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ID 1464 | ANTHROPOPHAGY IN PLANNING: BUILDING A THEORY FROM THE SOUTH THROUGH | AN ASSOCIATION OF ACTOR- NETWORK THEORY AND HISTORICAL MATERIALISM

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1 INTRODUCTION

The tacit understanding of a singular path to development still permeates the practice of urban planning in both Global South and North, ignoring “the world epistemological diversity [and] the conflictual plurality of the knowledges that inform social practices” (Santos et al., 2004, p. 19). Even when the interest to situate the local within a globalised world is identified, there is little research that investigates local networks, reflecting what Souza (2011) describes as ‘knocking on the doors, but not entering the houses’, as researchers do not delve into the everyday. Even still, when research does investigate the everyday, the natural step is to appropriate EuroAmerican (that is, central) theoretical frameworks to deal with peripheries, disregarding particular socio-spatial features of local practices. So, the tooling is usually inadequate and out of context reflecting a hegemonic ‘central’ process that packs places full of singularities in the category ‘the periphery’.

As a result, short-sighted strategies are not able to encompass micro-scale alternatives that might be brought about from specific socio-spatial practices, thus not challenging the socio-spatial inequalities and inequities deep-rooted in countries of the global South, such as Brazil. Theory and praxis fail to value local initiatives that may lead to local transformation, reinforcing the hegemonic power relations at play in the everyday. The lack of interest in what we will call bottom-bottom tactics (Melgaço, 2016)—those that will happen at a microlocal scale and in the everyday level of a given socio-spatial group—reinforces the ‘one solution for all’ approach. This phenomenon is even more deleterious in the Global South, where, as already said, EuroAmerican theories are often decontextualised to further explain peripheral phenomena without the due contextualised critical approach.

At LAGEAR (Graphics Laboratory for Architectural Experience) and MOM (Living in Other Ways), two research groups at the School of Architecture at the Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais in Brazil, we have been challenged to deal with urban communities’ everyday socio-spatial practices and we came to understand that the EuroAmerican theoretical framework we always drew from has blurred our view of the communities with preconceived abstract (and prejudiced) universal assumptions of power relations.

This might seem obvious, but is not an easy problem to deal with as socio-spatial postcolonial theories are scarce and come from elite researchers working in EuroAmerican universities (not to mention socio-spatial decolonial theories from Latin American researchers, which barely exist)¹.

In order to cope with such a problem, we started to investigate possible approaches to enlarge our theoretical framework to avoid hegemonic universal assumptions, taking into account microlocal specifics without turning our back to EuroAmerican theories. This has been done in a sort of meta-method, drawing from Oswald de Andrade Anthropophagic Manifesto (1928), which questioned Brazilian cultural dependency.

Andrade (1928) brings the image of the anthropophagic ritual, in which human beings eat others to incorporate their features. In Andrade’s Manifesto (1928) Brazilian culture would stop ignoring its roots (Indigenous and African) and be freshly reinvented, departing from the very roots, “eating” and “digesting” a selection of interesting features from abroad. Anthropophagy as a method assumes the richness of intercultural encounters and at the same time avoids dependency on foreign culture. A well-known jargon from Andrade’s manifesto (1928) is “Tupi, or not Tupi, that is the question”, which acknowledges Shakespeare’s relevance and at the same time replaces ‘To be’ with ‘Tupi’, dislocating the Shakespearean doubt from a universal being in the world to the Native Brazilian tradition. So, at the same time anthropophagy questions universals and draws from them. The main point, we argue, is the need to keep the theoretical framework in context, always under construction, avoiding abstract hegemonic universal theories that tend to become prescribed top-down truths.

Let us introduce a few critiques raised by decolonial theories in general and then by postcolonial urbanism² to explain our proposed anthropophagic method. One of the most important decolonial authors is the Argentinian philosopher Enrique Dussel, exiled in Mexico. His politics and philosophy of liberation focus on a collective, which he calls pueblo (the people), as the subject of democracy (Dussel, 2012). Democracy needs no adjective but to be aware of its subject, the block of people, which is neither a hegemonic block in power nor a class, but a group of different people (defined with Gramsci as the social block of the oppressed) that are usually powerless and misrepresented in the traditional representative democracy. For Dussel (2012), the decolonising turn indicates a new approach to politics taking into account the contradictions within the “block of people” and its potential historical transformations. So, the decolonial theory proposes a theoretical framework to look at oppressed people without preconceived EuroAmerican universals.

Being more specific, a good example is that of African indigenous feminist standpoint³, claiming that Western gender theories tend “to reduce women and girls’ experience to categories of ‘victim’ and ‘other’”,

¹ For the postcolonial theories of space see for example Ananya Roy (Professor of Urban Planning, Social Welfare and Geography and inaugural Director of The Institute on Inequality and Democracy at UCLA Luskin), AbdouMalik Simone (Goldsmiths College, University of London), Ash Amin (Director of Research in the Department of Geography at the University of Cambridge), Jamie Peck (Canada Research Chair in Urban and Regional Political Economy and Professor at the Department of Geography at the University of British Columbia in Canada).

² We have no intention to cover decolonial and postcolonial theories but highlight selected aspects that help understanding our proposed method.

³ Dussel is part of the Group modernidad/colonialidad, one of the most important collectives of thinkers in the first decade of the 21st century, discussing the power relations established from 1492 with the conquest of what came to be known as America. This group departs from the capitalist mode of production and European modernity (trying to construct a local political view rather than adopting the consolidated economic framework), distinguishing itself from postcolonial thinkers—usually coming from British and French colonies in Asia, Oceania and Middle East, drawing from a culturalist perspective and starting their colonial history 300 years after ours—. It is clear that colonization happened in very different ways in each place. Generally, we might say that the main difference, besides the period, is that the earlier

clouding contradictions experienced by girls and women in the construction of their power “via relational world views of motherhood, family, sisterhood and friendship” (Chilisa and Ntseane, 2010, p. 617).

Chilisa and Ntseane highlight that “Western male hegemony enters the school through subjects such as religion and can be typically reinforced through [...] culture, embodied in language and rituals, generating multiple centres of oppression for girls/women in the education system and the public space” and that there is a need to explore “ethical and transformative ways of approaching this complexity that can account for how girls and women negotiate and resist patriarchal power” (Chilisa and Ntseane, 2010, p. 617). They claim that their work “explore[s] strategies for decolonising Euro-Western archival knowledge and challenging dominant, patriarchal, colonial research methodologies” while also “outlin[ing] the role of the activist feminist researcher as transformative healer, who resists dominant research discourses in order to develop processes of social justice and healing in the community” (Chilisa and Ntseane, 2010, p. 617).

This seems a good pointer for social research, but if we expand our research scope to socio-spatial practices, considering that space is constituted by and is constitutive of a social group, we need to enlarge our decolonial perspective. Marcelo Lopes de Souza (2006, 2012) proposes a socio-spatial approach he calls *estadocritico* (critical of the state) incorporating tactics into strategies. Usually, tactical approaches (the bottom-bottom) tend to disappear while strategic proposals (top-down or bottom-up) tend to last. The challenge is to incorporate tactics into strategies, bringing bottom-bottom tactics to dialogue with bottom-up strategies, always avoiding the top-down (Gazzola, 2017). For that we might consider different scales (the microlocal and the global) and draw from a postcolonial critique of urbanism formulated by Jamie Peck (2015, p. 166).

[...] Postcolonial urbanism had to entail more than turning conventional treatments upside down, flipping over the ‘time chart of urban theory’ by promoting Southern urbanisms as alternative universals or premonitions of an alt-global norm; instead, the goal was to be one of ‘decentring [rather than inverting] the reference points for international scholarship’ (pp. 169, 91). Along the way, this would have to involve “dislocating” the EuroAmerican centre of theoretical production’, while recognizing that the regions of the ‘centre’ may also be ‘exceptional from a [truly] global perspective’ (ROY, 2009, p. 820; SEEKINGS and KEIL, 2009, p. vi; SHEPPARD, 2014). The project of postcolonial urbanism is consequently marked by an attitude of principled wariness concerning most (if not all) pre-given conceptual or classificatory formulations, especially universals made in the North and masquerading as stylized facts, policy paradigms or conceptual abstractions.

happened in very different ways in each place. Generally, we might say that the main difference, besides the period, is that the earlier colonisation of America ended up being more devastating of the native culture—by mixing cultures— than the later colonisation of British and French in Asia, Oceania and Middle East—and also Africa—which managed to preserve their dialects and cultural traditions (with much less mixture). The main similarity is the imposition of hegemonic power relations from the colonisers. The example of African indigenous approach might seem questionable, as the African decolonial perspective is very different from the Latin American, being the indigenous in Africa acknowledged as a preserved category oppressed by hegemonic discourses and practices of injustice, while in Latin America, specially in Brazil, the cultural mixture prevails, even if a few indigenous groups also exist. Nevertheless, the feminist perspective of the indigenous in African theory is a good example of a means to approach contradictions beyond reproducing abstract EuroAmerican hegemonic universals, moving towards social justice.

However, we also acknowledge the excessive particularism of Postcolonial studies that frustrates attempts to reconcile the global and the local in research (scales that are only growing apart (Peck, 2015)) and to develop common grounds for Southern urbanism and EuroAmerican theories to dialogue (Peck, 2015; Vainer, 2014). The urban field still lacks methodological strategies that address the local while situating it

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within a macro-structure as a means to overcome the dichotomy and, instead, foster a dialogue between the planetary and the particular (Peck, 2015). This means considering the 'globalising power' but also highlighting peripheral 'counter-narratives' (McFarlane, 2010).

In our research groups, one first attempt to deal with this through a meta-method drawing from anthropophagy was experimented in Ligia Milagres' PhD research (2016). She did two case studies of selforganisation of people in disputes for urban spaces—one in Brazil and one in Germany—not comparing, but highlighting the main issues raised in each. The method assumed the EuroAmerican basis of our socio-spatial theoretical background¹ and instead of trying to avoid that, incorporated it in building a theoretical lens to look at the cases. The lens brought fundamental concepts from anarchy and Marxian theories dealing with socio-spatial issues and had its focus defined according with the local spatial practices examined. After that, little theoretical pointers were drawn from the encounter with the everyday practices, establishing a deeper dialogue between global and local, EuroAmerican and Brazilian. The result is still incipient, but drafts a decolonial theory of self-organization of socio-spatial groups as an open process, not as a finished product, which would not come up to usual socio-spatial EuroAmerican methods. The main difficulties of Milagres' method were raising data within the time frame of the research; not looking at the cases with the colonial perspective of power relations (Quijano, 2000); not polarizing conflicting relations as antagonistic; and not being extremely subjective in the selection of what to consider or not. So, two main challenges need attention: first, to shorten data raising time and, second, to develop a tool to look more objectively to the local practices in order to voice socio-spatial contradictions without ignoring the theoretical lens.

In order to shorten data raising time we had already tried different approaches, extending from semi-structured interviews with a range of selected experts in the community, to photography workshops with a small group of people registering the spaces they like and dislike and projecting the pictures later for public discussion (Kapp and Baltazar, 2014). Regarding information apprehension, the latter is less timeconsuming.

Even if most people are not willing to take pictures, they are often keen to join the projection session. The discussions raised by different views on the places registered are very inspiring as they provide a quick socio-spatial panorama and reveal consensus and contradictions within the community. Nevertheless, researchers may fall into the trap of analysing the outcome from public discussions with a biased viewpoint, assuming power relations according to their cultural background and colonial universals, and polarizing contradictions as antagonisms. So, we also need a tool to analyse data avoiding the above said.

Actor-Network Theory (ANT) seems the best tool for the job (even being European) because it is a sort of meta-method designed against other tooling that departs from power relations, and proposes to look at the connections between humans and non-humans in an unbiased network. Relations will raise from a careful description of such a network (in our case, the socio-spatial relations) with no imposition of the researchers' EuroAmerican theoretical framework (Latour, 2005). According to John Law (1992) ANT researchers should not neglect the existence of a macro-social system that interacts with the micro-social:

For instance, we might start with interaction and assume that interaction is all that there is. Then we might ask how some kinds of interactions more or less succeed in stabilising and reproducing themselves: how it is that they overcome resistance and seem to become "macrosocial"; how it is that they seem to generate the effects such power, fame, size, scope or organisation with which we are all familiar (Law, 1992, p. 380).

ANT simultaneously wards off social and structural determinism (Latour, 1999), taking agency as something that "happens in the 'intra-actions' of everyone and everything involved, and is not an attribute located in the machine (...) neither an attribute located in people. Agency is not a practice separate from the whole interactive process, it always emerges as a hybrid process" (Baltazar and Kapp, 2010). According to Latour (1996 par. 13), "[t]he notion of network helps us to lift the tyranny of geographers in defining space and offers us a notion which is neither social nor 'real' space, but simply associations". He also explains that ANT "is a theory that says that by following circulations we can get more than by defining entities, essences or provinces. ANT is not a theory of the social, it is a theory of a space in which the social has become a certain type of circulation" (Latour, 1999, par.19). Nevertheless, space in ANT is seen as a background, not as an actant in the network (Farias and Bender, 2012; Murdoch, 1998).

Thus, the benefit for researchers to take ANT as a method to construct a socio-spatial network is the possibility of a temporary withdraw from structural assumptions surrounding the work of social research and take 'space' as an actant together with all other human and non-human actants, as it allows for more attention to the relations found on site that are often neglected from a macro scale approach (specially in urban fragile communities). However, we still have research questions that needs addressing after an

¹ With the exception of Marcelo Lopes de Souza and a few writings of our own group, all the socio-spatial literature we draw from is EuroAmerican.

unbiased understanding of the community as a network, to which ANT alone cannot respond. So, we can still keep the usual theoretical lens to frame research questions and adjust its focus according to the ANT network outcome. For that we draw from Historical Materialism (HM) because Marxian-based theories are usually the grounds of EuroAmerican Critical Urban theories (our known theoretical framework up to now).

It might be argued that constructivist theories such as ANT and Marxian-based theories such as Critical Urban theory are, in the least, antagonistic in nature. That is so, because, generally, while foundations of the latter lie on the existence of macro structures that actively influence the way space is produced, the former utterly negates the existence of such conforming fabric, arguing that reality is socially constructed.

This means that for ANT power lies on asymmetrical interactions between all sorts of actants (both humans and nonhumans) that can be observed in a microscale, while Marxian theories tend to explain the existing power relations on the basis of a macrostructure, such as the capitalist mode of production. Nevertheless, many scholars have already seen the complementarity of these approaches when attempting to bridge macro and micro analysis. For instance, Brenner et al. (2012) discuss the benefits of ANT as a methodological tool to investigate urban issues, as opposed to ANT as an ontology. Thus, while ANT provides an effective tool to quickly map a locality without any pre-judgement of value in the relationships of eventual conflictive parties (but lacks tools to generalise); HM allows for an in-depth critical analysis of co-existing conflicts found on site (despite its difficulty to encompass particular elements essential to understand urban issues at the microlocal scale and its pre-set EuroAmerican perspective of power relations)¹. Given the timely nature of the topic, this paper will present the association of ANT and HM as an anthropophagic method to uncover socio-spatial practices in the so-called rurban communities in an empirical teaching experiment.

2 AN EXPERIMENT USING THE ANTHROPOPHAGIC METHOD

The crossing of ANT and HM was firstly pursued in Melgaço's PhD research, supervised by Baltazar (Melgaço, 2016), and is being experimented in Lagear and MOM since 2012, with positive prospects. The experiment presented here follows the PhD in an undergraduate course taught by the authors in 2016 to test the method. It responded to a general complaint among students that many of the modules that deal with the urban scale are too abstract, not providing critical and practical tools for the fieldwork and subsequent analysis and discussion of data gathered. It is often the case in design and urban design studios, for instance, that students need to propose interventions to the study area, but these are unsuccessful due to the rushed and biased nature of analysis. Trying to address the difficulty of gathering data, since 2012, we have been trying to adjust ANT as a method also for students to empirically approach urban controversies² in different modules at the School of Architecture at UFMG. These modules presented varying degrees of success in problematizing situations—by identifying the issues and naming the main actants involved—and in associating these controversies to the space (and spatial practices) itself. Nevertheless, students still lacked tools for further critical investigation of the issues raised.

To tackle the limitations observed in the previous modules, a 15-hour course 'Spatial practices and the introduction of ICTs in rurban communities' was taught in 2016 to further test and mature our anthropophagic method. The main goal of the course was to allow architecture and urbanism undergraduates to experiment fieldwork by providing them with the necessary tooling to explore empirical research while being able to critically and contextually analyse it. For that, they were given the task to investigate the relationship between existing spatial practices and the way ICTs are being appropriated in rurban communities. The problem was defined enough so that it could be dealt within the timeframe of the course, but it was also open enough so it could generate a varied discussion among the students. The main goal was to look critically to spatial practices but without preconceived ideas of the communities, ergo the suggestion to take ANT as a preliminary approach to the subject (via fieldwork and collection of further information thereafter). ICTs were one of the elements suggested as their recent introduction is bringing important changes to rurban communities. In the case of the two communities investigated during the course, the influence of ICTs can be especially observed among younger generations, who are included in broader socioeconomical-cultural networks that are not geographically bounded.

The introductory class presented the three elements that composed the course: spatial practices, ICTs and the rurban. ANT as a method was also presented to instigate the students to further research this theory.

¹ As in decolonial theories (Dussel, 2012), our anthropophagic method does not ignore the capitalist mode of production but attempts to look not at the economic general aspect of it in a negative critique, but at the political that arises from the block of people and their diverse forms of resistance.

² Approach used, for example, by Albená Yaneva in the module "Mapping Architectural Controversies" at the University of Manchester.

During the session, they formed three groups and were given the task to find a rural community in Minas Gerais as a case study. The aim was to conduct a one-day field work and then understand the spatial elements that compose the rural, the spatial practices that were to be found there and the role of ICTs in the community's everyday¹. After understanding how these relations were built locally, they should focus on how they related to the wider socio-political, socio-spatial and socio-technological conjuncture.

We provided a set of literature divided into four categories: methodology, ICTs, spatial practices and the rural. Every student should read at least one methodology text, choosing among references on qualitative research (Demo, 2013) and ANT as a methodological tool (Law, 1992). In addition, they should ensure that at least one member of the group was responsible for one of the themes, who should read and write a review on the related literature and observe the elements related to the topic during the fieldtrip, using MOM's guide for fieldwork (MOM, n.d.). A google spreadsheet was used for the organisation of the reading schedule, guaranteeing that the groups would have access to all the basic literature given the short timeframe of the course. The literature was discussed during the second and third meetings, with each text presented by those responsible for it and an open discussion that followed. This dynamic allowed all students to get acquainted with the topics of which the others were responsible.

After being exposed to these two sets of bibliography—the first comprised of a theoretical framework based on Marxian authors and the second comprised of ANT as a methodological tool—the students were asked to devise their own plan on how to analyse the case study selected (using either framework or a combination of them). One group decided to visit Noiva do Cordeiro, a matriarchal community, located 100 km from Belo Horizonte, the capital of the state and where our university is located, while two groups chose to visit Arturos, a quilombola² community in the metropolitan region of Belo Horizonte. Each group went to the field trip on their own time before the third week of the course, when they presented their preliminary impressions of the visit, exercise followed by discussion. In the final week, students presented their initial analysis, also followed by discussion and questioning. This analysis was further developed for their final written work, due two weeks after the presentation. In the following section, we will unpack the dynamics of the groups in their field work and the methods they used to further analyse the data collected on the field³.

2.1 A LITTLE ABOUT THE COMMUNITIES CHOSEN FOR RESEARCH

The first group visited Noiva do Cordeiro, a community founded in the 19th century, after newlywed Dona Senhorinha separated from her husband to join Francisco Fernandes. Part of a very traditional catholic society, the couple was excommunicated to the fourth generation and had to settle in the outskirts of Belo Vale, a 7.000 inhabitant city in Brazil in current numbers. Having raised their family isolated from the nearby villages led to very strong bonds amongst themselves. Fifty years later, the marriage between the young Delina with 42 years' older Evangelic pastor Seu Anísio reinforced local prejudice against the community. He instated the Noiva do Cordeiro religion, whose strict rules—daily prayers, fasting and public punishment—led the community to the brink of starvation. In the 1990s, with the minister's death, the community joined to overcome poverty. While men commuted to the capital for work, women organized collectively the reproduction activities in equally collectively owned spaces. This solution freed some women to invest time in productive activities: they run a lingerie factory and a medium scale farm; process some of their feedstock, producing compotes and cheese. The interest in the community raised with the documentary "Noivas do Cordeiro" aired by the Brazilian channel GNT, and since then, they have increasingly received the visit of "social tourists", lay people, researchers and students from all around the country (and the world) interested in their lifestyle. Because of that, they have developed a tourism agenda and no random visits are allowed in the community. The unfolding of social tourism over time led to the creation of a local narrative, told repetitively and edited to please visitors. This means it is hard to obtain spontaneous information.

Group 2 and 3 visited Arturos, located in the outskirts of Contagem, largest industrial complex of the State of Minas Gerais. Similar to Noiva do Cordeiro, Arturos is a familiar community, formed by the descendants of Arthur Camilo Silvério and Carmelinda Maria da Silva. Arthur was the most prosperous sibling of Camilo Silvério da Silva, an African slave from Angola brought to Brazil in the 19th century, and founded the community on the land he acquired in Contagem. After his death, the land was divided into plots for each

¹ Everyday is explored here with Henri Lefebvre as a social level, avoiding a possible hierarchization of spatial relations in scales.

² Quilombola is the designation of slave refugees and their descendants that fled the sugarcane mills, farms and smallholdings where they performed various menial jobs to form small villages called quilombos, today a symbol of resistance of the black culture and fight for equality.

³ It is important to note that the three groups of students showed similar levels of engagement in the course, of exposure to the community and time to produce their final work. They were also encouraged to conduct interviews rather than a photography workshop, as the latter requires prior organisation and at least two visits to the community.

of his siblings, and the community today is formed of eighty families, accounting for more than 500 members (Prefeitura de Contagem, 2011). The older generations value their African heritage, especially through cultural activities such as batuques and congado, local musical traditions, and for their active contribution to the resistance of African culture in Brazil, in 2014, the community was the first recognised as immaterial heritage in the country (IEPHA MG, 2014). The increasing interface of Arturos with the outside, with the younger generations leaving the community to study and work and the introduction of ICTs, are bringing new socio-spatial processes to the community, challenging its traditional form of spatial organisation. Both communities, despite clear distinctions, provide some of the current conflicts faced by the urban that could be grasped by the student in their research.

2.2 THE DIFFERENT WORK DYNAMICS DEVISED BY THE GROUPS

Each group developed different dynamics to visit the community and analyse the data collected. Group 1's methodology was mainly based on HM. Two main reasons explain such approach: the exposure of students to the community prior to the fieldwork through online material and our own perspective as researchers; and the familiarity of some students with our research methods, as they work as undergraduate researcher assistants at Lagear. Their first impressions were impregnated with preconceived notions of power relations based on socio-economic macrostructures. Fig 1 shows the group's attempt to relate their preliminary perceptions of Noiva do Cordeiro with João Rua's (2006) discussion of urbanities in the rural which was kept in their final work. Although an important exercise of understanding concretely the discussion proposed by the author, it did not allow the group to advance their perception of spatial practices beyond the input from discussions in class and from the literature.

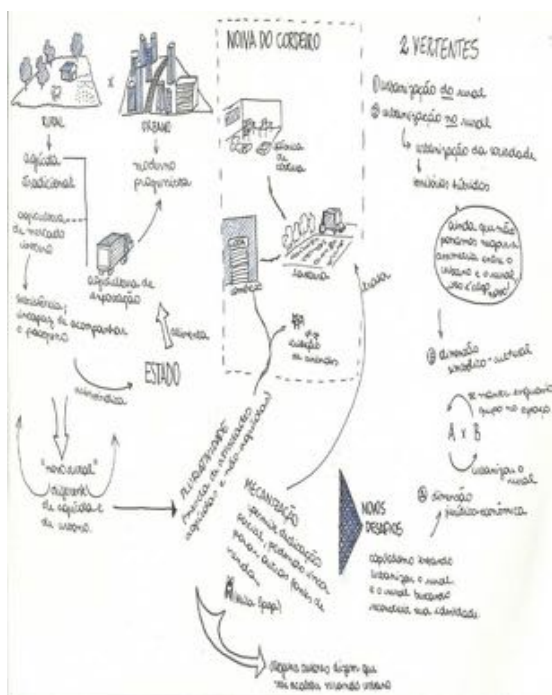


Figure 1 – Group 1's concept and empirical evidence link. Source: Group 1 final essay (unpublished).

Network analysis was introduced later, as a visualisation rather than as a process tool. The hasty attempt to arrive to conclusions by using HM underscored the pre-existence of value judgements and incurred in the group resorting to universals without allowing local actants and their relationships to be revealed by the method. A precarious network resulted, with highlighted elements and connections from previous analysis. Neither the weight of the interactions nor existing power relations that could have projected by a network analysis of the community can be inferred from the graph (Fig. 2).

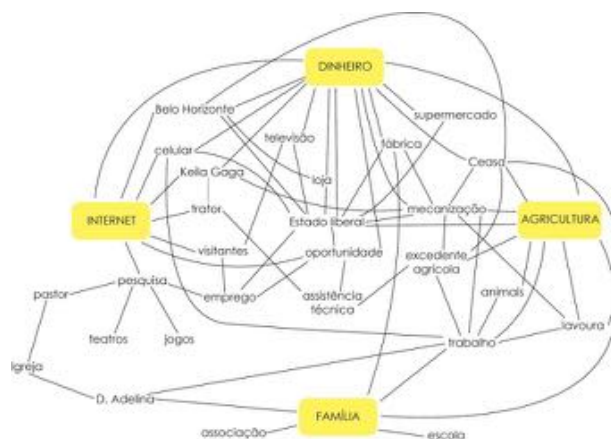


Figure 2 – Group 1 final network. Source: Group 1 final essay (not published).

Groups 2 and 3 departed from a loose attempt to use ANT on the field, but assumed different strategies, especially after the first critique session that followed the fieldtrip. Group 2 did a thorough research online previous to the visit to corroborate their choice of community. According to them, “the analysis of the quantitative data, the history, satellite image and the representativeness of the cultural body were the important information for the final decision to work in Arturos”. Students used observation and interviews and secondary sources to define their actants. Despite the desire to use ANT as a process tooling, the group used it “as a means to represent the existing relationships in Arturos” (excerpt from their final work, unpublished), and was presented only at the end as a final product. After the fieldtrip, they soon adopted an unstructured mix of both ANT and HM to organise and analyse their findings, which concealed singular elements of the community that depict its conflicts as a rural community in the context of an everurbanising society. For instance, they resorted to general actants—family, field, house, access, conviviality, values, religion, cattle—rather than focus on more specific actants, such as Mario, the patriarch of the community. The lack of the particular elements that compose the network led to a misleading construal of the power relations according to their own cultural and social position.

Their rushed construction of the network can be observed by its lack of structure and confusion of elements to be included, which masked existing but invisible power relations (fig. 3). As with group 1, the main actants (highlighted in yellow) were defined by the group, with no clear explanations to their choice of prominent actants. Some elements included, such as ‘tradition’, are not observable actants. If an ANT processual approach were fully adopted, tradition could have emerged during the critical analysis, as one of the underlying elements that function as a social glue of Arturos, with the use of an HM theoretical framework, for instance. Even though the exercise might have been an attempt to bridge a theoretical framework and a concrete situation, not only the network, but all the analysis of the group was based on general elements thereby with little advancement in critically addressing the questions posed in the course.

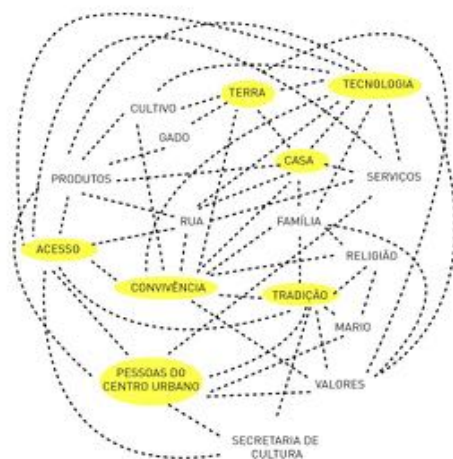


Figure 3 – Group 2 final network. Source: Group 2 final essay (unpublished).

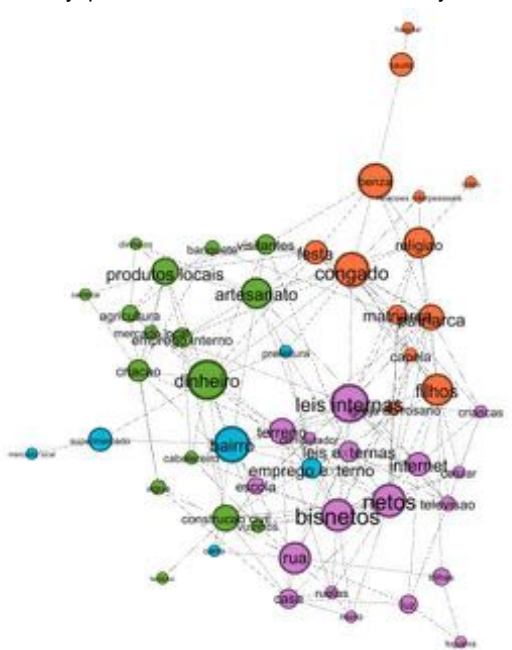
Group 3 also conducted interviews and observation in the community. Differently from group 2, they attempted to use ANT as a tool “to understand the community, [...] not assuming what one wants to explain, as it masks the most interesting questions about the origins of power and organisation” (group 3’s essay excerpt, unpublished), focussing on the collection of primary data. For the first discussion session, the students built a preliminary network by writing the actants on different post-its and trying to arrange them in a large sheet of paper, which proved to be ineffective.

Without an appropriate tool, the students were unable to compute the amount of information collected (actants + relationships), also inferring local socio-spatial practices from their own standpoint. Let us note

we do not believe in assuming the other's viewpoint, but exercising a critical position is essential to avoid decontextualised, preconceived constructions.

During the discussion in class, this shortcoming was underscored and the group focussed on understanding local elements and micro-relationships from the data collected before making any other assumptions about the community. Their response to the critique was to delve into the ANT method. They used Gephi, an open source platform to devise and visualise networks, to create a model based on the relationship of the different elements they found on their fieldwork, as it can be seen in Fig. 4. The main benefit of using this software is that it does not organise the network according to relations of power as they are perceived by the researcher. The layout chosen by the group positioned the nodes in accordance to attraction and repulsion calculated by the relations among them (Jacomy et al., 2014). As such, they were able to observe a set of social relations that were not made clear by group 2, especially the roles and levels of engagement of the different generations in the community. By attributing a node to each of the family generations, they were able to analyse and uncover their different responses and interactions with spatial elements, technology, institutions and other individuals and groups.

By exploring the connection between the nodes, this method illuminated power relations that would not be so easily processed otherwise because they are not perceptible on the first sight. The relationships



between the nodes also defined different 'clusters' in the network (groups of nodes with a similar pattern of attraction and repulsion), in different colours. This feature revealed that different generations had different relations with the elements in the network, and they were organised in two communities: in one group were located the matriarch and patriarch and their siblings (in orange), but the grandchildren and the greatgrandchildren were located in another one (represented in pink). While the first cluster connected traditional elements, such as the congado and religion; the second cluster connected to recently introduced elements, such as the internet, mobile phones and television (which is quite sensible, if one ponders the relationship between younger generations and technology).

Figure 4 – Group 3 final network using Gephi software. Source: Group 3 final essay (unpublished).

The most important discovery is that the node they named 'internal laws' is also part of this last cluster. The students understood internal laws as a sort of institution, a set of rules that do not necessarily conform with the formal legal system, one of them being child labour. In Arturos, child labour was never seen as an exploitation of minors, it was rather a means to teach the youngsters the value of work and, most of all, a way to reproduce the community's values and pass it through generations. The fear of being charged with the crime of child labour (something that was never said to the students) might have been the reason for the community to change their posture regarding the education of the youngsters. By doing so, the so-called internal laws, which were introjected in the members everyday, became a visible element in the network developed by the students. Their work did not advance much further than that in the discussion, but this outcome highlights foundations of the relations of production in the community and how those reflect in the space that is being produced in Arturos. By using ANT as a methodological tool to understand the social relations that were present there (or actor-networks, in Michel Callon and Latour's terms (Callon and Latour, 1992)), it was group 3 that was able to unveil expeditiously some of the crucial elements to further understand the community with the theoretical lens based on HM.

3 ANT + HM AS AN AGONISTIC APPROACH TO PLANNING: A PROPER TOOLING FOR THE SOUTH?

So far, we have attempted to provide an anthropophagic method to challenge the shortfalls of our own theoretical production, extensive to the ways we teach future architects and urban planners. This means not only discussing the pedagogical approach but also calling attention to the political implications of the field as we invite students to dwell on the conflicts found on site. As already explained above, ANT enables researchers (and students) to step back from their prejudices to look at the actants and unveil connections and contradictions between them by means of a network. Together with an HM analysis, actants may not be polarised and regarded as antagonists, therefore avoiding the dichotomy friend/enemy (and its antagonism) towards an 'agonistic pluralism', and unveiling that which Chantal Mouffe (2005) discusses regarding political implications. In other words, we should assume the difference between enemy and adversary, being the latter constitutive of a radical democracy. In Mouffe's (2005) words:

Conflict, in order to be accepted as legitimate, needs to take a form that does not destroy the political association. This means that some kind of common bond must exist between the parties in conflict, so that they will not treat their opponents as enemies to be eradicated, seeing their demands as illegitimate, which is precisely what happens with the antagonistic friend/enemy relation. (...) If we want to acknowledge on one side the permanence of the antagonistic dimension of the conflict, while on the other side allowing for the possibility of its 'taming', we need to envisage a third type of relation. This is the type of relation which I have proposed to call 'agonism'. While antagonism is a we/they relation in which the two sides are enemies who do not share any common ground, agonism is a we/they relation where the conflicting parties, although acknowledging that there is no rational solution to their conflict, nevertheless recognize the legitimacy of their opponents. They are 'adversaries' not enemies.

An agonistic (not antagonistic) approach in urban research implies the need to pursue a careful data raising taking into account interactions (conflictual or not) between actants (human and non-humans). This also means a critical perspective that de-naturalizes existing conflicts and questions social relations as contingent constructions of hegemonic practices. If ANT seems a good tool to deal with the first challenge, as it is an attempt to construct an unbiased network of actants, HM still seems a good tool to deal with the second challenge, as it might help dealing with power relations arising from the network (constructing a theoretical lens to be focused according to the network, instead of drawing from universals, as shown by Chilisa and Ntseane (2010). This means to avoid pre-conceived theoretical lenses (those that have also blurred our own critical perspective of the socio-spatial groups we have been working with).

Our anthropophagic method drawing from both ANT and HM is one possible way to approach research agonistically, as it acknowledges the (inevitable) co-existence of conflictive parties without prejudging them before trying to uncover local evidences of the power relations enacted in space. Its preliminary results indicate that it can be a positive asset for undergraduates to grasp local interactions and produce critical socio-spatial analysis that are more context specific and responsible. We use the word responsible here because this method allows them to acknowledge the political dimension of the field while positioning themselves, rather than embodying the universals postulated by EuroAmerican theoretical framework.

This experiment also suggests the positive outcomes for research itself, as it proposes an anthropophagic meta-method to approach a community (mainly a non-organized socio-spatial group) to be able to propose an informed collaboration. This does not mean an imposition from researchers, but a careful first contact to enable the construction of a truly collaborative research relation with the community. A few works state that research might never be pursued by outsiders, the ideal would be that community (indigenous community) undertook their own research, but it would be acceptable a collaboration since the outside researchers respected the indigenous traditions and did not impose their theoretical framework (Smith, 2013, p. 186). Our proposal is not of an outside research, but of a method that only starts with approaching the community with a meta-method to enable further developments. By extending it to undergraduate education, we instigate students to avoid from the onset top-down approaches that often lead to ill-suited responses to local demands, and may continue throughout their professional life.

In order to conclude, we might state that this paper acknowledges the importance (and pervasiveness) of EuroAmerican theories in Southern urban studies, but calls for more context-driven academic production in our countries. For such, it presented an alternative anthropophagic method for studying socio-spatial groups in the context of Brazilian academic production. It draws from ANT to approach a community, systematising it as an agonistic network. It also draws from HM to construct the lens to look at the network adjusting its focus according to the intertwining of unbiased interactions found in the agonistic network and the theoretical framework that sets research questions (which at this stage is still primarily an EuroAmerican framework that needs the anthropophagic approach to purge it of its foreign dominance). It is a work in process that has been furthering, but needs systematisation as it advances (and that is what this paper does).

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