trip may be romantic only when the couple is able to disconnect from ordinary problems.

The following statement by Ursel also helps to illustrate how romance seems to lie not in the consumption of a commodity, but in the meaning that this commodity has for the individuals and how ordinary events can turn into romantic ones according to the meaning individuals attribute to them. When asked what she thinks about the relationship between romance and consumption, Ursel answered that she does not see it in her relationship. She observed that she likes to travel and never needed much money for it, since she used to carry a tent and hitchhike. Today, because of her and her husband’s jobs they still travel a lot, and since accommodation is usually included, they still do not need much money for that. She observed that she works in tourism and was invited to get to know a hotel on an island; her husband went with her and they enjoyed the trip together, which for her was a romantic experience. According to Ursel, romance has nothing to do with money, but with the shared experience of something beyond the everyday, like a visit to a restaurant, which is a luxury that one cannot afford that often. Further in her interview, she reported that when she wants to create a romantic moment with her husband she prepares the bathtub, puts in some fragrant oil, lights some candles and invites him to bathe with her.

Ursel: Ich glaube das ist bei uns ein bisschen anders, weil.. er reist schon sehr viel durch seinen Job. Als Capoeiralehrer ist man einfach viel unterwegs. Ich liebe schon immer das Reisen und brauche zum Reisen aber nicht viel Geld. Also ich stelle mich an die Straße, also jetzt inzwischen nicht mehr, aber früher. Ich habe mich an die Straße gestellt, bin getrampt und habe mein Zelt dabei gehabt. Das heißt, ich brauchte so gut wie gar kein Geld zum Reisen. Deswegen... /ehm/ für ihn ist es normal

und dadurch ist, glaube ich, das Reisen an sich.. kostet uns auch nicht viel, weil er ja Geld verdient, wenn er reist. Deswegen, das ist schon mal so ein Punkt. Aber es ist z. B. romantisch für uns, wenn wir aufgrund meiner Arbeit kann es halt passieren, dass ich mal irgendwie in ein Hotel eingeladen werde oder irgendein Land oder eine Insel kennenlernen muss. Also ich arbeite im Tourismus. Und ihn dann mitnehmen zu können, das ist natürlich für uns auch Romantik. Wir waren z. B. auf Malta ein paar Tage. Eigentlich rein privat, aber offiziell war es geschäftlich, weil ich die Insel kennenlernen musste. ((lachen)) Und das ist dann schon wieder romantisch. Aber hat nicht unbedingt vordergründig mit Geld zu tun. Und /ehm/.. was Restaurants angeht? Ok, aber ich glaube das ist eher so.. also abends auszugehen oder in ein Restaurant zu gehen, ist halt irgendwo ein Luxus den man sich nicht oft leistet und dadurch wird es schon wieder romantisch, weil es etwas Besonderes ist. Ich glaube, alles was etwas Besonderes ist, hat irgendwo mit Romantik zu tun. [...] für mich ist eine romantische Situation z. B. okay, lass uns zusammen baden. Ich bereite das Bad vor, stelle irgendwie ein Duft Öl und ein paar Kerzen hin und so was. [29-year-old German conference and event planner (Masters degree)]

Although no particular correlation between cultural capital and amorous experience could be observed in this investigation, what Illouz (1997:286) described as the “romantic competence” of individuals who had earned degrees beyond the college level, professionals as well as cultural specialists, i.e. common abilities such as “choosing a tasteful greeting card, writing a love note in clear but moving prose, carrying on an ‘intelligent’ conversation, avoiding clichés, and so on” (Illouz 1997:262), could be observed in this study above all among German respondents, independent of their cultural capital. This data is presented and discussed next.

7.2. Romance and regional differences

Descriptions of romance, such as the experience of realizing how much one is cherished or how much one cherishes the other and the experience of communion, could be found in the reports of both cultural capital groups and regional groups. As observed previously, individuals from both cultural capital groups mentioned clichés used to create romantic situations. Rejections of romantic clichés appeared in the report from individuals with both high cultural capital and low cultural capital, as can be observed in the reports of the German Masters student in Literary and Cultural Studies Ulla (high-school degree) on page 202, in which she states that roses and tacky music in background are ludicrous, and in the report of the Brazilian fight tutor Guilherme (high-school degree) on page 189, in which he affirms his dislike of flowers and candles. Nevertheless, German respondents, but also of Brazilian respondents when reporting about Germans, reported that individuals in Germany tend to be more critical than individuals in Brazil about romantic clichés and commodities. As the reports of the respondents suggest, following the rule “the less, the better”, individuals in Germany seems to favor simple and spontaneous romantic situations and to be critical of “exaggerated” expressions of romance. The Bachelors student in music Lina (high-school degree), for example, who in her statement on page 188 mentioned having arranged a surprise candlelight dinner, with a handwritten card and sliced tomatoes in a heart shape for a romantic moment, observed at another point in her interview that although she thinks that Germans and Brazilians have a similar understand of romance, she believes that Germans are a little bit

“uptight” about it or they are afraid that the situation could become tacky or ridiculous, while Brazilians tend to see romantic situations as less complicated, to take them more lightly and to regard romance as somehow a beautiful and cozy moment of togetherness.

Lina: *Hu. /ehm/ Mhm. Also, ich glaube /ehm/ schon ein ähnliches Verständnis von Romantisch. Aber/ehm/ ich glaube die Deutschen sind da so ein bisschen /ehm/ verklemmter oder. Vielleicht. Haben eher Angst vor Romantik. Das sie denken, dass könnte jetzt unglaublich kitschig und albern werden. Und Romantik: “Ach, ist doch nichts, weil das ist doch alles kitschig und albern.” Und die Brasilianer auch Romantik sehen, aber als. Also, weniger kompliziert. Oder also. Also, sich weniger komplizieren, sondern Romantik ist einfach irgendwie schön und gemütlich beisammen sein und. Als, locker und ehrlich miteinander umgehen ohne dass das jetzt alles so wahnsinnig gekünstelt irgendwie sein muss oder so. [25-year-old German Bachelors student in music (high-school degree)]*

The German bank financial manager Max (Ausbildung degree) brought up the same point as Lina in his interview when observing that his Brazilian wife appreciates his attempts at romance – like spreading rose petals on the bed, creating a romantic light, lighting candles and so on – more than his previous German girlfriends. According to Max, his Brazilian wife is more sensitive to those romantic acts and unlike German women, she feels good about it.

Max: *[...] Wobei ich glaube... /eh/ Manu, ich kann jetzt nur von Manu sprechen, dass sie diese, wenn ich jetzt romantische Sachen mache, beispielsweise.. Rosenblätter aufs Bett streue oder romantische Beleuchtung anmache, Kerzen anmache usw., dass das von ihr, unter Umständen, mehr geschätzt wird als von einer deutschen Frau. [...] Also das sie dafür empfänglicher ist. Dass sie sich dann wohler fühlt, als beispielsweise eine deutsche Frau. [43-year-old German bank financial manager (Ausbildung degree)]*

The Brazilian Masters student in Art History, Rosa (Bachelors degree), who in her statement on page 201 described a day trip with a partner as a romantic moment, reported like Lucia in her statement on page 191, that Germans tend to regard simple things as romantic and to reject exaggerated displays of romance. According to her, Germans may regard as romantic a picnic in a park surrounded by a lot of screaming kids, or an ordinary meal just because the cook decided to eat on the balcony rather than in the kitchen and put an ordinary candle on the table. For Rosa, Brazilians on the other hand need more staging, like eating dinner on the balcony, but previously decorating it with hearts and laying cloth napkins and a scented candle on the table, which she believes would be regarded by Germans as frightening and excessive. As she observed, a German may regard the situation as theatrical, and what you thought would be a success, like putting flowers on the table, dimming the lights and lighting a vanilla-scented candle because it is arousing, can become a disaster. Germans’ critical opinion of that romantic staging, observed Rosa, may lead them to react negatively to the arrangement, which, for the one who stages romance, feels like a “cold shower”.

Rosa: */ehm/ Eu acho que o alemão, ele pode interpretar, às vezes, como um momento romântico algo bem simples, e que o brasileiro talvez não interprete.*

Entrevistadora: *Como assim?*

Rosa: *Não sei. Eu acho que para um alemão pode ser coisa do tipo, um piquenique a dois no Victoria Park e o clima ali, ele interpretar aquilo ali como um clima romântico, apesar de ter trezentas crianças gritando ao redor, aquelas coisas realmente de um parque. Não sei. Ou só porque você cozinhou e hoje não vai comer na cozinha, vai comer na varanda, e você botou, sei lá, uma velinha aqui. Não é uma vela bonita com perfume, não. Sei lá. Ascender um fósforo. E ele interpretar isso como algo de especial e desse especial ele parti para o romântico. O brasileiro, eu acho que ele já precisa de uma encenação maior.*

Entrevistadora: *Como assim?*

Rosa: *Por exemplo, não só vir comer na varanda, mas ele chega aqui à varanda está enfeitada com corações, com guardanapo de p a n o, com uma vela p e r f u m a d a. Não sei. Com todo um mise-en-scène. E às vezes, eu acho que essa coisa maior para o alemão, passa a ser assustadora e übertreibende.*

Entrevistadora: *Exagerado*

Rosa: *É, é. Exagerado. E ele começa a achar teatral. E aí pode sair o seu tiro pela culatra, quer dizer, se você faz isso propositalmente, “Ah, vou botar aqui flores hoje, vou deixar tudo aqui escurinho, só vai ter uma luzinha aqui, vou botar um cheiro de baunilha de não sei das quantas, porque é excitante “bá-bá-bá”, seu tiro pode sair totalmente pela culatra. E aí entra o que a gente já falou lá da crítica do alemão, dele tipo, abrir a porta e falar assim “Nossa! Para que isso tudo?”. E aí é aquele balde de água fria. [38-year-old Brazilian Magister student in Art History (Bachelors degree)]*

Like Ulla on her statement on page 202, Ruth, a German research assistant and PhD student (Masters degree), also reported how she spurns romantic clichés. She observed that she is not a romantic person and that her first German boyfriend attempted to create romance through flowers, cards and candles, which she experienced as “really terrible” and after he noticed that she did not fall for it, he gave up. According to Ruth this cliché form of romance is “totally stupid”. Experiences of communion seems to be for her real romantic experiences, since she observed in her interview that she had really romantic moments with her Brazilian boyfriend during their trip through Brazil, or when they had a nice dinner together, engaged in conversation and had fun, or when they made a barbecue with friends on the beach while playing guitar. For Ruth it was all romantic because it happened without planning, thus she is skeptical about “planned romance”.

Ruth: */ehm/ Ja, mit meinem ersten Freund hatte ich romantische Erfahrungen die fand ich aber ganz schlimm, weil ich eigentlich nicht romantisch bin. Also, ..so. Und mit meinem zweiten Freund hatte ich das nicht. Und mit Pedro habe ich das auch nicht wirklich. Aber das finde ich auch nicht schlimm. Also, ich bin wie gesagt nicht so der romantische Typ. Also, so dieses.. Kerze anmachen. Das ist irgendwie nicht so ganz meins. Wie gesagt, das hat der Erste /ehm/ am Anfang versucht. Nachdem er bemerkt hat, damit kann man bei mir keine Blumen gewinnen, hat er das sein lassen. [...] was auf jeden Fall total romantisch war, waren Teile unseres Urlaubes in Brasilien. Also. Aber das ist glaube ich. Also, ja das auf jeden Fall. [...] Also, bei dem Deutschen war das wirklich so eher dieses Klischee- Denken. Ja. Also, so was weiße ich, Rosen und Blumen und Briefe und Kerzen. Und das finde ich ja. Also, das ist halt so eine Art von Romantik die ich nicht mag. Weil ich die .. einfach total blöd finde. Und mit Pedro ist es eher so was/ehm/ ... Keine Ahnung ein schönes Abendessen wo wir uns einfach gut unterhalten haben und irgendwie Spaß hatte, es war gute Musik. Also, das war dann. Also, so was ist dann eher für mich in dem Sinne romantisch. Und für ihn glaube ich auch. Weil Pedro. Also, diese ganzen Klischee Romantikgeschichten auch nicht macht und nicht mag. Oder weiß nicht am Strand sitzen und ... Ja, mit Freunden irgendwie da am Strand grillen. Oder was heißt am Strand also, da vorm Strand. Weil direkt darf man ja nicht. Und da dann einfach da zu sitzen und der Eine spielt Gitarre. Und einfach dazu. Das fand ich dann auch romantisch. Aber es ist jetzt nicht, sagen wir mal etwas geplant war, sondern eher was sich so zu sagen ergibt. Geplante Romantik finde ich schwierig. ((lachend)) [31-year-old German research assistant and PhD student in Linguistics (Masters degree)]*

Like Ruth, the German engineer and Masters student Heiner (Masters degree) also observed that romantic moments cannot be planned, that they are, rather, spontaneous. He noticed that he had never heard of a planned romantic moment being successful.

Interviewerin: *Hattest du schon probiert eine romantische Erfahrung zu produzieren oder eine romantische Situation zu produzieren?*

Heiner: ... Ne, eigentlich nicht. ((lachen)) Das ist eher spontan. ((lachen)) [...] Das kommt aus dem Moment. Wie gesagt, ich mache eh gerne Sachen. ((zögerlich)) Insofern.. ist es nicht so.. ich denke, so emotionale Momente passieren eher als dass man die plant. Umso mehr man so was.. plant, oder wenn man jetzt sagt, wir gehen an dem Tag essen und da passiert irgendwas.. also.. ich weiß nicht. Habe ich noch nie erlebt, dass ich gehört habe, dass das gut gelaufen wäre. ((lachen)). Ich würde eher sagen das passiert spontan. [31-year-old German MBA student and engineer (Masters degree)]

The Masters student in Political Sciences Karl (high-school degree), who in his statement on page 199 described experiences of communion-like shared experiences and shared interests as romantic and emphasized surprise as an important feature in romantic moments, observed at another point in his interview how he, like Ruth and Heiner above, regards spontaneity as a feature of romantic experiences and how he does not like “scheduled romance”. He expressed his disdain for Valentine’s Day and romantic symbols and observed that he does not understand the significance Brazilians give to Valentine’s Day. As Karl explained, his birthday occurs on Valentine’s Day in Brazil and if he wanted to celebrate his birthday that day, only singles would come to his party, since committed people in Brazil reserve the day and the evening for their partners. He observed that he would be happy to be invited to a party on Valentine’s Day and have the chance to celebrate with a lot of people, to get to know new people, which for him would also be a perfect moment to share with a girlfriend.

Karl: Richtig. Auf jeden Fall. Momente teilen, die beide als besonders empfinden und Momente werden ja nur dann wirklich besonders wenn sie eben ein Stück weit spontan sind. finde ich. Deswegen bin ich z. B. ü b e r h a u p t kein Fan dieses Valentine’s day. Wo man einen Tag im Jahr hat, wo dann zu der Uhrzeit man das und das macht. Das hat für mich nichts von Romantik. [...] Es gibt Terminplaner-Romantik. Das hat für mich wenig Bedeutung in der Romantik. Es ist natürlich wichtig, dass man irgendwie sich das zeigt, man braucht ja dafür keinen Tag um das zu machen. Man kann das ja im ganzen Jahr machen, man muss ja nicht unbedingt so..... Symbolische Romantik ist das, genau. Von symbolischer Romantik bin ich nicht so ein Fan davon und ich habe es auch nie verstanden hier..... Dia dos namorados (Valentinstag) heißt das ja glaube ich. Dia dos namorados ist mein Geburtstag in Brasilien. Ich habe am 12. Juni Geburtstag. [...] Das heißt, wenn ich am 12. Juni in Brasilien, da wollte ich meine Geburtstagsfeier machen, alle Leute die in einem Pärchen sind kommen nicht zu meiner Geburtstagsfeier! Wo ich immer nicht verstanden habe, wieso nicht? Weil man kann doch zu meiner Geburtstagsfeier kommen und da eine romantische Zeit zusammen haben. Aber für die brasilianischen Pärchen schien das.. die müssen alleine sein am dia dos namorados und dann den Abend zusammen verbringen und solche Sachen. .. Und das ist z. B. eine Sache, die mit meiner Vorstellung von Romantik gar nichts zu tun hat. Ich würde mich freuen, wenn ich am dia dos namorados ich eine Einladung kriege zu einer Geburtstagsfeier wo ich weiß da sind 40, 50, 60 Leute, da ist eine Riesenparty, da lerne ich viele Leute kenne, da ist viel los und solche Sachen. Das wäre für mich der perfekte Moment um mit meiner Freundin dorthin zu gehen. [27-year-old German Masters student in Political Science (high-school degree)]

The disdain of individuals in Germany for romantic clichés and commodities could also be observed in the analyses of the questionnaire filled out at the interview. It attempted to evaluate among other subjects the interest of respondents in the subject of romantic love in the media – books, television programs and the internet. It could be observed that the interest of the German respondents in the subject of romantic love was unremarkable, since most of them do not devote themselves to the subject in their leisure time. No German respondents admitted reading romance novels frequently or using the internet to get to know people or to flirt. Only three German respondents admitted watching television programs about love, and they mentioned romance films, the German soap opera *Nur die Liebe zählt* and the English

series *King of Queens*. The interest of the Brazilian regional group in the subject romantic love, however, was considerable, since nine Brazilian respondents devoted themselves to the subject romantic love in their leisure time. Four respondents admitted reading romance novels frequently, though two of them could not remember the title of the last book they had read. Three other respondents admitted watching television programs about love and mentioned as examples romantic films, erotic films and the German reality show *Bauer sucht Frau*. And two other respondents admitted using the internet to get to know people or to flirt through Facebook, Orkut, Twitter, msn, Skype, and email.

In such a context of advanced individualization as in Germany, where individuals enjoy high autonomy and social security and are encouraged to focus on their own subjective world, interests and desires – and usually have the means to realize them – and where the discourse of the supremacy of the mind over the body has been widely disseminated, the individual desire for creative and singular expressions of romance seems to increase in conjunction with the strong critique of romantic clichés and commodities. As was already noted in the initial phase of this study, during the exploration of the field, the analysis of the questionnaire of German high-school students revealed that even high-school students in Germany tend to be critical of romantic clichés and to expect creative and singular expressions of love, since some of them also reported that a hand-written letter has more value than a printed one and that a gift must be creative.

As the reports of respondents suggest, individuals in Germany seems to invest more creative effort in preparing a romantic situation than individuals in Brazil, whether by reflecting on the meaning of a gift – as could be observed in the statements of Lucia on page 191 and Vanessa on page 193 – or by handcrafting something unique – as could be observed in the statement of Flávia on page 187 about how her German husband turned her anniversary into a special day; or in the statement of Lina on page 188 about her preparation of a special dinner, although she does not like to cook, and the handwritten card and video she produced for her boyfriend; or in the statement of Heiner on page 196 about the handcrafted gift he gave his Brazilian girlfriend on the day of their farewell. The conference and event planner Ursel (Masters degree), for example, who in her statement on page 194 described the moment she and her Brazilian boyfriend came together as romantic, observed in her interview that she likes to give and to receive gifts, but that for her the important gifts are the spontaneous ones, because the giver simply thinks of the receiver, and not the compulsory ones for Christmas or birthdays which, for her, involve only consumption and no romance. As she observed further, it is much nicer to receive a gift that “comes from the heart”, which does not have to be expensive like a ring, but something handcrafted like a candle, or to spend a special evening together.

Ursel: Und Geschenke? ... Ich glaube da denken wir gleich. Also, klar, ich schenke gerne und kriege auch gerne Geschenke, aber es ist für mich nicht so wichtig, weil es ist oft einfach so, ein Geschenk gibt man an einem bestimmten Tag, weil jetzt gerade Weihnachten ist oder weil gerade Geburtstag ist. Und nicht, weil man gerade an den Menschen gedacht hat, in dem Moment wo ich jetzt irgendwas gesehen habe 'Ach das könnt ich doch für den und den mitnehmen'. Also ein spontanes Geschenk finde ich viel wichtiger als jetzt irgendwie, nur, weil jetzt Weihnachten ist. Und ich denke, das ist in unserer Gesellschaft sehr verbreitet. Es ist Weihnachten, okay, wir müssen jetzt alle

Geschenke kaufen. Oder Geburtstag. Und.. das hat für mich nichts mit Romantik zu tun. Das ist Konsum. Ein Geschenk, für mich, ist auch viel schöner vielleicht einfach ein Geschenk zu bekommen was einfach von Herzen kommt. Das muss nicht teuer sein oder es kann eine selbstgemachte Kerze sein. ((lachen)) Die dann schmilzt. ((lachen)) Oder halt einfach, das man sagt, okay man macht mal was Besonderes an einem Abend oder man nimmt sich Zeit füreinander. [...] Das ist mir dann viel wichtiger als jetzt irgendwie, was weiß ich, einen teuren Ring zu bekommen oder irgendwas in diese Richtung. [29-year-old German conference and event planner (Masters degree)]

The Brazilian primary school teacher Patrícia (Bachelors degree), who in her statement on page 195 described as romantic one of her anniversaries in which her German husband wrote “I love you” with rose petals on the floor, when asked if she sees differences in the romantic expression of Germans and Brazilians noted that in Germany it is usually something handcrafted. She observed that Germans spend more effort on romantic situations than Brazilians, with the example that while her husband bought roses, took them apart and locked the room, her Brazilian boyfriend made public verbal declarations of love and gave her gifts.

Patrícia: Agora me veio à cabeça esse negócio do Basteln. Realmente, aqui tem um esforço maior sim. Tanto que o Oliver, tanto que o que eu me lembro é o do Oli, o que ele fez. Imagina o trabalho que a pessoa não tem?! Comprar rosa, desfazer, trancar o quarto. Sim! É muito mais, é um esforço muito maior, requer um esforço muito maior. É verdade. Exatamente! Calho de ser exatamente isso. O Marcelo era mais declaração pública e me deu presente. O Oli não, ele fez o presente. [30-year-old Brazilian primary school teacher (Bachelors degree)]

In a context of advanced individualization processes and disseminated critiques of romantic clichés as in Germany, “creative efforts” seem to become an important feature of amorous expressions, a feature that must be able to transmit the intensity of one’s feelings.

In Brazil, on the other hand, where the individualization process has not progressed as far as in Germany; where individuals enjoy less autonomy and less social security, being more concerned about ordinary day-to-day needs and less encouraged to focus on their own subjective world, interests and desires – which they do not always have the means to realize; where gender inequality is high; and where the discourse of the supremacy of the mind over the body and critiques of romantic clichés and commodities are not strongly disseminated, the use of clichés and the consumption of romantic commodities seems to be an acceptable and desirable form of experiencing something extraordinary. Like Lucia in her statement on page 191, Detlev, Volker and Julho also believe that people in Germany are more critical of romantic commodities than people in Brazil, and the lack of criticism by the latter leads them to be more oriented toward market prescriptions of romance. In his interview, the German higher-education teacher Detlev (PhD degree) observed that while in Brazil people tend to arrange romantic moments, for example, by planning a trip, in Germany people tend not to plan romance, they tend to “enjoy the moment when it happens”. Like the respondents above, Detlev observed that he does not like planned romance, and he rejects commercial offers of “romantic evenings”, since for him romance will never arise in such an arranged situation.

Detlev: É, eu acho que, comparando as duas mulheres assim, eu acho que pra ela aqui, ela estava mais na busca disso, de romantismo. Sim. Ela tava buscando isso, como se ela precisasse disso pra cumprir alguma necessidade. Já que lá, eu não tenho tanta lembrança disso. Foi mais uma situação que a gente usava quando ela se apresentou. Ela pegou com as duas mãos, mas não era uma busca do romantismo. Não corremos atrás do romantismo. “Ah, vamos marcar?” Nunca, nunca tivemos estas ideias, que realmente tiveram no Brasil, de marcar uma coisa. Aí um final de semana num lugar, três ou cinco estrelas. Essa ideia de fazer assim.

Entrevistadora: *De produzir uma situação romântica?*

Detlev: *Isso. De organizar romantismo. Aqui, eu percebi que as pessoas tentam organizar romantismo. Criar situações românticas. E lá, eu percebo mais que as pessoas utilizam quando se apresenta, agarra mesmo, aproveita. Mas não organiza. Nunca. Mas isso também tem a ver comigo também. Muito. Eu não gosto de pacote turístico de, aqui uma noite romântica. Quando eles escrevem "inclusive uma noite romântica", muito obrigado! Romantismo pra mim não vai surgir nesse momento, assim organizado. Isso eu percebi bem mais aqui. Ela tava muito a fim dessa ideia. [37-year-old German higher-education teacher (PhD degree)]*

The German manager of research and development Volker (PhD research) observed that his Brazilian partner was an exception for Brazilian behavior, since she did not like romantic clichés. For him women in Brazil consider it romantic to wear a beautiful dress, to go out to dinner, to go to the theater, or to spend the honeymoon in an apartment with a whirlpool in a city that advertises romance. Like Detlev, Volker spurns such romantic clichés and commodities and regards them as excessive in Brazil.

Volker: *Eu acho que... brasileira tem mais clichê. De romântico. Eu tive sorte que a minha ex-namorada, entendeu, brasileira, tinha também esse sentimento de... ela não queria sair para um restaurante com jantar de velas, e essas coisas todas, ela não queria isso nunca, quase nunca. Mas ela sentia mais romântica também no meio do mato, vendo algum bichinho, não sei o que. Ou passando a noite lá, eu fazendo amor até no meio do mato, lá. A coisa mais romântica possível, mesmo com todos os mosquitos, carrapatos ((risos))... E... eu tive muita sorte porque esse era uma cúmplice, mesmo. E... mas a maioria das brasileiras que eu conheci... acho que eles... a maioria tem esses clichês, "ah, romântico é uma coisa... ah, vestido muito bonito, restaurante, ou depois de um teatro, alguma coisa...", mas só isso. E não esse... tivemos também às vezes, nos vestimos muito bem, fomos ao teatro, depois fomos jantar bacana, mas não era o... o top do romance. Mas acho que para a maioria das brasileiras é isso. Ou se eu vejo... o lado mais consumista, se eu vejo essas cidades horrorosas, como Campos do Jordão, ou... que eles estão fingindo "ah, passamos a lua de mel lá, nesses lugares, lá tem hidromassagem, apartamento não sei o que, com vista não sei o que, e lareira, tatata". Em São Francisco Xavier, todas essas coisas, achando... nossa, isso para mim não teria nenhum valor romântico, passar um tempo disso, nesses lugares. Quando eu fui para São Francisco Xavier eu fiquei em uma das pousadas mais afastadas, mais simples, para poder sair muito cedo na manhã e ir procurar os macacos. Isso era para nós a coisa mais romântica, porque encontramos os macacos lá, que é muito difícil encontrar. Aí ficamos ao lado da cachoeira, vendo os macacos e ainda depois fizemos amor lá. Coisa mais maravilhosa do mundo, não pode ser... não existe um melhor lua de mel que isso. E... mas eu vi toda essa infraestrutura na cidade, o conceito de passar a lua de mel nesses... coisas, acho que é muito exagerado e muito clichê aqui. [46-year-old German manager of research and development (PhD degree)]*

Julho, a Brazilian Masters student and journalist (Bachelors degree) reported with irony the focus of Brazilian women on romantic commodities. According to him, women in Brazil regard a man as romantic when he provides for them. They expect a "prince", but not an ordinary one; it must be a prince who comes well-dressed, on a winged unicorn from a superpower, and despite all his power, he will dismount from his horse to greet the princess. For Julho women in Brazil expect men to take them to the best place on earth, to the most beautiful house, to the chicest hotels, to the most beautiful beaches. According to him, men in Brazil do not dream of such things, they just want the "most beautiful woman". Further in his interview, Julho reported about his German girlfriend and reported how she was emotionally touched when she found a picture of him in her notebook, which he secretly put there. When regarding his German partners, Julho stated that they tend to find trips to the beach really romantic.

Julho: *Ah, eu acho que sim. Eu acho que no Brasil está mais ligado ao aspecto econômico, e ao cavalheirismo em geral, o romantismo. O homem tem que ser um provedor no romantismo, né, no*

máximo do romantismo idealista. O príncipe, pô, é u m príncipe, né. É um príncipe bem vestido, com um m e g a cavalo, um unicórnio se puder, né, alado. ((risos)) E de um reino, um reino f o d a, né. ((risos)) Entendeu? De um reino não, de uma super potência, né. ((risos)) E esse príncipe, apesar de todo o poder que ele tem, ele vai descer do cavalo para cumprimentar a princesa. Ele não vai cumprimentar ela lá de cima do cavalo, o que é de se esperar de um príncipe. Não. Para a princesa, ele vai descer, e ele vai levá-la. Esse é o romantismo feminino, né. Levar para os m e l h o r e s lugares do mundo, para a casa m a i s bonita nã nã nã, pros hotéis m a i s chiques lálálálálá, as praias mais lindas trálálá. Homem não sonha com essas coisas. Homem quer a mulher mais gata e pronto. [...] Ela gosta das pequenas coisas também. Por exemplo, a última coisa que ela adorou. Me ligou mais de meia-noite, para dizer que ela tinha encontrado uma foto 3x4 minha que eu coloquei dentro de uma agenda dela. Ela achou o m á x i m o. Ela estava nitidamente emocionada no telefone, coisa atípica, assim. E.. Romântico é, por exemplo, também. Eu acho que qualquer mulher gosta de flores, né. Flores, ou, férias. Alemães são muito ligados em férias, né. Então, férias românticas, ir para a praia. Qualquer porcaria de lugar que tenha praia, para alemã é uma coisa super romântica. ((risos)) [29-year-old Brazilian Masters student in Journalism (Bachelors degree)]

As observed in the previous chapter, in Brazil, where the exercise of sexuality is regarded as an expression of autonomy, where sexiness seems to have become a significant element of one's identity, the individual's desire to be acknowledged for one's body and sexual attraction seems to increase, and sexiness plays an important role in the Brazilian amorous code. As the repetitive mentions of sex and eroticism in the report of Brazilian respondents on romantic experiences suggest, sexiness seems to be also a constitutive – but not exclusive – feature of romance in Brazil. Maria, a Brazilian beautician (high-school degree), like Brazilian fight tutor Guilherme in his statement on page 189, when asked to report a romantic experience, first mentioned a sexual encounter. Guilherme found it romantic “to make out in the rain”, while Maria's romantic moment was “to make love under the stars”. She observed that she was in love with a man for a long time and after her divorce they started to date. According to Maria, they had a great passion for each other and one evening, after they came home from a disco, they started to make love on the patio of her house, where they fell asleep and were awoken up by the sunlight the morning after. When questioned about her romantic experiences with her German husband, Maria described as romantic the beginning of their relationship, when they were so lustful for each other that once, on their way back home from a trip, they drove out on the freeway into the woods and made love in the car. Another romantic situation at the beginning of their relationship, according to Maria, was an evening that they spent together in a park, since at the time she lived with her siblings and they had no privacy at home. She observed in her interview that her German husband is really romantic, that he brings her flowers once a month and never forgets important dates like her birthday or the anniversary of their marriage, and always gives her something on special dates – which was regarded above as tokens of love, i.e. as the experience of realizing how much one is cherished. When asked if she had ever attempted to create a romantic situation, Maria answered that she had done so a lot by wearing special clothes, with background music and “everything else”] – which suggested a sort of sexual or erotic situation.

***Maria:** Fazer amor debaixo das estrelas. ((risos)) foi uma noite muito linda, e eu era apaixonadinha. Isso eu já tinha me separado do meu primeiro marido, mas a gente tinha uma paixão bem grande. Foi o primeiro que eu tive, depois que eu me separei. E teve uma noite que a gente chegou à discoteca, e ele. Aí tinha, eu morava numa casa que tinha, era uma. Antigamente tinha umas galerias, onde fazia móvel e tudo, né. Aí foi muito lindo esse dia! Que a gente ficou debaixo. A gente*

começou a fazer amor e adormecemos ali, acordamos, o sol já estava nascendo ali, ali fora. Foi para mim a parte mais romântica que teve na minha vida foi essa.

Entrevistadora: *Então foi o encontro com uma pessoa especial?*

Maria: *Sim. É. Ele era especial para mim. E para mim foi assim, eu babava nele, né. E para mim foi muito gostoso esse dia. Foi ótimo! Maravilhoso! Eu não esqueci até hoje. ((risos))*

Entrevistadora: *E com alemão você não teve ainda uma experiência que você considere romântica?*

Maria: *Não. Tive, com o meu marido tive muito. Quando nos conhecemos, nós viajamos e voltando a gente parou o carro assim. Era muito tesão um com o outro, né. Paramos o carro assim na autoestrada, entramos na mata e fizemos amor dentro do carro mesmo. Assim, foi tudo. E um dia assim, foi logo quando a gente começou também, e aí fomos lá pra casa, e a gente morava com uma turma lá em casa, era quatro irmãs, eram seis pessoas que morava, e a gente não podia ir para casa, né. Aí a gente parou num parque perto da minha casa. Aí a gente pegou um forro lá de cama, né, colocamos lá e ali a gente ficou até o dia amanhecer. Foram muitas coisas boas. Assim, quando e conheci meu marido, foi tudo romântico, tudo era romântico.*

Entrevistadora: *Você está falando do seu marido atual, o alemão?*

Maria: *É, com meu marido atual, o alemão. Ele é muito romântico! Ele é aquele homem que dá flores para mim, entendeu? Que uma vez por mês ele traz flores para mim. Todas as datas, assim, data de casamento, todas as datas importantes, ele não esquece, sempre tem um presente. Sempre, sempre tem um presente em datas especiais.*

Entrevistadora: *E você já tentou produzir uma situação romântica?*

Maria: *Já. Já, muitas. ((risos))*

Entrevistadora: *E o que você fez para produzir uma situação romântica?*

Maria: *Roupas especiais, com música e tudo. [45-year-old Brazilian beautician (high-school degree)]*

The Brazilian visual artist Tiago (Masters degree), like Maria and Guilherme, also found it romantic “to have sex outdoors”. When asked whether it was necessary to have an erotic aspect to romance, Tiago denied this and stated that it must have an affectional aspect. In his opinion, it is not possible to have a romantic moment with someone with whom one does not have a sexual relationship.

Tiago: *Ah, isso que eu tô te falando assim, fazer sexo ao ar livre, acho super romântico, embaixo das estrelas.*

Entrevistadora: *Tem necessariamente a ver com um aspecto erótico ou não? Tem que haver um aspecto erótico numa situação romântica?*

Tiago: *Não. Tem que ter um aspecto afetivo.*

Entrevistadora: *Afetivo?*

Tiago: *Claro. Tem que ser uma pessoa com quem você esteja tendo uma relação. Senão no momento erótico, mas, você pelo menos está tendo uma relação.*

Entrevistadora: *Mas tem que ter a ideia de que pode ter algo erótico, é isso?*

Tiago: *A ideia de que pode ser ou que você já tenha. Eu acho que não tem como você ter um momento romântico com uma pessoa que você não tem uma relação sexual. [39-year-old Brazilian visual artist (Masters degree)]*

The Brazilian journalist Rodrigo (Bachelors degree), when reporting about his romantic experiences with his German wife and Brazilian partners observed that they bring an erotic dimension to a romantic situation in different ways, that while the former tends to create a

romantic atmosphere with lights and so on, Brazilian women tend to seduce through their appearance by putting on a dress and high heels.

Entrevistadora: *E você acha que a brasileira e a alemã entendem "romântico" de formas diferentes?*

Rodrigo: *Ah, eu acho que sim, (?). São culturas diferentes, né, são formações, assim...*

Entrevistadora: *E você saberia dizer o que é diferente? Porque por exemplo, você falou que a Janine cria, tenta criar todo esse ambiente com luzinhas, com não sei o que... e a brasileira, o que ela tentava fazer para criar uma situação romântica?*

Rodrigo: *Eu acho que a brasileira já ia botar um vestido como, né...*

Entrevistadora: *Decotado, é isso?*

Rodrigo: *Decotado, um salto alto... já ia cair naquela coisa mais do... do erótico, é.*

Entrevistadora: *E a alemã cria mais uma atmosfera de fantasia, é isso?*

Rodrigo: *É, é. Não que também ela não trabalhe essa coisa do erótico, mas, vamos dizer assim, que trabalha, assim, de outra forma, né. [41-year-old Brazilian journalist (Bachelors degree)]*

Marcelo, a Brazilian dance tutor (high-school degree), like Rodrigo, related romance to eroticism and seduction in Brazil. When reporting about romantic experiences with his Brazilian girlfriends he noticed that when watching a film at home they would always put on perfume, since they would be embraced during the film. In Germany, Marcelo observed that romance involved sitting at a table in the kitchen with candles, dining and drinking wine until both are more relaxed and ready for sex. Further in his interview, Marcelo observed that a romantic moment does not have to be erotic, but it must have an erotic atmosphere, the idea that sex could take place.

Marcelo: *Ah, brasileira sempre, sempre assim, a gente, é... a gente sempre fazia alguma coisa em casa com mais... assim, com mais espontaneidade, do que... assim, assistir uma televisão tinha que botar um perfume, tinha que botar um aroma, tal, para poder assistir, para a gente ficar mais abraçadinho, mais alguma coisa assim... aqui, tem, mas essa parte tem que ficar na mesa, na... na cozinha com uma vela, com velas, assim, mas jantando, tomando um vinho, para poder, né, desenrolar mais, depois que tãtã, depois que vai, mas não tem esse negócio de ficar mais espontâneo, tipo, você deitar num lugar assim, para ficar... sei lá, assistindo alguma coisa, assim, não, mais... mais formalzinho, assim, no início, né... [...]*

Entrevistadora: *Um momento romântico tem que ter necessariamente um aspecto erótico?*

Marcelo: *Não... tem que ter só o clima, né, o clima erótico, clima romântico, assim...*

Entrevistadora: *A ideia de que "pode ser", é isso?*

Marcelo: *É, a ideia que "pode ser", é... [31-year-old Brazilian dance tutor (high-school degree)]*

The Brazilian English teacher and Masters student Lucia (Bachelors degree), who in her statement on page 191 highlighted the attentiveness and creativity of her German boyfriend as romantic, reported at another point in her interview how she misses the sexual aspect in her relationship with him. She observed that during her stay in Germany at the beginning of their relationship she became startled by how he seemed to forget sex and to fulfill his romantic expectations only with friendship. According to her, in contrast to her Brazilian partners, her German boyfriend loves to talk about everything, and sometimes he is so focused on his intellectuality that he forgets that she is "not his friend", but his girlfriend.

Lucia: É. Só que também, a gente conversou um pouco lá em Berlim, porque também eu achei que em certos momentos que ele é. Assim, ele também dava valor de mais para a parte intelectual, né. Então, eu cheguei lá e a gente foi passear, visitar museus, visitar lugares, e ele contava tudo, e me explicava tudo, e de lá a gente foi beber vinho, e a gente continuava falando sobre Alemanha, Brasil e tal e tal e tal. E às vezes meio que esquece, entendeu, do sexo parece. E eu falei para ele algumas vezes “Eu não sou sua amiga.” Entendeu, às vezes eu me assustei um pouco com isso. Porque eu via assim, que ele suprindo toda a necessidade dele romântica, com a amizade. E pra mim não, eu precisava do sexo também, porque senão ele fica um excelente amigo e eu não estou com ele por amizade. Eu gosto dele, eu tenho um romance com ele. Então a gente já conversou um pouco sobre isso. E o homem brasileiro não, ele não conversa, ele transa, ou ele vê televisão, entendeu. Ou então ele está transando ou. Claro que conversa, né. Ah, você está viajando. Mas não é igual a ele. Ele conversa muito, todo tempo, sempre, todos os assuntos interessam, desde a culinária até o calor, tudo interessa, entendeu. Mas às vezes ele esquece do sexo, entendeu, porque está tão focado em toda a intelectualidade, em toda conversa e tudo, que aí é isso, né, repetindo, então eu digo assim “Olha só, eu não sou sua amiga, entendeu.” [47-year-old Brazilian English teacher and MBA student (Bachelors degree)]

As could be observed in this study, individuals in Germany and in Brazil seem to share the same understanding of romance as being the experience of realizing how much one is cherished or how much one cherishes the other and the experience of communion – which one may regard as a Western understanding of romance. Nevertheless, because of the different socio-historical trajectories of Germany and Brazil, and the particularities of their amorous codes, romance has certain nuances in each nation. While in Germany individuals seems in particular to spurn romantic clichés and commodities and to favor spontaneous, modest and creative romantic expressions, individuals in Brazil seems more frequently to accept and desire romantic clichés and commodities, to stage more romantic events and to regard sex and eroticism as constitutive – but not exclusive – features of romance.

Regarding an initial proposition of this investigation – Illouz’s assumption of a higher “cultural competence” for romance among individuals with a higher cultural capital – one may ask why the German sample in this study, independent of their level of education, shares the same disdain for romantic clichés and favors unique and creative romantic expressions and experiences as do the individuals with higher cultural capital in Illouz’s sample (Illouz 1997).

As observed above, the different socio-historical trajectories of Germany and Brazil seem to have led to differences in their amorous codes that lead to nuances in their romantic expression and experience, and the same can be expected for the United States of America, where Illouz conducted her investigation.

In the previous chapter it was suggested that liberal democratic discourses have been furthering the individualization process and that the different dissemination of democratic discourses in Germany and in Brazil have led in the former to a more advanced individualization process than in latter. Conjoined with the distinct feminist discourses disseminated in each region – in Germany the “intellectual discourse” of the supremacy of the mind over the body, and in Brazil the “sexual discourse” of the exercise of sexuality as an expression of autonomy – the individualization process in those countries gained different expressions and led consequently to different courtship dynamics in each country.

Regarding the trajectory of liberal democracy in the USA one can observe that the roots of democracy can be followed to the 18th century and, unlike in Germany and Brazil, the development of democracy was not interrupted by military dictatorships in the 20th century.^{94,95}

The beginning of the welfare state in the USA can be traced to the 19th century; however, it developed more intensely from the time of the administration of Franklin D. Roosevelt's government in 1933 (Hamby 2011:34, 196, 121, 219). Although the welfare state in Germany can also be traced back to the 19th century, it was more intensely developed with the reestablishment of democracy after the Second World War⁹⁶ – initially in West Germany and later in the entire country after the reunification of the nation in 1990. In Brazil, the establishment of a welfare state can be traced back to the 20th century, and it was more intensely developed only after the reestablishment of democracy in 1985.⁹⁷

Therefore, the USA presents a longer, uninterrupted tradition of democracy and welfare state than Germany and Brazil. Nevertheless, when regarding the Democratic Index offered by the Economist Intelligence Unit (2013), although the USA is classified like Germany among the full democracies, it is placed six positions below Germany in the ranking of Democracy, i.e. in 21st place, and 23 positions above Brazil. As the fifth report (2013) indicates, the USA presents, like Germany, a higher score of political culture than Brazil (GE/USA: 8.13 x BR: 4.38), a higher score than Germany and Brazil in political participation (GE: 6.67 x BR: 5.00 x USA: 7.22), but lower scores than Germany and Brazil in electoral process and pluralism (GE/BR: 9.58 x USA: 9.17) and in civil liberties (GE/BR: 9.12 x USA: 8.53), and like Brazil a lower score than Germany in the functioning of government (GE: 8.21 x USA/BR: 7.50).

With regard to the implementation of democracy, as the Human Development Index (HDI) offered by the United Nations Development Programme (2014) indicates, the USA ranks higher in Human Development than Germany, i.e. in the fifth position with a score of 0.914, and 74 positions above Brazil. However, when “discounting” the inequalities (IHDI), the USA falls to 28th place in the same ranking with a score of 0.755, while Germany rises one position in the ranking with a score of 0.846, and Brazil decreases 16 position in the ranking with a score of 0.542.

It seems that although the USA may have a great dissemination of democratic discourses due to its longer democratic trajectory and the establishment of a full democracy characterized by a high political culture and political participation, the experience of democracy through the implementation of a welfare state seems to be more of a reality in Germany than in the USA, as the IHDI indicates. Nevertheless, the experience of democracy is still much higher in the USA than in Brazil.

⁹⁴ https://www.bundestag.de/htdocs_e/artandhistory/history/parliamentarism.

⁹⁵ <http://revistacult.uol.com.br/home/2010/03/democracia-no-brasil-um-breve-historico/>.

⁹⁶ https://www.bundestag.de/htdocs_e/artandhistory/history/parliamentarism.

⁹⁷ <http://revistacult.uol.com.br/home/2010/03/democracia-no-brasil-um-breve-historico/>.

Perhaps the higher social inequality in the USA than in Germany may be a reason for the different romantic descriptions observed by Illouz (1997) between social classes. Although individuals in the USA enjoy higher prosperity and social security than in Brazil, it may still not be enough for those who do not enjoy the economic, social and cultural privileges of an academic education and therefore still need to worry more about their prosperity and social security than those who hold an academic degree and have more means to dedicate to their own subjective world, interests and desires. In other words, the working class would have less cultural and economic means than the upper and middle classes to invest in creative expressions and consequently the former would differ from the latter in evaluating romance in those terms.

Moreover, the feminist movement, which introduced democratic discourses into the private sphere, has also had a particular trajectory in the USA as it has in Germany and in Brazil. The second wave of feminism in the USA started in the 1960s, in the context of rising civil rights and the anti-Vietnam War movement, and extended itself into the 1990s.⁹⁸ Although sexual and reproductive rights were dominant issues in this phase, the movement was above all concerned with passing the Equal Rights Amendment to the constitution. Denouncing traditional forms of femininity as male prescriptions that restricted women's freedom and reduced them to objects, feminists started to reject bras, high heels, makeup and so on. In competition with other civil movements, the feminist one was easily marginalized and viewed as less important than, for example, the movement against the Vietnam War. By creating women-only organizations, feminists engaged in theoretical and political discussions to rid society of sexism. At that time the notion arose that "women, whether due to their long 'subjugation' or to their biology, were thought by some to be more humane, collaborative, inclusive, peaceful, nurturing, democratic and holistic in their approach to problem-solving than men".⁹⁹ In the 1980s the feminist movement suffered a depressed period.¹⁰⁰ The Equal Rights Amendment was defeated by 1982 and the national discourse became dominated by the conservative and hyper masculine rhetoric of the Reagan government. At the same time, minority groups among women, such as women of color, low-income women and immigrant women, did not have their causes adequately defended by the aging generation of predominantly white, upper-class activists, which led to dissent and the weakening of the feminist movement in the USA. In the mid-1990s a new wave of feminism informed by post-colonial and post-modern thinking emerged in the USA, questioning notions of "universal women", body, gender, sexuality and heteronormativity.¹⁰¹ Dissenting from the older feminists, this generation, re-signifying feminine beauty for themselves as subjects and no longer as objects of a sexist patriarchy, started to adopt high heels, cleavage and makeup as an expression of their autonomy, thus bringing sexuality once again to the foreground.

⁹⁸ <http://www.pacificu.edu/about-us/news-events/three-waves-feminism>.

⁹⁹ <http://www.pacificu.edu/about-us/news-events/three-waves-feminism>.

¹⁰⁰ <http://civilliberty.about.com/od/gendersexuality/tp/History-of-Feminism.htm>.

¹⁰¹ <http://www.pacificu.edu/about-us/news-events/three-waves-feminism>.

Despite the strong participation of women in social and political fields in the USA, according to the Gender Inequality Index (GII) provided by the United Nations Development Programme (2014), the USA is in 47th place in the rank, while Germany is in 3rd place and Brazil in 85th. As the GII (2014) indicates, feminism in Germany has achieved more autonomy for women than feminism in the USA and in Brazil and while women in Germany experience considerable equal relations to men in social life, in the USA and in Brazil the same is not the case.

As can be observed, democracy and feminism in the USA have a different trajectory than in Germany and in Brazil. Nevertheless, how their trajectories affect the American amorous code and how they work in the context of class can only be answered with appropriate investigation.

8. Conclusion

Grounded in the assumptions of the cultural paradigm (Reckwitz 1999, 2000) and the social construction of reality (Berger and Luckmann 1966), this study adopted a broad definition of love as a system of meanings and offered, in the theoretical chapter on love, a short description of the socio-historical construction of love in Western society, conjoining the contributions of different scholars on the subject.

In light of the individualization processes that have intensified in particular since the 18th century – through the emergence of an emotional moral order (Luhmann 1986), separation of the workplace and home and the sexual division of work (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 1990), the invention of home and maternity and the transformation of the child-parent relationship (Giddens 1992a), and the advent of a leisure culture (Illouz 1997) – it was suggested that the romantic form of love arose in modernity as a powerful system of meanings that on the one hand express the increasing “individualistic desires” – such as the affirmation of one’s singularity, the development of personal narratives and the celebration of a moral individualism – and on the other hand enables individuals to establish an understandable and intimate reality, to corroborate their identity and to experience the sacred.

Social changes in late modernity have, according to scholars, however, been leading to the impairment of romantic ideals, introducing new values into the lives of individuals, giving birth to a partnership form of love, intensifying the conflict between intimacy and individuality and leading to the secularization of love. In light of the lack of consensus among scholars with regard to love and the small number of studies on the subject in Latin America, as well as Illouz’s consideration that the educational level stipulates the “romantic competence” of individuals in contemporary society (Illouz 1997:286), the present study proposed to investigate how love has been practiced and signified in two distinct contexts, Brazil and Germany, and to ascertain the implications of cultural capital in the experience of love.

Grounded in the interpretivist ontological-epistemological approach (della Porta and Keating 2008:23-25) this study has followed the orientations of qualitative social research (Hesse-Biber and Levy 2006:14; Taylor and Bogdan 1998:3; Keller 2009:118; della Porta and Keating 2008:23-25). The first two lines of investigation in the field research, the observation of events for singles and the questionnaire on love given to high-school students, made clear that love is not an easy object of research. Regarded as a private experience, love cannot easily be asked about by strangers or observed in a public environment, and, moreover, it is regarded as natural and self-evident, making it difficult for people to report objectively about it. However, as observed in the acquaintance and friend groups of the researcher, foreigners could easily describe differences between their amorous experiences in their home country and with individuals in Germany. These conclusions led to the third line of investigation in this study: interviews with individuals who are or were in a binational relationship (Germany and Brazil), which became the main source of data for discussion.

The presentation of the data began in the chapter *Courtship: observing the formation of intimate relationships*, in which a report of the observations conducted at events for singles in Germany and in Brazil was presented. The main observations, an illustration of the courtship situation in both regions and the inferences drawn from the data were presented. Based further on the observation of events for singles and the reports of respondents about their courtship experiences, a description of the face-to-face courtship process between heterosexual strangers was offered in the chapter *The courtship process: grasping the meanings behind courtship*, in order to better identify the similarities and differences between the regional groups during the establishment of intimate relationships. As could be observed, the courtship process seems to consist of three phases: the prelude, approach and development of a relationship.

During the prelude phase, the two parties become aware of each other and rely on non-verbal communication, especially eye contact, to signalize their interest in courtship. As the data suggested, in order to express their interest individuals in Germany tend to use alternating eye contact and less body language, while individuals in Brazil tend to establish steadier eye contact, to use more body language and to express their sexual desire more frequently. The subtler expression of interest on the part of Germans, according to respondents, seems to leave more doubts about the common interest between the parties in the prelude phase than the open expression of interest usually exhibited by Brazilians. As also observed in the prelude phase, people in Germany tend to attribute more importance to the establishment of eye contact before approaching someone and tend to engage in such nonverbal interaction for a longer time than people in Brazil, leading consequently to a longer prelude phase in the former region than in the latter.

The approach phase is when the couple come together and engage in verbal communication, making preliminary physical contact and demanding a definition of the encounter. As the observation and reports of respondents indicated, men are usually the ones who initiate the approach in both Germany and Brazil. However, with regard to women in both nations, it seems that in Germany women tend to approach men more often than in Brazil. The subtlety of the expression of interest observed between individuals in Germany during the prelude phase seems to repeat itself in the approach phase. As observed in the data, while individuals in Germany tend to wait to approach the admired person until they are “coincidentally” in the same place, such as the dance floor, the bar or the smoking area, and also to pretend that the approach was a casual encounter in order to disguise their interest in courtship, individuals in Brazil tend to not wait long after eye contact to approach the admired person – in the event that they do not skip eye contact altogether – and they tend to be open about their interest in courtship by, for example, walking directly to the person, or making early compliments on their physical appearance or applying endearments during the conversation.

The conversational subjects broached at the beginning of an encounter seem also to vary between the regional groups. As observed, in order to continue disguising their interest in courtship, individuals in Germany would tend to first broach ordinary subjects – factual descriptions such as age, job, study, place of residence, tastes, the venue they are in or the

event they are taking part in, as well as discussions on public subjects like politics, news and science – and only later would they engage in intimate communication. In Brazil, however, individuals would tend to approach more intimate subjects right away – such as relationship status, family and physical appearance.

The amount of preliminary physical contact also seems to vary between the regional groups. As observed, while individuals in Germany would take longer to engage in physical contact and men in Germany would often wait for women to initiate it, in Brazil individuals would touch each other much sooner, usually already at the exchange of the first words, and men hardly ever waited for women to initiate contact. The form physical contact takes seems also to be different between the regional groups. While in Germany, in order to disguise their interest in courtship, individuals tend to “accidentally” touch each other when gesticulating, lighting a cigarette, handing over a drink or moving their feet under the table, in Brazil individuals tend to engage in physical contact more assertively, by caressing or embracing the other, or pulling the other near.

As observed throughout the data, individuals in Germany seem to maintain a conversation longer than individuals in Brazil before demanding a definition of the encounter, i.e. an objective expression of interest in the establishment of a more intimate relationship – sexual and/or affectional – thus usually rendering the approach phase longer in the former than in the latter region. As a usual objective expression of interest used by individuals in Germany and in Brazil, the passionate kiss tends to occur later during an encounter in Germany than in Brazil, and individuals in Germany may also postpone it to future encounters – i.e. dates – while individuals in Brazil usually tend to kiss deeply during the first encounter.

The development of a relationship is the phase that describes what happens after the kiss and how individuals establish a relationship. As a usual objective expression of interest in courtship, a kiss seems to communicate without doubt the sexual and/or affectional interest of the parties for each other and consequently changes the relationship between the parties. Nevertheless, as the data suggest, the physical intimacy achieved with a kiss seems to imply different things for the regional groups. While individuals in Germany tend to expect a more intimate relationship – a sexual and/or affectional one – after a kiss, in Brazil a kiss seems to be regarded exclusively as a momentary expression of sexual and/or affectional interest with no further implications. Consequently, individuals in Germany tend to expect a higher degree of openness and commitment to each other after a kiss and to demand a definition of the encounter fairly quickly, while individuals in Brazil tend to continue meeting and enjoying physical intimacy for a longer time before demanding a definition of the relationship.

The peculiarities observed in each regional group during the courtship process revealed how love may take on a particular expression in each nation. The chapter *Love and regional differences: the formation of regional amorous codes* offered an explanation for this, based on Bourdieu’s concepts of “field” and “habitus”. In light of the fact that each nation has a particular field constellation due to its particular socio-historical trajectory and that each field

has its own rules, some of them constitutive of the regional amorous code, variations in the expression of love in each nation are to be expected. As natives internalize the rules of the fields during their socialization process, the regional amorous code is constitutive of their habitus, which leads them to take amorous meanings and conducts as self-evident and “natural” and to remain unaware of them until confronted with foreigners, who present another amorous code.

Given that regional amorous codes result from the particular socio-historical trajectory of the nation and consequently its particular field constellation, the analysis of the reports of the regional groups looked for shared opinions and beliefs that seem to sustain the particular courtship practices, and which bind the members of the group together by engendering in them the feeling of communality. Two main systems of meanings could be identified in the reports of respondents that structured their courtship practices and led to specific courtship dynamics and conflicts: liberal democracy and feminism.

As argued, liberal democratic discourses play an important role in the process of individualization by promoting individual autonomy. However, these discourses achieve a higher expression when turned into practices when implemented as a political system and developed into a welfare state. With regard to the different socio-historical trajectories of democracy and of the welfare state in Germany and in Brazil, as well as the nations’ rankings in the Democracy Index (2013), in the Human Development Index (2014) and in the Inequality-adjusted Human Development Index (2014), it was suggested that liberal democratic discourses are more widely disseminated in Germany than in Brazil and that the individualization process in the former is consequently more advanced than in the latter.¹⁰²

As the data suggest, the different degrees of individualization in Germany and in Brazil – due to the different dissemination of democratic discourses in those nations – seem to lead individuals in Germany to become more concerned about the boundaries between the self and others and about protecting these boundaries than is the case for individuals in Brazil. This could be observed in the different perception of the regional groups regarding courtship practices. As the reports of respondents indicated, Germans tend more frequently to regard courtship practices – such as eye contact, mentions of physical appearance (compliments), personal conversation, touch, kissing – as acts of intimacy, and as incursions into the private sphere of the other, than Brazilians tend to. Consequently, unexpected or unsolicited acts of intimacy during courtship would tend to be perceived as offensive more by Germans than by Brazilians. More concerned about the boundaries of each other’s privacy and more concerned in protecting it than individuals in Brazil – due among other factors to the different degree of individualization promoted by the different development of democracy in those countries – Germans would be more cautious and subtle during courtship in order to avoid being regarded

¹⁰² Although the different rankings of democracy or human development may place the nations in a hierarchical order and suggest the idea of evolution, the present study does not share this perspective. The comparison of Germany and Brazil in those rankings attempts only to illustrate how different socio-historical trajectories lead to different field constellations, which engender different realities and particular understandings and practices of love.

as intrusive or disrespectful. Individuals in Brazil, however, less aware of the boundaries between oneself and others and less concerned in protecting them, would tend not to regard acts of courtship as incursions into the private sphere of the other, and they would be more assertive and open during courtship since they are not concerned with being perceived as intrusive or disrespectful.

With regard to the different socio-historical trajectories of feminism in Germany and in Brazil, as well as the nations' rankings in the Gender Inequality Index (2014), it was suggested that women in Germany enjoy more autonomy than women in Brazil. Nevertheless, as the reports of respondents indicated, the specific discourses disseminated by feminists in their struggle to improve women's conditions in each nation seem to affect most the amorous interactions and to engender specific courtship dynamics in each region.

The strong feminism in Germany and its broad institutionalization have enabled women to keep their fight against inequality active and visible in society. By disseminating their critique of traditional courtship practices and relying on discourses of the supremacy of the mind over the body, feminists have led both sexes to reject traditional courtship practices and to avoid expressions of sexuality in courtship and have consequently left them unsure about how to act during an encounter. As has been suggested, unsure about how to proceed, men and women in Germany have not only started to exchange active-passive roles in courtship interactions, e.g. with men leaving women to take the lead during the process, but they have also engendered a new courtship dynamic: to conceal interest. As observed in the description of courtship, individuals in Germany present not only a subtler expression of interest during courtship than individuals in Brazil, but they also attempt to disguise it by: favoring alternating eye contact, avoiding a direct approach, attempting to create an excuse to come closer, avoiding broaching intimate subjects, avoiding compliments on physical appearance and touching the other only subtly.

As the reports of respondents indicated, the disseminated discourses of the supremacy of the mind over the body in Germany, conjoined with the advanced individualization process, seem to increase the individual's desire to be acknowledged for his/her singular personality and to get to know the other's personal traits during courtship, therefore increasing the demand for communication during the process – which explains the observation that people in Germany tend to develop longer conversations during an encounter than people in Brazil.

Despite Giddens's (1992a:72, 96-97) suggestion that with the decline of the essentialist and complementary two-sex model and the rise of sexual emancipation the romantic game of seduction would come to an end, this study observed that at least in Germany, notwithstanding the strong impairment of traditional gender roles and the lesser inequality between the sexes, courtship remains a playful interaction, though following new rules. In Germany, where the discourses of the supremacy of the mind over the body are widely disseminated, where the courtship dynamic seems to depend on concealing interest and where the demand for communication is high, conversation seems to become the main instrument of seduction. By "playing with words" individuals in Germany attempt to express their interest in each other in a subtle and indirect form, as by applying a metaphor to offer a

compliment. As the data suggest, in a context of advanced individualization that praises the mind over the body, love seems to become a matter of merit, though measured not by one's brave deeds as during the middle ages, but rather by one's intellectual expression. Consequently, in such a context, "true" expressions of love become those that involve some "intellectual effort".

Sexuality, on the other hand, no longer desired to be performed in public in Germany, seems to become just a secondary feature of one's identity and a restricted, private, but also "primitive" experience. What once may have helped to bind individuals together seems today to have become a motive for shame, and consequently it seems to promote separation rather than connection. Pushed by the advanced individualization process and the disseminated discourses of the supremacy of the mind over the body, individuals in Germany crave communication and consequently seem to favor subjective intimacy over physical intimacy as the path to an intimate relationship.

In Brazil, as observed, the restricted institutionalization of the feminist movement in the academy and its dilution later among new discussions on gender failed to severely criticize traditional gender relations or to strongly diminish the inequality between the sexes. However, the movement achieved some benefits for women, in particular by increasing sexual emancipation. In a context of weakened feminist critique, traditional gender identities, and an increasing individualization process due to the developing democracy and welfare state, the feminist push for sexual emancipation seems to have led women in Brazil to regard the exercise of their "feminine sexuality" as an expression of autonomy.

As suggested, the focus on the exercise of feminine sexuality and consequently of masculine sexuality in Brazil seems to have increased the individual's desire to be acknowledged for his/her sexiness, i.e. for his/her body, appearance and sexual attraction. Nevertheless, in contradiction to the conclusions of Illouz (2012), who suggests that sexiness expresses the transformation of gender identities into sexual identities (Illouz 2012:45) and that sexiness is detached from a moral world of values (Illouz 2012:42), the data from this study indicated that in Brazil, where traditional gender identities still orient sexual relations, gender identities and sexual identities seems to remain one and the same, and double standards still seems to orient the individual's sexual life.

As noted in this study, due to the continuing classification of women into the categories of virtuous vs. licentious according to their sexual activity, women in Brazil are unable to experience their sexuality completely and therefore tend to restrict the courtship encounter to the kiss in order to maintain social approbation. Consequently, as observed in the description of courtship, while in Germany the kiss suggests the beginning of a development of a more intimate relationship – a sexual and/or affectional one – in Brazil it is usually regarded as an end in itself.

As the data suggested, the endurance of traditional gender identities in Brazil seems to lead individuals to sustain the traditional conquer–surrender dynamic of courtship, now boosted, however, by increasing sexual emancipation and the desire to be acknowledged for one's

sexiness. Women in Brazil may enjoy their sexuality more freely than before; however, in a context still dominated by men and their double standards, they seem to restrict their autonomy to more active conduct in provoking men into courtship, by attempting to seduce them through their body, appearance and gestures. Because of the intense and bold advances of men in Brazil, women have few options other than to lapse into a passive/defensive position during courtship. Nevertheless, since men and women in Brazil have been socialized in this dynamic, they do not know any differently, and therefore they tend to accept and also desire it.

As observed through the data, by following the tacit rule of “playing hard to get” during courtship, women in Brazil tend to feign disinterest at men’s advances during courtship, while the men attempt to persuade women verbally and physically to surrender to their sexual attraction. The strong individual desire to be acknowledged for one’s sexiness in Brazil seems to be responsible for the greater expression of sexuality, the open expression of sexual attraction and/or interest in courtship during an encounter – the use of direct eye contact, a direct approach also without previous eye contact, conversation about intimate subjects, compliments on physical appearance, assertive physical expressions of interest such as holding someone by the waist or arm – as observed in the description of courtship.

In a context where individuals are concerned about their sexiness, amorous declarations and compliments present a special lure since they engender sympathy by corroborating the other’s ability to attract someone through his/her appearance. Thus these verbal strategies of seduction are often applied during courtship in Brazil – as observed in the description of the process. At the same time, the increasing individual desire to be acknowledged for one’s sexiness seems to have placed body language in the foreground of the courtship process in Brazil. As observed in the description of courtship, individuals in Brazil tend to present more body language, to engage sooner in physical contact and to reach a kiss more quickly during an encounter; a lack of physical contact, on the other hand, would lead to insecurity about mutual interest, as observed.

As noted in the data, individuals in Brazil not only tend to engage more often in courtship than individuals in Germany, but some may also engage in courtship with more than one person in one evening. As suggested, in a context where sexiness has become an integral part of one’s identity, as in Brazil, individuals seems to engage more often in courtship by initiating it or being receptive to those who attempt it because courtship is a ready means to corroborate one’s sexiness. The increasing individual desire to be acknowledged for one’s sexiness in Brazil seems to have charged the social space sexually and turned courtship not only into a common form of social interaction, but also into a legitimate leisure activity. The higher focus on sexuality in Brazil seems to lead individuals to favor physical intimacy over subjective intimacy on the path to an intimate relationship. Since the performance of sexuality remains necessary to corroborate one’s individual identity in Brazil, it still seems to bind individuals together. Nevertheless, as the frequency with which individuals engage in courtship and the lack of commitment between the parties after the kiss suggest, sexuality seems to have become more than ever a matter of self-realization and the other person a means to an end in Brazil.

As observed further in the chapter *Love and regional differences: the formation of regional amorous codes*, the different socio-historical trajectories of liberal democracy and feminism in Germany and in Brazil not only seem to lead to different courtship dynamics, but also to particular conflicts. In Germany, the advanced individualization process – due to the more advanced democracy and feminist movement – and the broad dissemination of discourses of the supremacy of the mind over the body seem to have established subjective intimacy as the path to an intimate relationship. However, the higher concern of individuals in Germany to defend their private sphere and the feminist critique of traditional courtship practices, which have left both sexes unsure about how to act in an encounter, seem to lead men and women to assume a defensive position when interacting, making it hard to establish intimate communication in an encounter between strangers. This defensive position – combined with uncertainty about how to act during courtship; the risk of being regarded as macho or uncultivated when expressing attraction for the other; and the rising courtship dynamic of concealing interest, which leaves doubts about each other's interest during an encounter – seems to turn face-to-face courtship between strangers in Germany into a difficult endeavor, and many seem to resort to online-dating or socially accepted drugs such as alcohol and cigarettes to overcome the difficulties.

The increase in individual autonomy, due to advanced democracy and the welfare state, as well as the weakening of traditional gender identities, due to the strong feminist movement, has been freeing individuals in Germany from the economic and social need to have a partner. At the same time, in the face of the decline of gender roles and the instability of marriage, individuals are encouraged to seek their own emotional and financial self-sufficiency. Consequently, singlehood seems to have become in Germany not only a more acceptable lifestyle, but also a desirable one, since the absence of a relationship corroborates one's self-perception of self-sufficiency.

As has been observed, in a context oriented by liberal democracy such as in Germany, where individuals enjoy a high degree of autonomy, the exercise of choice enables them to exercise the three modern values of freedom, rationality and autonomy, thereby becoming choosier in the selection of a mate. At the same time, the increasing individualization process in Germany – due to the advanced democracy and welfare state and the disseminated discourses of the supremacy of the mind over the body – has pushed individuals to invest in their subjective world and to develop singular personalities, rendering their identity so intertwined with their ideals that to accept someone who does not share one's values seems to become a denial of oneself, thus making the search for a partner a longer and more complicated endeavor.

In Brazil, on the other hand, individuals seem to be more oriented toward the establishment of a relationship, since the perseverance of traditional gender relations and the importance of sexuality encourage individuals to corroborate their identity by having a sexual partner, and the lower individual autonomy – due to the moderate democracy and welfare state – sustain the individual's dependency on a partnership in order to survive. Therefore, as observed through the data, singlehood in Brazil seems to be a less acceptable and desired lifestyle –

especially for women in the face of the substantial inequalities between the sexes as pointed out in the GII (2014) – and individuals are more open to interacting with others and engaging in courtship.

Nevertheless, although individuals in Brazil may engage more easily in courtship, may express their interest openly and may start physical contact sooner, the lack of openness and commitment after the kiss and the leisurely character of courtship seem to make it difficult to take courtship further towards the development of a relationship. As observed, the lure of courtship in corroborating one's sexual identity and sexiness seems to lead many individuals to engage in serial flirting, i.e. many and parallel courtship encounters, instead of focusing on one person. In such a context, the establishment of an intimate relationship becomes a difficult endeavor and those interested in a stable relationship suffer from the lack of commitment of others.

As the discussion on courtship has shown, the modern dilemma between individuality and intimacy has only increased in late modernity, adopting particular forms in each nation due to their socio-historical trajectories. In Germany the individualization process seems to be boosted by the discourse of the supremacy of the mind over the body, while in Brazil it seems to be boosted by the discourse of the exercise of sexuality as autonomy. Consequently, the nature of amorous interaction has developed differently in each nation, engendering particular amorous dynamics and stablishing different paths to intimate relationships. Nevertheless, whether people are playing "concealing interest" or "conquer–surrender", whether they favor subjective intimacy or physical intimacy during courtship, they do it all with the goal of finding that special interaction that provides their lives with meaning, i.e. intimacy.

Illouz's statement (1997:286) that the educational level stipulates the "romantic competence" of individuals in contemporary society was investigated in the chapter *Love and cultural capital: the impact of the level of education on the experience of romance*. As observed, independent of their cultural capital, individuals apply clichés, i.e. cultural prescriptions of romance, to communicate and interpret each other's attempts to engender a romantic experience. A more accurate analysis of the reports of respondents showed that independent of their level of education, two types of experience seems to constitute a romantic moment: the experience of realizing how much one is cherished or how much one cherishes the other, and the experience of communion. While the former experience was usually described through tokens of love coming from the partner, such as attentiveness, solicitude, efforts to please or amorous declarations, the second involves a great intimacy and connection, such as interchanging or sharing thoughts and emotions, or taking part in each other's life by sharing or holding something in common, such as special experiences and moments, or interest and aims.

Although no significant divergences could be found between the cultural capital groups with regard to romance, differences could be found once again between the regional groups. As was observed, while individuals in Germany tend to spurn romantic clichés and commodities and to favor spontaneous, modest and creative romantic expressions, individuals in Brazil

seems to accept and desire romantic clichés and commodities, to stage more romantic encounters and to regard sex and eroticism as constitutive – but not exclusive – features of romance.

As suggested, in such a context of advanced individualization processes as Germany, where individuals are encouraged to focus on their own subjective world, interests and desires – and usually dispose of the means to realize these – and where the discourse of the supremacy of the mind over the body has been widely disseminated, the individual demand for creative and unique expressions of romance seems to increase conjointly with the strong critique of romantic clichés and commodities. Consequently, “creative efforts” seems to become an important feature of amorous expressions, a feature that must be able to transmit the intensity of one’s feelings.

In Brazil, on the other hand – where the individualization process is not as developed as in Germany; where individuals enjoy less autonomy and less social security and are more concerned about ordinary day-to-day needs and less able to focus on their own subjective world, interests and desires, which they do not always have the means to realize; where gender inequality is high; where the discourse of the supremacy of the mind over the body and critique of romantic clichés and commodities are not strongly disseminated – the consumption of romantic commodities seems to be an acceptable and desirable form of experiencing something beyond the ordinary in everyday life.

As the discussion on romance has shown, independent of one’s region of origin or level of education, individuals seem to make use of clichés to create romantic moments. In contrast to the suggestion of Illouz (1997) that the consumption of romantic commodities engenders romance in contemporary society, it was observed that it is the meanings people attribute to commodities and their consumption that make the situation romantic. As a more accurate analysis of the reports of respondents on romance showed, clichés appear only as allegories of their romantic narratives. The experience of realizing how much one is cherished or how much one cherishes the other, and the experience of communion, seem to be the main two types of experience that constitute romantic moments – what one may regard as constitutive of a Western understanding of romance. Therefore, diverging from Illouz’s assertion, the data from this study suggested that independent of an individual’s cultural capital, romance remains in modernity a possibility for everyone. Nevertheless, as the particularities observed in the amorous experience of individuals in Germany and in Brazil showed, the different socio-historical trajectory of each region has led to nuances in the experience of romance.

As noted in the chapter *The socio-historical construction of love*, rising social values in late modernity are leading to significant changes in the realms of love. Scholars are not unanimous about the future of romantic love, although they all seem to assume the impairment of romantic ideals, love’s secularization and the increase in amorous suffering over time.

Since social changes do not happen simultaneously in all societies or social groups, it is common to observe traditional forms coexisting with new ones, and as observed in the short description on the socio-historical construction of love, traditional meanings may prevail over

time or be reinterpreted. As Swidler (2001:120) observes in her study, for example, the ideal of “one perfect love” seems to remain true in late modernity although the beloved is no longer the uniquely perfect person and the relationships are no longer regarded as “happily ever after”. In her (Swidler 2001:120-121) words, “One’s marriage partner becomes irreplaceable, not because one could not have had an equally happy marriage with someone else, but because one could not have had *this* marriage, *these* experiences, *this* love”.

The heroic struggle to marry, the description of love as a force that overcomes social restraint, may no longer predominate; nevertheless, as Swidler (2001:122) detected, individuals remain heroes in their amorous stories, in their struggles to sustain a relationship, to overcome disagreements, to compromise. As she observes (Swidler 2001:122), “Love ‘conquers all’ not by overcoming social obstacles but by meeting the mundane demands of ongoing relationships.”

Even the romantic ideal of “everlasting love”, which has been deeply affected by increasing divorce rates, seems in late modernity to have taken on a new interpretation. Separation is a possible reality in any relationship; however, as Swidler (2001:123-124) notices, people still initiate a relationship with the expectation that it will last forever, and they consider how to manage their relationship so that it will last forever, and they tend to regard the love of those who choose to break up as not having been “real love” in the first place, i.e. “love is not real unless it is enduring” (Swidler 2001:124).

As observed in this study, democracy and feminism have encouraged in late modernity new social values such as autonomy, “intellectualism” and “sexiness”, which seem to strongly influence the amorous code. Nevertheless, old amorous ideals can still be identified in the reports of respondents.

Regarding the courtship dynamic in Germany, the ideal of finding a “soul mate”, which can be traced back to the spiritual love introduced by Christian mysticism in the middle ages, seems to take form in the strong individual desire to get to know each other’s personality during an encounter before becoming more intimate. Also the reinterpretation of “platonic love” by Christian culture, which emphasizes the idealization of the beloved and the disregard of sexual urges, seems to take expression in Germany through the courtship dynamic of concealing interest, which in some cases prevents individuals from recognizing the admirer’s amorous intentions.¹⁰³ The expectation created by the ideal of “postponement of satisfaction” may no longer be as great as in early modernity, but it can still be identified in the German courtship dynamic, where individuals may postpone the kiss to a further date. And the romantic ideal of “chance” appears to be prominent in the amorous code in Germany, since individuals prefer to meet “haphazardly”, to touch “accidentally”, and to favor spontaneous romantic situations.

In Brazil, however, the *eros* ideal of “longing for completeness” by emphasizing the role of the body, of physical interaction as a means of reunion, seems to take expression in the focus on sexuality, body language and physical contact during courtship. The erotic aspect introduced

¹⁰³ The report of Ursel on page 174 illustrates this well.

in *eros* and furthered by different traditions seems to take form in the assertive attempts to seduce each other through body language during an encounter and through the open expression of sexual attraction. And the ideal of “urgency” and “sexual enjoyment” from the *amour passion* tradition seems to take expression in the intense advances of men towards women in Brazil, or the “rush” to engage in physical contact, the reports of people engaging in courtship with more than one person at an event, or the statements of Brazilians that they could wait no longer to engage in kissing.

It seems that despite the introduction of new meanings to love or the reinterpretation of old ones, love seems to remain, at least for the groups under investigation, a mystical force that cannot be controlled, that happens unexpectedly or that drives individuals into each other’s arms. Despite the changes in social values and the secularization process, the mystical power of love seems to remain the answer to the dilemma between individuality and intimacy in late modernity.

As already highlighted in the methodological chapter, this study is based on restricted and specific quantities of data, historically located and dated, and although its results are generalized for stylistic purposes, this study still offers a particular and limited perspective on the subject and cannot claim to be representative for the general populations of Germany and Brazil. Therefore, to suggest that people in Germany and in Brazil seem to follow different rules during courtship does not mean that courtship cannot take different forms in those regions – such as Germans disclosing their interest in courtship and heading more rapidly to a kiss, or Brazilians concealing their interest in courtship and holding longer conversations before getting physical – nor that people may have different expectations after a kiss, such as Germans wanting to *Rumknutschen* and Brazilians expecting a more intimate relationship.

One must bear in mind that as a qualitative study, this investigation has attempted to grasp a particular empirical reality with the objective of reconstructing it as “a special case of what is possible” and that it therefore offers “an exemplary case in a finite world of possible configurations” (Bourdieu 1998:2).

This investigation has offered many inferences on love; nevertheless, during the process certain questions arose. Focused on love, regional differences and cultural capital, this study utilized observations and interviews with individuals who are or were in a binational relationship (Germany and Brazil) to ascertain regional amorous practices and to evaluate the impact of regional differences and cultural capital on love. Although binational relationships were not a focus of this investigation, the reports of respondents about the misunderstandings between the regional groups – due to the particularities of their amorous codes – begs the question as to how binational relationships function. How do individuals see and deal with the differences and how do those work for the establishment and maintenance of amorous relationships? Due to changes in marriage laws, higher social and geographic mobility, and advances in the technologies of communication, the number of binational relationships has increased in recent decades (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 2013:32-33). Studies that investigate the establishment and maintenance of such relationships may contribute to an understanding of the changes in love in our global society.

As observed in the analysis of the questionnaire, it was not possible to adequately evaluate the social origin of respondents, and therefore the cultural capital of respondents was determined exclusively by their level of education. An investigation that would also regard the social origin of respondents may provide further contributions to the discussion on the impact of cultural capital on love.

The inferences derived in this study were based on observations and reports of respondents. During this investigation it became clear that love is a more common subject in the media in Brazil than in Germany, being more frequently the favored theme of soap operas, songs and advertisements in the former than in the latter. For example, a search on the internet for the word “love” in Portuguese (i.e. amor) produced 379 million results, while “love” in German (i.e. Liebe) produced only 255 million results. Studies that investigate the cultural production of love may contribute further to the identification of prominent amorous ideals and meanings in each region.

Despite the open questions and the limited scope of this investigation, the present study has attempted to contribute to the international and national (Germany and Brazil) sociological discussions on love by highlighting the socio-historical construction of love and conjoining the contributions of different language centers of study, as well as by offering an empirical investigation of love that: ascertained courtship and romantic practices in different regions and between groups with different cultural capital; observed culture in action and highlighted the differences between regional amorous codes; identified emerging social values in each region and how they engender specific courtship dynamics and conflicts; analyzed the implications of cultural capital on romance; identified the main experiences behind romantic moments; and highlighted the singular role of the individual in signifying his/her experience and his/her ability to turn common experiences into romantic ones.

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A. The observation of events for singles

A.1. Script for observation

Description of the event:

- Origin and history of the event
- Description of the guests and social scene
- Description of the environment
- Possible contraventions: drugs, prostitution, under-age guests
- Organizers, staff and their duties – e.g. advertising, sale, surveillance
- Partners and sponsors
- First impressions: appearance and behaviors
- Theme parties

Description of the location

- Physical structure: environment, size, distribution, furniture posters, decoration...
- Sensory remarks: smell, light, sound, color, temperature...
- The organization of the event and service
- Documents that are distributed on site – e.g. ads, flyer
- What is happening? Which activities can be observed? Are there any illegal or suspicious activity?

Description of organizers

- How many?
- Who are they?
- What do they do? How do they do it?

Description of the guests

- Dynamic: distribution in the space, movement
 - How are the guests distributed in the space?
 - How do they interpret the physical space and its characteristics?
 - How do they present themselves physically? How do they behave?
 - Which practices are discursive?
 - Which styles can be identified?
- Status characteristics
 - What observations can be made about the socioeconomic, ethnic, racial and other status of the guests?
- Verbal and non-verbal communication
 - Which language do the guests use? Formal or informal language? Educated, aggressive or relaxed?

- What can be observed about touch, gestures and intimate space?
- What can be observed in their communication about the relations of power and status between the guests?

- What is happening
 - Which speeches and conversations can be observed?
 - What is not said? What is implicit?

Description of interviewees

- Physical characteristics: sex, age, ethnicity, corporal structure
- Physical presentation: clothes
- Identity: sexual orientation, nationality, place of origin, educational level, marital status
- Verbal and non-verbal expression: gestures, body posture
- Reactions to the researcher

Description of the researcher

- Physical characteristics: sex, age, ethnicity, corporal structure
- Physical presentation: clothes
- Identity: How does the researcher introduce herself?
- Behavior: How does the researcher integrate in the environment?
- Reactions: How does the researcher react to the environment, the event, the guests, the interviewees and so on? What are her prejudices, fears?

Points to be regarded at the end of the reports

- Possible inferences
- Questions and doubts that arose in the field
- Points for further observation

B. Romantic love for high-school students in Germany

In March 2010, a high-school teacher offered the researcher a small questionnaire on the subject of romantic love given by her in the same year to two groups of students from the 11th and 12th grade at a public high-school located in the former East Berlin. All 26 anonymous questionnaires were analyzed; however, since the answers of the respondents were usually short, like notes, the analysis and the discussion of the data were limited.

Nevertheless, the few observations derived from the analysis of the questionnaires and the contact with the teacher motivated a second front for the researcher: the investigation of the amorous practices of high-school students in Germany and in Brazil. A more elaborate investigation was designed to be applied in the following months. However, during the development of the field research, the negotiation with the German and Brazilian schools for access to the students was unsuccessful. The institutions showed no interest in the research and established various bureaucratic procedures that would not enable the implementation of the study in the period established for the field research. Therefore this line of investigation was discontinued.

The instrument and methods applied by the teacher in her investigation, as well as the methods applied by the researcher for the analysis of the questionnaires and the conclusions drawn from them are described below.

B.1. Methods, instrument and data collection

The questionnaire formulated by the teacher was presented as a voluntary activity to the students. The questionnaire was anonymous and composed of two demographic entries – age and sex – and four questions:

1. What is romantic for you?
2. How do you imagine romantic love?
3. Have you ever had a romantic experience? How was it?
4. Are there still romantic relationships?

Altogether 4 men and 22 women, between 16 and 18 years old, answered the questions on a sheet of their own paper and delivered it on the same day or later to the teacher. Table 1 shows the distribution of the sample according to age and gender.

Table 1. The sample of high-school students (N=26)

Age	Gender		Total
	Male	female	
16	1	0	1
17	0	8	8
18	3	14	17
Total	4	22	26

The data analysis and the conclusions drawn from the data are presented next.

B.2. Data analysis and conclusions

The analysis started with the examination of each questionnaire separately in order to observe possible misunderstanding of the questions. Since none were observed the analysis went further. The methodological approach adopted was the content analysis as promoted by Mayring (2008). First, the answers of the students were grouped according to the respective question. Then the main information in each answer was summed up in a word or expression and the answers of the respondents were related when possible to the five dimensions of romantic love suggested by Costa (2005), which served as a deductive category system.

Regarding the two objective questions (3 and 4), it could be observed that 7 respondents, two men and five women, had not had a romantic experience. Two of them, a male and a female respondent, mentioned that they were longing for this experience. Among the other 19 respondents who had already had a romantic experience, 12 of them mentioned that it was with a boyfriend or a girlfriend, which suggests that romantic experiences are more common between acquaintances.

Considering the position of the respondents about the existence of romantic love in contemporary society, only one respondent, who had not had a romantic experience, denied it by defining it as a utopia and a fairy tale.

[Gibt es heute noch romantische Liebe?]

“Nein, weil es die auch nie gab. Wir leben nicht in einem Märchen, der Traumprinzen gibt es nicht und gab es nie.” (Respondent 3, female, 17 years old)

The other 25 respondents corroborate the existence of romantic love. For eight of them, romantic love is self-evident, as their explanation of romantic love as an intrinsic feature of love relationships, or their report on self-experience and self-observation, suggest.

[Gibt es heute noch romantische Liebe?]

“Ich bin der Meinung, dass es sie heute noch gibt. Jeder hat etwas Romantik in seinem Charakter nur nicht jeder ist im Stande diese zu zeigen.” (Respondent 5, female, 17 years old)

“Selbstverständlich! Für mich gehört Romantik zu einer Beziehung dazu. Wo bleibt sonst die Überraschung, wenn man nie etwas Romantisches in der Beziehung erlebt? Wenn Romantik nicht in einer Beziehung Platz findet, warum geht es denn dann?” (Respondent 6, female, 17 years old)

“Ja, ich sehe immer wieder auf die Straße süße Liebespaare, die liebevoll miteinander umgehen. Viele meiner Freundinnen besitzen tolle Partner, die sie lieben und einfach meiner Freundinnen zeigen, wie viel sie ihnen bedeuten. Meine Freunde erzählen mir immer, was sie mit ihren Freunden unternommen haben und wie romantisch ihre Partner sind. Dafür könnte ich sie nur beneiden.” (Respondent 9, female, 17 years old)

“Ich denke schon, denn wenn niemand nach Romantik streben würde, würde es auch keine Beziehung geben.” (Respondent 13, female, 18 years old)

“Ja, denn ich führe ein.” (Respondent 20, female, 18 years old)

“Ja! Da jeder jemandes sucht mit dem er glücklich ist und Glück gehört zur Romantik dazu.” (Respondent 22, female, 18 years old)

“Ja! Romantik gehört zu einer Beziehung dazu..” (Respondent 23, female, 18 years old)

Among those who affirmed the existence of romantic love, 10 of them affirmed that romantic love occurs rarely. And for some of the 25 respondents, romantic love has been threatened by: the superficiality of people; unfaithfulness; the stress and rush of everyday life; excessive planning and thinking; the perception of love as weakness or being old-fashioned; the non-appreciation of love; or individualism.

[Gibt es heute noch romantische Liebe?]

“Ich hoffe, dass es sie gibt. Aber wenn es sie gibt, ist sie seltener geworden, sie wird wegen der Oberflächlichkeit der Menschen nicht so oft entdeckt.” (Respondent 1, male, 16 years old)

“Ja, aber seltener, da viele denken, dass romantisch sein heißt Schwäche zu zeigen oder dass es altmodisch ist.” (Respondent 8, female, 17 years old)

“Oftmals nicht, da viele Sachen immer groß und möglichst durchgeplant sind.” (Respondent 10, male, 18 years old)

“Ja, teilweise weil Liebe falsch definiert wird; viele gehen fremd; Liebe scheitert an zu viel Nehmen statt Geben; Liebe wird nicht mehr geschätzt.” (Respondent 17, female, 18 years old)

“Teilweise, Sie werden weniger, bedingt durch Hektik, Alltagsstress.” (Respondent 18, female, 18 years old)

“Natürlich, aber auf alle trifft das nicht zu, weil viele Menschen Affäre haben und diese gegenseitige Treue nicht mehr vorhanden ist.” (Respondent 21, female, 18 years old)

“Ja, aber selten da Männer und Frauen sehr verschieden sind, selten offen miteinander reden und sich durch kleine, doofe Streitigkeiten auseinanderleben und die Liebe dadurch kaputtgeht.” (Respondent 26, female, 18 years old)

Among the 25 respondents who believed in romantic love, three presented a less essentialist opinion of romantic love. Two of them affirmed that new forms of love are arising. And another one argued that each person must define love for him/herself.

[Gibt es heute noch romantische Liebe?]

“Meiner Meinung nach, gibt es romantische Beziehungen vereinzelt noch. Doch ich denke auch, dass sich “Trends” ändern. Die Jugend ändert sich und somit auch die Liebe.” (Respondent 7, female, 17 years old)

“Ja, aber anders als früher. Moderne. Z.B. Männer singen einem nicht mehr vor, schreiben keinen Brief / Gedichte mehr; jedoch kleine Geschenke usw.” (Respondent 16, female, 18 years old)

“Nun das muss jeder für sich selber erfahren, aber meiner Meinung nach auf jeden Fall.” (Respondent 19, female, 18 years old)

One respondent, who affirmed the existence of romantic love, felt that it existed above all at the beginning of the relationship, suggesting that it is not common in long-lasting relationships.

[Gibt es heute noch romantische Liebe?]

“Ja, besonders, wenn man frisch verliebt ist.” (Respondent 14, female, 18 years old)

The remaining information collected was related to one of the five dimensions of love proposed by Costa (2005), as presented below.

(1) Emotion

This theme involves the feelings that emerge in the interaction between culture and the body. The feelings mentioned by the respondents were: to feel beloved; affection and intense feelings, like passion; happiness/satisfaction; longing; and loss of the sense of time.

[Was ist für mich romantisch?]

“Romantische ist für mich das Gefühl geliebt zu werden, von meiner Partnerin überrascht zu werden, z.B. mit einem Essen oder mit einem Strauß Rosen...” (Respondent 1, male, 16 years old)

“Zuneigung.” (Respondent 5, female, 17 years old)

[Wie stelle ich mir romantische Liebe vor?]

“Beide haben ständig Sehnsucht nacheinander” (Respondent 16, female, 18 years old)

„Wenn man mit seinem Partner auf derselben Wellenlänge ist.“; „Ihn sowohl als Kumpel und auch als Freund hat.“; „Man gleich Interesse hat aber auch eine, die sich nicht decken.“; „Man einfach gern bei einander ist und da Zeitgefühl verliert.“ (Respondent 19, female, 18 years old)

[Gibt es heute noch romantische Liebe?]

“Ohne Romantik verliert eine Beziehung Leidenschaft und Spannung.” (Respondent 23, female, 18 years old)

(2) Cultural praxis

This theme comprises speeches, actions and rituals, through which amorous emotions are evoked, perceived, transmitted and intensified. Three categories could be related to this theme:

- a) Tokens of love, which involve the activities that prove and demonstrate someone's love: to give something; to confess love by writing, saying, singing or proposing marriage; to pay compliments; to show that he/she thinks of the beloved by writing messages or calling; to indulge the beloved; to sing the beloved's praises; to come to the beloved's defense; to care for the wellbeing of the beloved; to do unexpected things.
- b) Exchanges of tenderness, which involve the activities that show attraction and foster intimacy, like kissing, embracing, taking a shower together, cuddling. Those activities were also often mentioned by the majority of the respondents. Only three respondents made direct mentions of sex as a love practice, but two of them also affirmed that sex is not the most important thing in a relationship.
- c) Rituals, which involve activities that are related to the celebration of the feelings of the lovers or their relationship, and are associated with specific environments, forms and objects. As could be seen, some respondents described romantic situations such as Valentine's Day or anniversaries. A strong association between love and a "special place", which can be in the open air where the sunset can be seen, like a lake, a park, a beach, or indoors, like a cozy bedroom, could be observed. The associations were also strong with dim lighting, described as candlelight, sunset or evening. To feel comfortable was a feeling that emerged in the respondents' description of the context, defined as cozy, peaceful or relaxing. In addition to candlelight, other symbols also

appear in the respondents' descriptions: objects in the form of a heart and flowers, particularly roses.

[Was ist für mich romantisch?]

"Kerzenschein, spontane Liebesbeweise, Strand, bestimmte Musik." (Respondent 3, female, 17 years old)

"Spaziergang am Abend (z.B. im Urlaub); candle light dinner." (Respondent 4, female, 17 years old)

"Romantik bedeutet für mich, den Partner glücklich zu machen mit Gesten, die in Alltag nicht allzu oft vorkommen." (Respondent 7, female, 17 years old)

„Romantische sind Augenblicke, die einzigartig sind, die nicht zum Alltag gehören. Momente, die einfache lange in Erinnerung bleiben. Z.B. ich habe zum Valentinstag für meine Freundin einen Pfad aus Rosen in Richtung Bett gestreut und dort befand sich dann einen Blumenstrauß mit einem selbstgeschriebenen Brief.“ (Respondent 12, male, 18 years old)

"Picknick im Freien; Candel light Dinner; Blumen; Spaziergang im Freien; offenen Liebeserklärung." (Respondent 15, female, 18 years old)

"Kerze, Blumen, Küsschen, Sonnenuntergang." (Respondent 17, female, 18 years old)

"Zusammen duschen gehen" (Respondent 19, female, 18 years old)

"Zärtlichkeit; Tiefgründige Komplimente; Glück; Zweisamkeit in einer ruhigen Situation." (Respondent 22, female, 18 years old)

"Zweisamkeit; Klischeedinge wie Rosen(roste), Kerzen, Herzen; Liebesbeweise." (Respondent 24, female, 18 years old)

"Man isst zusammen; liegt sich in den Armen; geht spazieren; macht Kerzen an; oder schaut sich an und sagt was man für einander empfindet; er pflückt eine Rose und bring sie mit nach Hause." (Respondent 25, female, 18 years old)

[Wie stelle ich mir romantische Liebe vor?]

"Es muss nicht geplant sein." (Respondent 6, female, 17 years old)

"Romantische Liebe stelle ich mir keineswegs 'kitschig' vor. Eher bedeutet romantische Liebe für mich, die Gefühle zum Partner regelmäßig zum Ausdruck zu bringen und sich und seine Liebe nicht im Alltag verschwinden zu lassen. Romantik Liebe heißt, sich und seinen Partner zu verwöhnen, nicht mit Geschenken oder Kaufbarem, sondern mit Liebe und Emotionen." (Respondent 7, female, 17 years old)

"Romantische Liebe ist einfach dem Partner liebevoll zu zeigen, wie viel es ihm bedeutet" (Respondent 9, female, 17 years old)

"An einem Ort, der positive Energie ausstrahlt, mit seinem Partner Zärtlichkeiten austauschen." (Respondent 11, male, 18 years old)

"Romantische Liebe besteht natürlich auf Gegenseitigkeit, d.h. man muss nicht jeden Tag was außergewöhnliches machen, es reicht einfach nach langer Zeit die drei ‚magischen‘ Wörter zu sagen: ‚Ich liebe dich‘; oder ein schöner und intensiver Kuss; Sex ist dabei für mich nicht so entscheidend." (Respondent 12, male, 18 years old)

"Kleine alltägliche Geschenke; kreative Geschenke;" (Respondent 15, female, 18 years old)

"Beiden können über alles reden; man verbringt ruhige Zeit mit einander; aber auch lustige, spaßige Unternehmungen; beide haben ständig Sehnsucht nacheinander." (Respondent 16, female, 18 years old)

"Tiefgründige Gespräche." (Respondent 18, female, 18 years old)

"Zeigen, dass man an einen denkt - Anrufe, SMS." (Respondent 20, female, 18 years old)

[Hatte ich schon mal eine romantische Erfahrung?]

“Im Alter von 16 Jahren habe ich bei meinem Praktikum einen Jungen in meinem Alter kennengelernt, welche mich nach einer Woche fragte, ob ich Marmelade und Orchideen mag. Als ich dies bejahte, lagen 2 Tag später ein Marmeladenglas und eine Orchidee auf den Boden meiner Umkleidekabine. Daraufhin sind wir zusammengekommen.” (Respondent 5, female, 17 years old)

“Ich selbst habe einen Abend lang meinen Freund massiert, habe das Zimmer gemütlich hergerichtet. So was es ein schönes Zusammensein.” (Respondent 8, female, 17 years old)

“Bei der ehemaligen Freundin. In einer Herzchen Form war eine Liebesbotschaft enthalten.” (Respondent 11, male, 18 years old)

“Das Zusammenkommen mit meinem Freund: Sonnenuntergang am See, er nahm mich in den Arm, dann haben wir uns geküsst.” (Respondent 17, female, 18 years old)

“Schon sehr oft in der Beziehung. Liebesbrief bekommen, Lied (selbst gesungen) geschenkt bekommen, am Valentinstag mit Kerzenschein empfangen werden; gehört, dass Partner nur Gutes von mir erzählt / mich in Schutz nimmt...” (Respondent 20, female, 18 years old)

“Ja, Kuschneln und Leidenschaftlicher Sex.” (Respondent 22, female, 18 years old)

“z.B. spontanes legen von einem ‚I love U‘ mit Kerzen von meinem Freund (ohne Anlass).” (Respondent 26, female, 18 years old)

[Gibt es heute noch romantische Liebe?]

“Wenn man ihn sehr liebt, dann tut man Dinge, die man zuvor noch nicht wirklich gemacht hat.” (Respondent 12, male, 18 years old)

(3) Social interaction

This theme accounts for the special bond that distinguishes the lovers from the anonymous social context and reaffirms their own individual identity. The attributes applied by the respondents to describe love that could be related to this theme were intimacy, unconditionality, communication without words, being in tune.

The most common description of this special social interaction was togetherness, such as being together, spending time together, undertaking activities together and sharing experiences.

The strong interest in a partner with whom it is possible to have long, intense or profound conversations (respondents 16; 18; and 23), or with whom it is possible “to speak about everything” (respondents 16; 21) reveals the importance of cognitive exchange in a love relationship and was also considered a description for the special bond between lovers.

[Was ist für mich romantisch?]

“Wenn man einfache sich in die Augen blickt ohne ein Wort zu sagen und genau spürt, wie der andere etwas für einen empfindet.” (Respondent 9, female, 17 years old)

“Einen Abend zu zweit verbringen (Essen gehen; Film gucken; über alle Themen der Welt zu reden)” (Respondent 16, female, 18 years old)

“Zweisamkeit; zwei liebenden Menschen.” (Respondent 18, female, 18 years old)

“Zweisamkeit; Zärtlichkeit; Rosen; Kuschneln; Entspannung; Leidenschaft; intensive Gespräche.” (Respondent 23, female, 18 years old)

[Wie stelle ich mir romantische Liebe vor?]

“Sich alles erzählen können, offen sein.” (Respondent 21, female, 18 years old)

[Hatte ich schon mal eine romantische Erfahrung?]

“Ja. Ich war krank, zu Hause, sah schrecklich aus, weil ich keinen Nerv zum Duschen hatte und mein Freund kam spontan mit einem Strauß Rosen zu mir, wir hatten ein Jubiläum und er meint zu mir: ‚Schatz, du siehst immer wunderschön aus‘. Für mich war das total romantisch. 😊” (Respondent 6, female, 17 years old)

“Ja, mehrere. Zusammen Eis essen gehen; bei sich zu Hause einen Film gucken; lange Spaziergänge; heimliche Treffen; zusammen einschlafen; lange, intensive Gespräche” (Respondent 16, female, 18 years old)

“gemeinsamer Urlaub, einfach Zweisamkeit ohne äußerliche Einflüsse genießen → kein Fernsehen, kein Telefon, kein Kontakt zu andern” (Respondent 20, female, 18 years old)

(4) Model of relationship

This theme accounts for the description of the type of relationship related to love. It could be observed that only one female respondent associated love with marriage. The descriptions of a love relationship as a partnership, with full trust in each other and mutual unconditional support were common. The respondents also mentioned: consideration for the feelings of the partner; tender and respectful behavior toward each other; caring for the wellbeing of the relationship; and reciprocity.

[Was ist für mich romantisch?]

“Verständnis (auf eine einfühlsame Art und Weise) in schwierigen Situationen entgegenbringen.” (Respondent 5, female, 17 years old)

“Der Partner oder ich selbst Sorge für angenehme Stimmung.” (Respondent 6, female, 17 years old)

“Dabei sollten die Interessen, die Vorlieben und auch der momentane Gefühlszustand des Partners beachtet werden.” (Respondent 7, female, 17 years old)

“Wenn man mit einander liebevoll umgeht. Wenn man den anderen zu ganz bestimmten Situationen zeigt, wie sehr man die Person liebt und was sie für einen bedeutet. Wenn man durch bestimmte Gesten oder Geschenke der anderen glücklich machen will. Wenn man kreativ ist und den anderen überrascht bzw. eine Freude bereitet.” (Respondent 9, female, 17 years old)

“Liebesbeweise → spontane Überraschungen, Liebesgeständnis in besonderen / schlimmen / fröhlichen Momenten; Respektvolle Umgang; vom Partner bei anderen Schwärmer.” (Respondent 20, female, 18 years old)

[Wie stelle ich mir romantische Liebe vor?]

“Romantische Liebe ist für mich eine vertrauensbasierte Partnerschaft zu haben und diese Person von ganzem Herzen zu lieben. Natürlich muss es auf beiden Seiten beruhen.” (Respondent 1, male, 16 years old)

“In einer romantischen Liebe ist das Geben and Nehmen gleich verteilt und man streit selten.” (Respondent 8, female, 17 years old)

“Rücksichtnahmen; Gegenseitigkeit; Halt; sich fallen lassen können; Bedingungslosigkeit.” (Respondent 15, female, 18 years old)

“Ihn sowohl als Kumpel und auch als Freund hat.” (Respondent 19, female, 18 years old)

“...erkennen, wenn es dem anderen schlecht geht ☹ für ihn da sein, aber auch Glück und Zufriedenheit miteinander teilen.” (Respondent 20, female, 18 years old)

“Treue, Vertrauen, Zuneigung. Für einander da sein.” (Respondent 21, female, 18 years old)

“Zärtlich, Leidenschaftlich, vertrauensvoll, humorvoll, die Chemie muss stimmen.” (Respondent 22, female, 18 years old)

“Immer für einander da sein. Intimität.” (Respondent 24, female, 18 years old)

“Sich durch gute aber auch schlechte Zeiten zu kämpfen.” (Respondent 26, female, 18 years old)

(5) Ideal

This theme accounts for the idealization around the subject love. It could be observed that two women, who had already had romantic experiences, expressed clear idealizations of them. Both mentioned the existence of only one big love or of one man for one’s whole life. One of them also described the love relationship as an eternal voluntary faithful commitment to one another, and “also after 30 years to be completely happy and to get butterflies in your stomach” (Respondent 26, female, 18 years old).

[Was ist für mich romantisch?]

“Wesentlicher Aspekt: große Liebe – lang und dauerhaft andauernd ohne das Verlangen zu haben einen anderen Mann zu benötigen bis auf den eigenen.” (Respondent 26, female, 18 years old)

[Wie stelle ich mir romantische Liebe vor?]

“Ein Mann für immer.” (Respondent 17, female, 18 years old)

[Hatte ich schon mal eine romantische Erfahrung?]

“Das romantischste, was mir ja passiert ist, ist der Heiratsantrag meiner jetzigen Verlobten, den er mir am Valentinstag auf den Fernsehturm gemacht hat.” (Respondent 7, female, 17 years old)

Despite the limited scope of the data, this analysis provided three important considerations for the development of this research. First, the fact that the majority of the respondents consider romantic love as self-evident suggests that they do not reflect about their romantic praxis, they just do it or feel it, which makes the object under study even more difficult to grasp.

Second, it could be observed that the discourse of the high-school students about love does not diverge from what can be found in global media, such as romantic films or romances. However some comments deserve attention: a hand-written letter has more value than a printed one (respondent 12); a gift must be creative (respondent 15); a compliment must be profound (respondent 22); the partner must be able to speak about everything, to have profound conversations (respondents 16, 18, 21, 23). These comments suggest critically and cognitively demanding individuals, for whom a love demonstration must involve “effort”; it must transmit the intensity of their feelings. This observation brought the consideration that the differences in amorous practices between individuals lies in subtle, symbolic meanings and that further investigations on the subject would be more successful through the application of an instrument that enabled such subtle meanings to be captured, such as an in-depth interview.

Third, this analysis showed that the dimensions of love proposed by Costa (2005) are not independent of one another. The dimensions are related to each other, and some data could be applied to more than one dimension. For example, the feeling of “being beloved” may be

a consequence of a token of love; the “togetherness” which is related to social interaction could also be applied to describe a model of the relationship; and to what extent does the ideal of love not propel all other dimensions? This observation led to the conclusion that it is not possible to speak exclusively about one of the dimensions proposed by Costa (2005) without alluding to the others.

C. The questionnaire

C.1. The formulation of the questionnaire

As mentioned in the methodological chapter, the “Questionnaire on socio-demographic and cultural information” was formulated to collect descriptive information on the respondents, their binational relationships and their partners; and to enable the measurement of their cultural capital and other important variables that might serve for the description of the sample.

Regarding the qualitative character of this study, it was considered important to offer a detailed description of those who would supply the data. Therefore, beyond the usual descriptive information such as age, sex, marital status and occupation, it was also considered relevant to know:

- The locale of birth, to enable the identification of possible sub-regional cultures in the sample and to control for respondents with a recent immigration history;
- Immigration history in the family, to identify who may have been influenced by other regional cultures and therefore does not fit the ideal sample;
- Parenthood status, to identify those who already constitute a family;
- Information on the current love relationship, since marital status does not always indicate those who are engaged in a relationship;
- Group and religious orientation, to identify possible ideological orientations in the sample that might influence the discourse on romantic love and on amorous praxis;
- Interest in the subject of romantic love, to investigate how much the respondents are involved with the theme and the idealizations of love disseminated by the media;
- Relationship experience, to evaluate the previous experience of the respondents with amorous relationships, since they are going to report about the subject.
- Travel and residence abroad. Considering that the habitus also has a creative character, integrating new experiences and transforming itself (Bourdieu 1990:60), and the supposition that the transit of the individual through different fields may grant more plasticity to their habitus (Brandão 2010:232), it would be interesting to observe the involvement of the respondents with foreign cultures (foreign fields). This information would also help to evaluate the intensity of the contact maintained by the respondent with the culture of the foreign partner; and to control for respondents with recent immigration history.

In line with the aims of this study, the cultural capital of the respondents needed to be evaluated to compose the groups of analysis. The educational qualification of the respondents, what Bourdieu calls educational capital (2008a:13), was applied as an indicator of their cultural capital. Since Germany and Brazil have different educational systems, equivalence between them both would be necessary to enable the classification of the respondents according to their educational capital. Therefore the International Standard

Classification of Education (ISCED 1997)¹⁰⁴ was applied. The ISCED is a scale developed by UNESCO to access, assemble and present possible indicators of comparison and statistical data on education between countries. The ISCED 1997 presents a scale of education, which suggests the increase of knowledge and skills. The scale starts with primary education at level 0 and it ends with the PhD degree at level 6. Thanks to the cooperation between the governments of Germany¹⁰⁵ and of Brazil¹⁰⁶ with UNESCO to establish equivalence between their educational systems and the ISCED 1997, it was possible to establish a common base of classification for the respondents' educational capital.¹⁰⁷

Considering the observation of Bourdieu (2008a:82-83), that there will always exist discrepancies between the cultural capital of individuals with the same educational capital, since the schooling process between the individuals may have different duration and each institution and teacher promotes different methods, contents and criteria of evaluation, it was decided to collect other information that could serve as a second reference for the cultural capital of the respondents:

- Current study status. This would help to identify those who are active in the process of acquiring legitimate knowledge and are improving their educational capital status;
- Number of foreign languages. Considering that the mastery of a foreign language is embodied capital transmitted by the family or acquired through formal education, it was supposed that the higher the number of languages someone masters, the higher his/her cultural capital;
- Media behavior. Considering that knowledge, the element of cultural capital, can be acquired through different media, it was supposed that the more time spent by individuals with media, the higher their investment in the acquisition of knowledge and therefore the higher their cultural capital.
- Cultural activities. Assuming that cultural products are above all consumed by those who master the codes to decipher them, it was supposed that those who more frequently attend cultural programs may present a higher cultural capital than those who do not.

In order to be able to locate the respondents in their social space, three coordinates, according to Bourdieu (2006:12-13), must be estimated: cultural capital, economic capital and social status. The cultural capital of the respondents, as already mentioned, was evaluated by their educational capital. The gross monthly income of the respondents would serve as a partial reference for their economic capital. And to evaluate the social status of the respondents, several pieces of information were chosen: the paid work they perform, from which to deduce their social status [the International Standard Classification of Occupations 2008¹⁰⁸ would

¹⁰⁴ UNESCO 2006.

¹⁰⁵ UNESCO 2007b.

¹⁰⁶ UNESCO 2007a.

¹⁰⁷ A table constructed to visualize the equivalences between the German educational system, the Brazilian educational system and the ISCED 1997 can be found in this Appendix.

¹⁰⁸ ILO 2006, 2009.

provide a reference for that]; the source of their money for subsistence, to identify those who live from their own work activities and those who do not need to; and the social class to which they assign themselves.

The occupation of the parents was also considered important information to be acquired, since it is a reference for the social origin of the respondent. By applying the status of the occupation of the parents as a reference for the social status of the family, it would be possible to identify the original social status of the respondents. And by deducing from the occupation of the parents their educational capital, it would be possible to evaluate the concentration of cultural capital in the parental home, which may also be a reference for the social status of the family. As Bourdieu (1997:49) argues, the long time necessary for the acquisition of cultural capital in its embodied state creates a positive relation between culture capital and economic capital. Individuals born in rich families have more chance to extend their schooling period than individuals born in poor families, who must start to work earlier in order to guarantee their own subsistence or the subsistence of their relatives.

Since the description of the respondents would be related to their foreign partners, it was also important to collect some socio-demographic information on those.

Regarding the considerations described above the questionnaire was formulated based on the *Fragenbogen zum Mikrozensus*,¹⁰⁹ *Allgemeine Bevölkerungsumfrage der Sozialwissenschaften*,¹¹⁰ *Pesquisa de Orçamentos Familiares*,¹¹¹ Pierre Bourdieu's study "Distinction" (1979), Eva Illouz's study "Consuming the romantic utopia" (1997) and studies on cultural capital (Brandão 2010, Setton 2005).

Although pilot interviews were conducted, the contribution of respondents at the beginning of the field research led to further improvements of the questionnaire. These improvements refer to: the elimination of questions that showed themselves irrelevant to the study; changes in the order of the questions to better present the questionnaire; reformulations of questions for better understanding or evaluation; and the transformation of open-ended questions into closed-ended questions (multiple-choice) to lessen the time necessary to fill it out.

The comparability among the questionnaires was not affected by its reformulation, since the few respondents who had answered an old version of the questionnaire were contacted to provide answers for the reformulated questions.

At the end of the field research the section "information about the partner" was expanded (place of birth, immigration background, length of the relationship, remuneration, social class, and cultural and social activities) and also duplicated to account for data on the foreign partner and on the partner from the same country. Despite all the efforts to obtain answers for those last two sections from respondents who had filled in the previous version of the questionnaire, there remained a great number of "missing answers" in these two sections.

¹⁰⁹ SÄBL 2010.

¹¹⁰ GESIS 2006.

¹¹¹ IBGE 2010.

The final version of the questionnaire presents 55 main questions divided among nine sections and is shown below.

C.2. The questionnaire

Thank you very much for your participation!
Identification data will be protected!

The questionnaire presents 9 categories, which comprise 55 main questions.
The time for filling it out is approximately 15 minutes.

Name: _____

Date: _____

A. Question on the person

1	Which is your gender?	<input type="checkbox"/> Female	<input type="checkbox"/> Male
2	How old are you?	_____	
3	Where were you born? (State, Country)	_____	
4	How long you have you lived in Brazil?	<input type="checkbox"/> Always	<input type="checkbox"/> Since ___ years
5	Is there an immigration story in your family's history?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
5.1	If yes, what?	_____	

B. Family Status

6	Which is your marital status?	<input type="checkbox"/> Single <input type="checkbox"/> Domestic Partnership <input type="checkbox"/> Divorced	<input type="checkbox"/> Married <input type="checkbox"/> Widowed <input type="checkbox"/> _____
6.1	How long have you held this marital status?	<input type="checkbox"/> Always	<input type="checkbox"/> Since ____ years
7	Do you have any kids?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
7.1	If yes, how old are they?	_____	
7.2	If yes, do they live in the same household as you?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
8	Are you in a love relationship at the moment? (for example: dating, partnership, affair...)?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
8.1	If yes, how long has it lasted?	_____	
8.2	If yes, do you share the same household with your partner?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
9	How many love relationships have you already had?	_____	
10	Have you ever shared the same household with a partner?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
10.1	If yes, how long did it last?	_____	

C. Religion

11	Do you practice a religion?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
	11.1 If yes, what?	_____	
12	Did your parents or do your parents practice a religion?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
	12.1 If yes, what?	Mother: _____	
		Father: _____	

D. Formal Education

13	What is your higher educational certificate? (For example: High-School, Abitur, Bachelors, Diploma, etc.)	_____ _____	
14	Have you ever completed an apprenticeship (not involving university study)?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
	14.1 If yes, what?	_____	
15	Are you studying at the moment?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
	15.1 If yes, to what educational certificate do you aspire?	_____	
16	Do you speak foreign languages?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
	16.1 If yes, what?	_____	

E. Occupation

17	Which is your main activity at the moment?	<input type="checkbox"/> Student <input type="checkbox"/> PhD Student <input type="checkbox"/> Trainee <input type="checkbox"/> Housewife <input type="checkbox"/> Self-employed	<input type="checkbox"/> Formal worker <input type="checkbox"/> Contract worker <input type="checkbox"/> Civil Servant <input type="checkbox"/> Businessman <input type="checkbox"/> _____
18	Do you perform a paid work at the moment?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
	18.1 If yes, what?	_____	
	18.2 If yes, what is the working time?	<input type="checkbox"/> Full time	<input type="checkbox"/> Part time
19	What paid work did you perform before?	_____	
20	What paid work did your parents or do your parents perform?	Mother: _____ Father: _____	

F. Social Status

21	What is your gross monthly income in Euro?	<input type="checkbox"/> Under 900 <input type="checkbox"/> 1,501 to 2,600 <input type="checkbox"/> Over 5,001	<input type="checkbox"/> 901 to 1,500 <input type="checkbox"/> 2,601 to 5,000 <input type="checkbox"/> no statement
22	To which social class do you assign yourself to?	<input type="checkbox"/> Working <input type="checkbox"/> Upper	<input type="checkbox"/> Middle <input type="checkbox"/> no statement

23	What is the source of the money for your subsistence?	<input type="checkbox"/> Work activity <input type="checkbox"/> Retirement, pension <input type="checkbox"/> Unemployment benefit <input type="checkbox"/> Own savings, earnings, inheritance <input type="checkbox"/> Other persons, like parents, spouse, partner <input type="checkbox"/> Other sources, like scholarship, government benefits <input type="checkbox"/> _____
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G. Cultural and social activities

24	How many pages do you read on average per week for work and study?	<input type="checkbox"/> None <input type="checkbox"/> 51 to 100 <input type="checkbox"/> 151 to 200	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 to 50 <input type="checkbox"/> 101 to 150 <input type="checkbox"/> more than 200
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24.1 What do you read for work and study? _____

25	What do you do in your free time?	_____
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26	How many pages do you read on average per week in your free time?	<input type="checkbox"/> None <input type="checkbox"/> 51 to 100 <input type="checkbox"/> 151 to 200	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 to 50 <input type="checkbox"/> 101 to 150 <input type="checkbox"/> more than 200
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27	Do you often read romances?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
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27.1 **If yes**, which was the last romance you read through? _____

28	Do you watch television?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
----	--------------------------	------------------------------	-----------------------------

28.1 **If yes**, how many hours do you watch on average per week?

<input type="checkbox"/> 1 to 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 8 to 12	<input type="checkbox"/> 4 to 7 <input type="checkbox"/> More than 12
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28.2	If yes , which programs do you watch?	_____
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28.3 **If yes**, do you watch programs about love?

<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
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28.3.1.	If yes , which programs?	_____
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29	Do you use the internet in your free time?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
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29.1	If yes , how many hours do you use the internet on average per week in your free time?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 to 5 <input type="checkbox"/> 10 to 15	<input type="checkbox"/> 6 to 10 <input type="checkbox"/> More than 15
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29.2 **If yes**, what do you use the internet for in your free time? _____

30	Do you use the internet to get to know people or to flirt?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
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30.1 **If yes**, which internet pages do you access to get to know people or to flirt? _____

31	Do you go more than once a month to the movies?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
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31.1 If yes , how many times do you go to the movies per month?	<input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> More than 4
32 Do you go more than once a month to museums, galleries or exhibitions?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
32.1 If yes , how many times do you go to museums, galleries or exhibitions per month?	<input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> More than 4
32.2 If yes , what is the name of the last art event that you attended?	_____	
33 Do you go more than once a year to music concerts?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
33.1 If yes , how many times do you go to concerts per year?	<input type="checkbox"/> 2-6 <input type="checkbox"/> 12 - 24	<input type="checkbox"/> 7-12 <input type="checkbox"/> More than 24
33.2 If yes , what music genre do you like?	_____	
34 How much money do you spent on average per month on leisure activities?	_____	
35 How often do you travel abroad as a tourist?	<input type="checkbox"/> Never <input type="checkbox"/> every 2 years <input type="checkbox"/> twice a year	<input type="checkbox"/> Rarely <input type="checkbox"/> once a year <input type="checkbox"/> 3 or more times a year
36 Have you ever lived abroad?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
36.1 If yes , in which countries have you lived and for how long?	_____ _____	
37 Do you take part regularly in some group (for example: political, religious, and artistic)?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
37.1 If yes , in which groups do you take part?	_____	

H. Socio-demographic and cultural information of the German partner

38 Where was he/she born?	_____	
39 Is there an immigration story in his/her family's history?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
39.1 If yes , what?	_____	
40 How long has your relationship lasted/ did it last?	From ____/____/____ until ____/____/____	
41 What is/was his/her higher educational certificate? Please, specify.	_____	
42 Does/did he/she speak foreign languages?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
42.1 If yes , what?	_____	
43 Does/did he/she perform paid work?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No

43.1 If yes, what?		
44	Which is/was his/her gross monthly income in Euro?	<input type="checkbox"/> Under 900 <input type="checkbox"/> 1,501 to 2,600 <input type="checkbox"/> Over 5,001
		<input type="checkbox"/> 901 to 1,500 <input type="checkbox"/> 2,601 to 5,000 <input type="checkbox"/> no statement
45	To which social class would you assign him/her?	<input type="checkbox"/> Working <input type="checkbox"/> Upper
		<input type="checkbox"/> Middle <input type="checkbox"/> no statement
46	Which are/were his/her cultural and leisure activities?	_____

I. Socio-demographic and cultural information of the Brazilian partner

47 Where was he/she born?		
48	Is there an immigration story in his/her family's history?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
48.1 If yes, what?		
49	How long has your relationship lasted/did it last?	From ____/____/____ until ____/____/____
50	What is/was his/her higher educational certificate? Please, specify.	_____
51	Does/did he/she speak foreign languages?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
51.1 If yes, what?		
52	Does/did he/she perform paid work?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
52.1 If yes, what?		
53	Which is/was his/her gross monthly income in reais?	<input type="checkbox"/> under 1020 <input type="checkbox"/> 1531 to 3060 <input type="checkbox"/> 5101 to 7650 <input type="checkbox"/> over 12,750
		<input type="checkbox"/> 1021 to 1530 <input type="checkbox"/> 3061 to 5100 <input type="checkbox"/> 7651 to 12,750 <input type="checkbox"/> no statement
54	To which social class would you assign him/her?	<input type="checkbox"/> Working <input type="checkbox"/> Upper
		<input type="checkbox"/> Middle <input type="checkbox"/> no statement
55	Which are/were his/her cultural and leisure activities?	_____

Thank you very much for your participation!

C.3. The International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED 1997) and the German and Brazilian educational systems

Equivalences between the German educational system, the Brazilian educational system and the ISCED 1997

ISCED	Name	Subdivisions	Germany			Brazil		
			Name	Duration	Diploma	Name	Duration	Diploma
0	Pre-primary education		Kindergärten	3 years		Educação Infantil - Creche	4 years	none
			Schulkindergärten / Vorklassen	1 year	none	Educação Infantil - Pré-escola	2-3 years	none
1	Primary education First stage of basic education		Primärbereich	4 years	none	Ensino Fundamental [1ª - 4ª Série até 2006] [1º - 5º Ano a partir de 2006]	4-5 years	none
						Educação de Jovens Adultos (EJA) [1ª - 4ª Série até 2006] [1º - 5º Ano a partir de 2006]	variable	
						Educação Especial [1ª - 4ª Série até 2006] [1º - 5º Ano a partir de 2006]	4-5 years	
2	Lower secondary education Second stage of basic education	2A - lead to 3A or 3B	Sekundarbereich I, ohne Qualifikation für weiterführende allgemeinbildende Bildungsgänge	6 years	Hauptschulabschluss/ Realschulabschluss/ Fachschulreife	Ensino Fundamental [5ª - 8ª Série até 2006] [6º - 9º Ano a partir de 2006]	8-9 years	Certificado de Conclusão do Ensino Fundamental
			Sekundarbereich I, mit Qualifikation für weiterführende allgemeinbildende Bildungsgänge	6 years		Educação de Jovens Adultos (EJA) [5ª - 8ª Série até 2006] [6º - 9º Ano a partir de 2006]	variable	
			Sekundarbereich I, Abendschulen	2 years		Educação Especial [5ª - 8ª Série até 2006] [6º - 9º Ano a partir de 2006]	4 years	
			Berufsaufbauschulen	1 year				
		Berufsvorbereitungsjahr	1 year	Abschlusszeugnis Berufsvorbereitungsjahr				
		2B - lead to 3C	does not apply			Educação de Jovens Adultos (EJA) integrada à Educação Profissional de Ensino Fundamental	variable	Certificado de Conclusão do Ensino Fundamental + Certificado de formação técnica inicial
2C - lead to labour market	does not apply			does not apply				
3	(Upper) secondary education	3A - lead to 5A	Fachoberschulen, 2 jährig	2 years	Fachhochschulreife / Hochschulreife	Ensino Médio	3-4 years	Certificado de Conclusão do Ensino Médio
			Berufsfachschulen, die eine Studienberechtigung vermitteln	2 years		Educação de Jovens Adultos (EJA)	variable	
			Fachgymnasien	3 years		Educação Especial de nível médio	3-4 years	
			Allgemeinbildende Programme im Sekundarbereich II	3 years				
		3B - lead to 5B	Berufsgrundbildungsjahr	1 year	Abschlusszeugnis Berufsgrundbildungsjahr	Formação de Professores na modalidade Normal em Nível Médio	4 years	Certificado de Magistério
			Berufsfachschulen, die berufliche Grundkenntnisse vermitteln	1 year	Abschlusszeugnis Berufsfachschule (Berufliche Grundkenntnisse)	Educação Profissional de nível Técnico	3-4 years	Diploma de Técnico
			Schulen des Gesundheitswesens, 1 jährig	1 year	Abschlusszeugnis für medizinische Hilfsberufe	Educação de Jovens Adultos (EJA) integrada à Educação Profissional de Ensino Médio	variable	
			Berufsfachschulen, die einen Berufsabschluss vermitteln	3 years	Beruflicher Abschluss	Educação Especial (modalidade Educação profissional de nível técnico)	3-4 years	
			Berufsschulen (Dual System) Erstausbildung	3 years	Lehrabschluss			
		3C - lead to labour market or level 4	Beamtensausbildung (mittlerer Dienst)	2 years	Laufbahnprüfung für den mittleren Dienst	does not apply		

4	Post-secondary non tertiary education	4A - lead to level 5	Fachoberschulen, 1 jährig	1 year	Fachhochschulreife	does not apply		
			Berufsoberschulen / Technische Oberschulen	2 years	Hochschulreife			
			Berufsfachschulen, die eine Berufsabschluss vermitteln (Zweitausbildung kombiniert mit Studienberechtigung)	3 years	Beruflicher Abschluss			
			Beruflichen (Dual System) (Zweitausbildung kombiniert mit Studienberechtigung)	3 years	Lehrabschluss			
			Sekundärbereich II, Abendschulen	3 years	Hochschulreife			
		4B - lead to labour market	Berufsschulen (Dual System) (Zweitausbildung, beruflich)	3 years	Lehrabschluss	does not apply		
5	First stage of tertiary education (not leading directly to an advanced research qualification)	5A - theoretically based / research preparatory programs or professions with high skills	Fachhochschulen	4 years	Bachelor/Master/ Diploma (FH)	Educação Superior	3-6 years	Diploma de Licenciatura Plena; Diploma de Bacharel; Diploma Especifico da Profissão
			Universitäten	5 years	Diplom/ Bachelor/ Master/ Staatsprüfung/ Lehramtsprüfung	Mestrado (Pós-graduação stricto sensu)	2 years	Diploma de Mestrado
		5B - practical / technical / occupationally oriented	Fachakademien (Bayern)	2 years	Abschluss der Fachakademie / Fachhochschulreife (in some cases)	Educação Profissional de nível Tecnológico	2-3 years	Diploma de Tecnólogo
			Schulen des Gesundheitswesens, 2+3 jährig	3 years	Abschlusszeugnis für medizinische Assistenten, Krankenschwestern/-pfleger			
			Fachschulen, 2 jährig	2 years	Fachschulabschluss, Meister / Techniker, Erzieher			
			Fachschulen, 3+4 jährig	3 years	Fachschulabschluss, Meister / Techniker, Erzieher			
			Berufsakademien	3 years	Diplom (BA - Berufsakademie)			
			Verwaltungsfachhochschulen	3 years	Diplom (FH - Verwaltungsfachhochschule)			
6	Second stage of tertiary education (leading to an advanced research qualification)		Promotionsstudium	2 years	Promotion	Doutorado (Pós-graduação stricto sensu)	4 years	Diploma de Doutorado

C.4. International Standard Classification of Occupations 2008 (ISCO-08)

ISCO-08 major groups	Skill Level	ISCED-97
1 - Managers, senior officials and legislators	4	6 - Second stage of tertiary education (leading to an advanced research qualification) 5A - First stage of tertiary education, 1st degree (medium duration)
	3	5B - First stage of tertiary education (short or medium duration)
2 - Professionals	4	6 - Second stage of tertiary education (leading to an advanced research qualification) 5A - First stage of tertiary education, 1st degree (medium duration)
3 - Technicians and associate professionals	3	5B - First stage of tertiary education (short or medium duration)
4 – Clerks	2	4 - Post-secondary, non-tertiary education 3 - Upper secondary level of education 2 - Lower secondary level of education
5 - Service and sales workers		
6 - Skilled agricultural and fishery workers		
7 - Craft and related trades workers		
8 - Plant and machine operators, and assemblers		
9 - Elementary occupations	1	1 - Primary level of education
0 – Military occupations	4	6 - Second stage of tertiary education (leading to an advanced research qualification) 5A - First stage of tertiary education, 1st degree (medium duration)
	1	1 - Primary level of education

D. The interview

D.1. The formulation of the interview script

The interview script was formulated in consideration of the literature review and the preliminary considerations drawn from the field research – the observation of events for singles, the questionnaire of high-school students, and the conversations with acquaintances and friends on their binational relationships.¹¹² Initially twenty themes were selected to be investigated during the interview; however, in the first phase of the field research some themes showed themselves superfluous to the study and were therefore discarded. The changes to the interview script did not disturb the comparability of data, since the themes did not change, they only decreased in number. The final interview script can be seen below.

D.2. Interview script

I. Amorous experience

1. How many relationships have you ever had with Germans?
 - 1.1. How long did they last?
 - 1.2. Have you cohabited with any of them? **How long did it last?**
2. How many relationships have you ever had with Brazilians?
 - 2.1. **How long did they last?**
 - 2.2. Have you cohabited with any of them? **How long did it last?**
3. Have you ever been to Brazil/Germany?
 - 3.1. How long did you stay there?
 - 3.2. When was the last time you were there?

II. Personal considerations

4. If you think about the most significant relationship you had with a Brazilian partner and the most significant relationship you had with a German partner, do you observe differences in the way they expressed their love for you? **What?**

(1) Verbal amorous expressions

5. What do you observe in regard to verbal amorous expressions, like 'I love you' or 'I like you'?
 - 5.1. Were there differences in the way they applied such verbal expressions?
 - 5.2. In the frequency that they said it?
 - 5.3. In the contexts they said it?
6. What do you observe in regard to nicknames?
 - 6.1. Were there differences in the frequency that they applied it?
 - 6.2. In the contexts they applied it?
7. What do you observe in regard to compliments?

¹¹² This methodological approach is called by Manning (1987) "existential field work", which emphasizes the relationship between researcher and object and allows the first to apply his/her own knowledge and from his/her circle of discussions to establish hypotheses and allegations about the subject.

- 7.1. Were there differences in the frequency that they applied them?
- 7.2. In the contexts they applied them?
- 7.3. Which were the subjects of the compliments? For example: appearance, ability...
- 7.4. What is your opinion on compliments related to beauty?
- 7.5. How did they react to your compliments?

(2) Gestural amorous expressions

8. What do you observe in regard to gestural amorous expressions, like hugging and kissing or caressing?
 - 8.1. Were there differences in the way they applied such gestural expressions?
 - 8.2. In the frequency that they applied them? Is one of them more proactive in gestural expressions than the other?
 - 8.3. In the contexts they applied them?
 - 8.4. Did those gestures have different meanings for them?
 - 8.5. How did they react to your amorous gestures?
9. What do you observe in regard to a passionate kiss?
 - 9.1. Did it communicate the same thing for both of them?
10. What do you observe in regard to body contact, besides sexual relations?
 - 10.1. Was it more necessary for one of them?
11. What do you observe in regard to sex?
 - 11.1. Was it more necessary for one of them?
 - 11.2. Were there differences in the way they performed it?
12. Could you please describe what your partners did that expressed their desire for you?
13. Could you please describe what your partners did that expressed their love for you?

(3) Private and public spaces

14. Did you observe differences in their amorous conduct when they moved from a private to a public space?

(4) Romantic love

15. Have you ever had romantic experiences?
 - 15.1. Were there differences in the way they understood romantic situations?
 - 15.2. Could you please describe romantic experiences that you had with your partners?
 - 15.3. Have you ever tried to produce a romantic situation? How was it?
16. What do you observe in regard to jealousy?
 - 16.1. Did it have different meanings for them?
17. What do you observe in regard to the position they gave to the love relationship in their lives?

(5) Gender relations

18. What do you observe in regard to gender relations?
 - 18.1. What were the expectations they had for you because you are a man/woman?
 - 18.2. How did the decision process happen in the relationships? What did you decide together and what did you decide separately?
19. What do you observe in regard to partnership?

- 19.1. Were there differences in the way they understood partnership?
- 20. What do you observe in regard to courtesy acts, such as helping with bags, or opening doors?

(6) Individuality and collectivity

- 21. What do you observe in regard to leisure time?
 - 21.1. Did you spend leisure time together or apart?
- 22. What do you observe in regard to friendship?
 - 22.1. Did their friends become your friends too and vice-versa?
 - 22.2. Were there differences in the way their friends took part in your relationship?
- 23. What do you observe in regard to family?
 - 23.1. Were there differences in the way their families took part in your relationship?
- 24. What do you observe in regard to autonomy?
 - 24.1. Were there differences in the frequency they asked for help?
 - 24.2. How did they accept your help?

(7) Planning and spontaneity

- 25. What did you observe in regard to planning and spontaneity?
 - 25.1. What is the impact of those on the relationship?

(8) Critical conduct

- 26. What did you observe in regard to critical conduct?
 - 26.1. Were there differences in the way they criticized?
 - 26.2. In the frequency they did so?
 - 26.3. How did they accept criticism?
 - 26.4. Did criticism have different meanings for them?
- 27. What did you observe in regard to opinions?
 - 27.1. Were there differences in the way they expressed their opinion?
 - 27.2. In the frequency they did so?
 - 27.3. In how they substantiated it?
- 28. What did you observe in regard to sincerity and objectivity?

(9) Flirting and social interaction

- 29. What did you observe in regard to flirting in Germany and in Brazil?
 - 29.1. Could you please describe flirtation situations in Germany and in Brazil?
- 30. Are there differences in the way they exchange glances?
 - 30.1. Is a glance exchange necessary before approaching someone?
- 31. What do they talk about in a flirtation situation? Which subjects do they approach? What do they want to know?
- 32. Are there differences in the way they provide information about themselves?
- 33. Do you feel yourself evaluated when you meet someone in Brazil or in Germany? How?

D.3. The analysis of the interviews

Before the analysis of the 32 interviews started, they were transcribed in their entirety and in the original language. The formal language form was applied, although preserving some colloquial language, syntax or vocabulary mistakes. Non-verbal information, like laughter, and interruptions by others, such as waiters, were mentioned in the transcript to better understand the context. The transcription rules adopted were based on the ones suggested by Hoffmann-Riem (1984:331 apud Kuckartz 2010:47) and can be seen in the next subchapter.

Since the interviews together comprised more than 58 hours, to accelerate the transcription process, students and professionals not related to the interviewees were contracted to help with the transcriptions. They were requested to protect the identity of the respondents, as well as the data provided. They all received the same orientations, transcription rules and examples of transcriptions, to guarantee the uniformity of the transcripts.

MAXQDA, software for qualitative data analysis, was applied to implement the analysis of the interviews, and the advice for computer-assisted analysis of Udo Kuckartz (2010), one of its developers, was adopted. Thus, after the transcription, corrections and formatting of the transcripts (1034 pages), the 32 interviews were introduced into the program. Important descriptive information of the respondents, such as sex, regional and cultural capital groups, as well as the audio format of the interviews, were also input into the program before the analysis process started.

The methodological approach adopted for the analysis of the interviews was the content analysis as promoted by Philipp Mayring (2008). The researcher offers a systematic, rule-guided approach to content analysis, which treats the material as a model of communication and, consequently, takes into consideration all its constitutive elements, i.e. the authors/speakers and the recipient/listener, the socio-cultural background, the situation of the text/discourse production, and also the analysts themselves (Mayring 2008:48; 2010:603; 2000:2). Thus, regarding the respondents as co-observers, the interviews were analyzed considering *who* is telling *what* about *who* and to *whom*? The standpoint from which the observations were made, the themes they involved, the objects of their consideration, and those whom they were addressing, were all taken into account.

To speak about content analysis as a systematic approach does not mean that it is a standard instrument, but rather one that has to be adapted to the data available and to the leading questions of the investigation (Mayring 2008:49). According to Mayring (2008:49), the analysis procedure must be systematically described, in order that the readers may follow the researcher's steps and conclusions.

At the center of the content analysis is the system of categories (Mayring 2010:603; 2008:49; 2000:3). The categories are the condensed form of the evaluation aspects [what the grounded theorist calls code], and must be accurately defined, and their application to the text must conform to the rules of analysis, which in the present study follows an inductive process, i.e.

consists in the formulation of the categories from the data and in the assembly of those inductive categories into major categories (Mayring 2010:604-605, 603; 2008:83; 2000:3-5).

In his investigation of the main approaches in content analysis, Mayring (2008:63-65) observes that the basic techniques applied are three: summary, explication and patterning. While the first technique has as its aim the reduction of the text to its substantial content, the second one aims through the aggregation of external data to expand the comprehension and explanation of the text, and the third one analyzes only sections of the text in order to filter specific aspects previously established.

As Kuckartz (2010:96) observes, although the summary form of content analysis is considerably more descriptive and less oriented to theory than other methodological approaches (e.g. Grounded Theory), it is one of the more favorable approaches for an explorative study. Taking this observation into consideration, the present study adopted the summary procedure model suggested by Mayring (2008:68). This procedure model is composed of seven steps, which are described next.

The first step consists in the definition of the sequence in which the text will be analyzed, and in the definition of the units of analysis, i.e. the definition of the smallest and the biggest textual sections that can be analyzed and that can be related to a category. In the present study it was decided that the interviews would be analyzed in their original progress, and a word was defined as the smallest textual section, and for the biggest textual section no limit was determined. It was also decided to not analyze the interviews randomly, but to analyze them according to the regional and cultural capital groups, place of the field research and sex. Regarding those features, eleven sets of analysis were established for the implementation of the analysis.

The next step consists in the paraphrasing of text parts with significant content, i.e. textual sections must be rewritten in a short and condensed form. The third step, the definition of the level of abstraction and generalization of the paraphrases under this level of abstraction, consists in the establishment of the themes of the paraphrases. The fourth step comprises the first intense reduction of the material through grouping the paraphrases with similar themes and eliminating paraphrases with the same meaning.

Mayring (2008) suggests for those initial steps a table structure, which allows the process of paraphrasing and generalization to be observed in detail. However, this format is not possible in software for qualitative analysis (Kuckartz 2010:96), and for a great amount of text the paraphrase process is extremely time-consuming (Kuckartz 2010:95). Therefore, following the suggestions of Kuckartz (2010:96) and Mayring (2008:113), categories, i.e. words or small sentences, were applied as paraphrases to sentences with similar content, thus enabling the formation of inductive categories and the acceleration of the analysis process. During the inductive category construction process, category-memos were written to define them and to account for reflections and considerations on the relations between the categories. After the interviews from sets 1 and 2 were categorized [codified], a revision of the system of categories

was implemented to check its adequacy and to make the necessary reformulations, as suggested by Mayring (2008:84) for an appropriate inductive category construction process.

Subsequently the codification of the remaining interviews, the fifth step, was executed, i.e. the second intense reduction of the material through condensing, constructing and integrating paraphrases according to the established level of abstraction. This step led to the re-evaluation and condensation of the categories, which enabled the sixth step, i.e. the arrangement of the statements as a system of categories. To guarantee that the text content was preserved during the reduction process, the review of the system of categories through the re-examination of the analyzed material was effectuated, as the last step prescribes.

After the categorization of the data and the identification of main themes, the second part of the analysis began: the writing of the results of the investigation.

D.4. Transcription rules

Symbols	Meaning
..	Short pause
...	Medium pause
....	Long pause
.....	Omission
/eh/ /ehm/	Thinking pause
((event))	Non-verbal expression, like ((Silence))((pointing to a photo))
((reaction)) ((emotion))	Non-verbal expression accompanying the speech
<u>word</u>	Conspicuous emphasis, also loud speech
w o r d	Drawn-out speech
()	Incomprehensible
(word?)	Presumed speech, when not precisely understood
[word]	When interviewer omitted the word in his/her speech; information about interruptions on the interview; anonymization of the text
[...]	elimination of redundant information
//	Speaker was interrupted

E. Considerations on the methodological process

Every investigation involves a number of decisions, which in conjunction with difficulties met in the field lead consequently to limitations and bias. This study is no different.

Regarding the instruments applied during the field research, it became clear that the questionnaire was too long, especially following a 60-to-90 minutes interview. For this reason, it was necessary to allow some respondents to deliver the questionnaire later, which engendered two unexpected tasks: to request the questionnaire and to collect it. The changes in the questionnaire during the field research were applied because of their importance. However, the additional work in contacting the respondents who had not answered the new (re)formulated questions led to extra work and delays in the schedule of the research. In addition, the inclusion of questions on the questionnaire at the end of the field research was unsuccessful, since it was not possible to obtain answers from all the past respondents. These adversities in conjunction with invalid answers impaired the usability of the questionnaire.

In light of the way in which individuals could more easily report about differences than similarities between regional groups, it was decided to focus the investigation on cultural differences. As observed in the methodological chapter, the explorative character of qualitative social research encourages researchers to be creative and develop new techniques of investigation (Lamnek 2010:20, 76; Miles and Huberman 1994:7). In order to grasp the practices and meanings behind courtship and romance in Germany and in Brazil, an interview script was formulated that focused on the comparison of amorous experiences between Germans and Brazilian partners.

Nevertheless, discursive reconstructions of past experiences are informed by the individual's regional culture and may carry stereotypes about regional groups – one's own and the foreigner's. In order to account for this, the data collected through the participant observations of events for singles was applied not only to immersion in the empirical world of the respondents – to identify objects of central concern for the regional groups and to understand the actions of their members during courtship – but also to cross-check the information gathered through the interviews. Beyond that, in order to avoid the reproduction of possible stereotypes during the analysis of the data, it was decided to consider as particular to each regional group only those observations that could be found in the reports of both groups, i.e. only what Germans described as usual for themselves and what Brazilians also mentioned as usual by Germans was included, and vice-versa.

The fact that the researcher is Brazilian and therefore a foreigner in Germany, on the one hand granted her a better understanding of Brazilian amorous practices and enabled her to identify more easily the differences between the regional groups; on the other hand, the shared and "self-evident" knowledge with one of the regional groups may also have made her "blind" to particularities in the Brazilian group and susceptible to corroborating stereotypes shared by them. In order to avoid bias or misinterpretations in the analysis process a constant effort of reflexivity was applied during the whole study.

By choosing to restrict the sample to heterosexual individuals living in Berlin, Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo, and as a consequence of the snowball sampling process, this study reports above all the perspective of heterosexual individuals with a high level of education particularly in the Social Sciences and from urban environments in Germany and in Brazil.

The methodological choices made in this investigation are, however, not the only reasons for the biased sample. Some difficulties encountered in the field were also responsible for the profile of the sample. As observed during the exploration of the field, it was more difficult to get the participation of German respondents than of Brazilian respondents; of male respondents than of female respondents; and of respondents with lower educational capital than of respondents with higher educational capital.

Although potential respondents were reassured about data protection and the preservation of their identity through the anonymization of the data, the German candidates who refused to be interviewed mentioned in particular their discomfort in speaking with a stranger about such an intimate subject. The Brazilian respondents, on the other hand, showed little concern about the fact that the researcher was a stranger, or how the data would be used. Those different postures in regard to exposure of the private life led to a higher number of interviews with Brazilians than with Germans.

The limited number of male interviewees may be explained as an effect of heteronormative gender relations. Since the researcher is a woman, the approached male candidates may have felt uncomfortable in talking about such an intimate subject with her.

The difficulty in acquiring respondents with lower educational capital may lie in the fact that the researcher, as a foreign PhD student in Germany, has a network composed primarily of persons in the same situation as she. The sampling procedures through advertisement of the study in different institutions and personal contact with the staff of locations that promote the Brazilian/German culture in Germany/Brazil tried to overcome this circumstance. Nonetheless, contact with Germans and Brazilians with low educational capital remained rare.

The field research in Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo presented many difficulties in compared to the field research in Berlin, which restricted the amount of data collected in Brazil. During the stay in Rio de Janeiro, the invasion of the complexo do Alemão by the police and militaries occurred. Because of the context of violence many respondents wanted to stay at home and public transport was not working, so some interviews needed to be postponed, and others were cancelled by the respondents.

The period of the field research in Brazil involved the Christmas and New Year's Eve holidays and the school and university vacations. Since many candidates were not sure about their plans for those days, they were also unwilling to establish appointments, making it hard to arrange interviews.

With regard to the collected data, the different ways in which individuals in Germany and in Brazil seem to regard courtship practices may have influenced the results of this study. As was observed in this study, in Brazil courtship seems to be regarded as a common interaction and

a leisure activity, and individuals tend to speak about it with less restraint. In Germany, however, courtship seems to be regarded as a private experience and consequently individuals do not tend to speak explicitly and openly about it with strangers, as Krause and Kowalski (2013:37) also observed in their investigation on courtship in New York (USA) and in Berlin (Germany). Beyond that, although the effort was made to create a comfortable situation for respondents during the interviews, the question remains open as to how individuals in Germany, male respondents or those with a lower education qualification felt around the researcher – a strange young academic woman – and to what extent they exposed their private experiences and thoughts during the interviews. In other words, to what extent they report what is socially acceptable rather than what they really think. Nevertheless, that is a fundamental, unavoidable problem for any interview, which must be taken into consideration.

As Blumer (1969:21-32) highlights, the traditional means of validity cannot be applied to qualitative social sciences, since they cannot access the validity of premises, concepts, interpretations and so on. The solution for validity for qualitative social research, according Blumer (1969:40-47), lies in grounding the interpretations, decisions and conclusions of the study on empirical data. In this study it was attempted to achieve validity by developing three lines of investigation, by describing them in detail, by comparing their data and from this comparison deriving conclusions that were illustrated with the reports of respondents, in order to enable the readers to follow the researcher's thoughts and inferences on love.

Despite its limitations and biases, this study contributes to the discussion on love by showing culture in action, by providing a broad definition of love and combining the contributions of different language centers, by offering an explanation for different regional amorous codes, by providing a glimpse of the courtship and romantic practices in Germany and in Brazil, by pointing out new social values and their influence on love, by investigating the influence of cultural capital on love, by discussing the data with the theory and by offering new insights for further consideration.