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THE CITY AS HERITAGE: THE PERSPECTIVE OF ANTHROPOLOGY

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INTRODUCTION

This article is an updated version of the talk presented at the event: *``Cidades em Transe: Patrimônios Conflitos e Contra Narrativas Urbanas``*, by invitation of “Margens” - “Urban Ethnographic Studies Group” from “Universidade Federal de Pelotas” (Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil). about the issue of heritage.¹

The initiative allowed me to identify some theoretical and methodological recurrences between my experiences in the field of heritage and led me to rethink the research, proposals and decisions made throughout my journey in this field, at “Universidade de São Paulo” and in heritage protection bodies.

The article will develop as follows: firstly, a quick overview of my career in the area of heritage; then, how Anthropology – especially Urban Anthropology – is integrated into this process, always seeking to establish relationships with the theme of “Cities in Trance” programming. And, finally, a conclusion pointing to the approximations and points of agreement that exist between Anthropology’s perspective on heritage, both within academia and outside it, in preservation bodies.

TRAJECTORY

My first experience in this area was the research carried out at the request of CONDEPHAAT (Council for the Preservation of Historical, Artistic and Archaeological Heritage of the State of São Paulo), back in 1984, in the city of Santana do Parnaíba, where there were a series of tensions and conflicts around the issue of heritage, whose title was the final report. “Santana de Parnaíba: Memory and Daily Life”. Continuing the chronology, I was invited by the then Secretary of Culture

of the State of Paraná, Fernando Ghignone, to take over the Coordination of Cultural Heritage of Paraná, (CPC) at the end of the 1980s, from 1986 to 1988. I highlight some works, among several that we carried out: the listing of “Serra do Mar” section of Paraná; the survey of the stretch of the “Caminho das Tropas” that, originating in Rio Grande do Sul to São Paulo (from Viamão to Sorocaba), passes through Paraná and research in a colony of Polish immigrants, threatened by the construction of a dam. Still coordinating heritage, I contacted “Universidade Estadual de Londrina”, with professor Ana Cleide Chiarotti Almeida: together, we worked with the inventory to protect Londrina’s cultural heritage, whose characteristic was to be in a new city, unlike those in generally covered by heritage, such as Diamantina, Ouro Preto and others that have a recognized historical and architectural collection.

Then, the listing of “Parque do Povo”, in São Paulo, a space traditionally linked to floodplain football on the banks of the Tietê River, before being canalized, with controversial developments pointed out by Anthropology throughout the process. And, more recently, in 2019, I was invited to coordinate the team in charge of evaluating impacts resulting from the collapse of the Fundão dam, in Mariana, State of Minas Gerais, causing architectural, archaeological and also intangible heritage damage throughout the region. route of the river, until reaching its mouth in the State of Espírito Santo.

The proposal of the initial presentation was to go through these points, drawing relationships with practices on the issue of heritage in the city of Pelotas. And the central question is: how does Anthropology enter into the topic of heritage? In my case, it entered

1. The text is an adaptation of the lecture “The city as heritage: an ethnographic approach” held on August 16, 2021, in the 5th edition of the event: “Cidades em Transe”, “Universidade Federal de Pelotas” “Instituto de Ciências Humanas” – ICH Department of Anthropology and Archeology – Urban Ethnographic Studies Group – GEEUR, available at: <https://youtu.be/tvvoFTfCOc>. The transcription was carried out by the “Margens” Team and later edited by José Guilherme Cantor Magnani.

unintentionally, during my doctoral research, some time ago....

Readers may be familiar with the expression “*Festa no Pedaço*”, the title of the doctoral research I carried out, defended in 1982, on circus-theater on the outskirts of São Paulo. This research presented, in the context in which it was developed, something new in relation to Urban Anthropology. The advisor for this was Professor Ruth Cardoso and I also had contact at that time with Professor Eunice Durham; I usually highlight her pioneering spirit, in the current moment of female protagonism in academia and also outside of it. Ruth and Eunice introduced the perspective of Urban Anthropology, focusing on the outskirts of São Paulo, at the Department of Anthropology at USP, which until then was focused on studies of indigenous ethnology and rural communities. Ruth worked with young descendants of Japanese immigrants in the city and Eunice with Italians and thus began to open a new and important field of research in Anthropology.

A LOOK BACK

A quick historical review is in order to contextualize this turn of events: in 1933, businessman and economist Roberto Simonsen founded the Free School of Sociology and Politics (ELSP) to, in a way, reestablish the political influence of São Paulo, after the defeat in the Constitutionalist Revolution. 1932. To this end, he brought in professors from the Chicago School and the research they guided became known under the motto “community studies”: their theme was the transition from a rural society to the urban-industrial phase. Antônio Candido, Otavio Ianni, Darci Ribeiro, Sergio Buarque de Hollanda are some of the names of the national intelligentsia of the time who

attended it and their influence extended until the 1950s.²

However, another perspective opens up: in 1934 the Faculty of Philosophy, Sciences and Letters at USP was founded (under this name, FFCL) and received support from the so-called “French mission”, made up of Claude Lévi-Strauss, Roger Bastide, Maurice Braudel, Pierre Monbeig. These professors, unlike the ELSP orientation with their “community studies”, opened other theoretical lines: in the area of social sciences they brought contributions from European sociology with the approaches of Max Weber, Georg Simmel, among others.³

Lévi-Strauss, in particular, was fundamental in this change. In the book: “*Tristes Trópicos*” (2001), Written in 1955 after his return, he narrates his departure from France, his expectations upon arriving in the New World, his experiences as a professor at USP and his impressions about this new reality. His interest was indigenous ethnology and he imagined the city of São Paulo surrounded by Indians..., but that was not what he found. However, he came across hillbillies, national migrants who came from the interior of the country, small landowners, farm workers, of Catholic tradition, with their religious celebrations such as the “*Festa do Divino Espírito Santo*”, “*Folia de Reis*”, “*Dança de São Gonçalo*”. In addition to Syrian, Lebanese, German, Italian immigrants, of course, also with their traditions..., what about the Indians? there were them, but not in the number he expected to find.

Even so, Lévi-Strauss did not miss the opportunity. With his then wife, Dina Dreyfus and the company of Mário de Andrade – known as folklorist, a term of the time – he dedicated himself to the study of popular culture in journeys that he called “ethnography of

2. Read about: “*Os Parceiros do Rio Bonito: estudo sobre o caipira paulista e as transformações de seu modo de vida*”. Rio de Janeiro, José Olympio, 1964

3. For more details: Magnani, 2012: 17- 35

Sundays”. Finally, during the school holidays, he fulfilled his desire to research indigenous populations and left for the hinterland of Mato Grosso towards the villages of Bororo, Nhambiquara and Cadiweu.

A new situation, 30 years later, opened with the military coup of 1964, and its repercussions on universities, with persecution of professors opposed to the regime and, mainly, against the working class: unions and political parties were closed, social movements of vanguard, dissolved. With this there was a reflux not only in politics, but also socially, with transformations in urban dynamics: the factory floor and the city center were no longer the places of worker militancy; This reflux also had consequences for popular housing spaces, as if they were previously considered just “bedroom neighborhoods”, they now serve as a place of greater permanence at other times of the day and week.

There is, however, a particularity: if this return to places of residence made such spaces more visible, it was the protagonism of women that came to the fore: while their husbands were active in union headquarters, in the context of factories, they were the ones who maintained daily life. from the outskirts of the city. Their actions – petitions against famine, for health clinics, improvements in the neighborhood – were not always considered relevant, when compared to that of their husbands: this was the real policy... And the discipline that registered these What changed was Anthropology: while the other social sciences turned to the major questions of politics, to the clashes of class struggles, anthropologists were more accustomed to issues considered to be of little importance: systems of kinship and cronyism, neighborhoods, popular culture, religious festivals.

These practices begin to be thought of as elements of a way of life for residents of the periphery — which in a way had an influence

on the choice of my doctoral topic, a traditional form of entertainment, circus-theater. In principle, it wasn't a very relevant object of study: Teresa Caldeira and Alba Zaluar, both of my colleagues, for example, dedicated themselves to studying women's political activity. However, the closest ethnographic contact with this apparently marginal practice opened a trail that already had the appearance of cultural heritage. I didn't see it that way at the time, but now, when I look back on the trajectory, I realize that this characteristic was already present in circus dramatic art: “*O Céu Uniu Dois Corações*”, a drama I watched when I did the linked research. whether to 19th century melodrama; the practice of comedy clowns refers to Commedia Dell'Arte and the way of life of circus families, nomads, traveling through interior cities, rural areas and also urban centers, maintaining a long-lasting type of entertainment.

The starting point for studying circus-theater in my research project was the following question: “Are circus-theater, its comedies and dramas progressive or conservative?” as it was a question that, at the time, evoked notions of ideology and culture. However, through the arts of ethnography, learning to listen to what the ‘other’ has to say, I heard, not exactly in these terms: “Professor, it doesn't matter if the circus is conservative or progressive, what matters is that it's a good place for we meet, it's a good place for us to spend the weekend, it's a party we go to, it's our place.” So, this term, trivial, appeared to me as a category to be taken into consideration, in the continuation.

In an article I wrote for the magazine ‘*Horizontes Antropológicas*’, from ‘*Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do Sul*’ (Magnani, 2009) about ethnography as a practice and experience, I discuss that it can, as stated by the French-Moroccan anthropologist Jeanne Favret-Saada (2005), present the experience of “being affected” and,

on the other hand, care with its theoretical elaboration. So, I turned to the discussion proposed by anthropologist Roberto DaMatta, who worked with the categories of “house and the street”: the house as a place for relatives and the street, a place for strangers. I decided to insert the category of piece in the middle, the place of “arrival”. Thus, it was possible to identify a theoretical relevance for an apparently banal, commonplace term and this was the starting point for the family of categories that I developed over time, in the Laboratory of the Urban Anthropology Center at USP (LabNAU).

The piece, therefore, is configured as a meeting space between equals – neither relatives nor strangers – but who share a basic sociability, be it the football team, the church, musical preferences or traditions due to their migrant origins. The category therefore reveals the existence of important sociability in the periphery, which was seen, above all, as a space of decadence and fragmentation.

This perspective gave new clues for pursuing the thesis, defending it and then publishing it with the title *Festa no Pedaço: cultura popular e Leisure na Cidade* (First edition, 1984). But what then? A new challenge arose: “What if I go to the city center? Will there be pieces there? I ventured to where a large equipment was located, the “*Galeria do Rock*”, with a strong presence of skateboarders, skaters, fans of hip-hop, people of African descent who did their hairstyles: in other words, a place frequented by young people, suitable for continuing research.

I went once, I went twice and I concluded that the fundamental element needed to be a piece was missing: they didn’t know each other; Boys and girls came from the municipalities of Carapicuíba, Santos, the North Zone of the capital of São Paulo, the South Zone and the East Zone. But I didn’t get discouraged, I continued attending and, little

by little, some recurrences began to manifest themselves: they didn’t know each other, but they recognized each other, through the t-shirts bearing images of the same band, the body posture, the slang used, the hairstyles they wore. a lot of time to be made, allowing for the exchange of information... It wasn’t really a piece, but there were several pieces there, constituting a patch, another category that emerged...

THE CITY: UP CLOSE AND INSIDE

The presentation of this trajectory aims to show how ethnography presented the city, from the perspective and practices of its residents. It is worth, therefore, going back a little more about how ethnography and “participant observation” were methodologically constituted within the field of Anthropology. By looking at our lineage, one of our ancestors, Bronislaw Malinowski – whose best-known work *The Argonauts of the Western Pacific* turned one hundred years old in 2022 – it is possible to recover the principles that guide participant observation.

During his research in the Trobriand Islands, Malinowski closely followed the daily life of the village: people working, making food, manufacturing, conflicts, etc. Evans-Pritchard also has a very interesting quote in *The Nuer*: “From the door of my tent I could see what was going on in the camp or village and all my time was spent in the company of the Nuer” (1978 [1940]:20).

These were some of the contributions that authors from the British school made to the field of Anthropology. Participant observation was in contrast to the methods of previous anthropology, called “armchair anthropology”, in which researchers worked with information given by missionaries, traders, and European officials in the colonies. Then followed what was called “balcony

anthropology”: the anthropologist went to the location of his “natives”, but remained in the hammock of the colonial administrator’s house, receiving the indigenous people who came to tell their myths, their genealogy, their kinship and they took note...

The contribution of anthropology that inaugurated the method of participant observation, in loco, remains to this day, but it needs to be updated. In a metropolis like São Paulo, with 12 million inhabitants, the urban anthropologist who lives in the city center, when opening the window of his studio apartment, will certainly not see the daily life of São Paulo residents; At most, you will come across the blind gable of the building in front, covered in graffiti, or the surrounding neighborhood.... Regarding that quote from Evans Pritchard above, I wrote the following in the book: ``*Na Metrópole*``:

“If this passage constitutes the classic image of field research, nothing could be more distant, then, from the working conditions of an anthropologist dealing with issues and problems characteristic of modern urban-industrial societies, whose field is the city: from the window of his apartment he does not have before him the spectacle of social life in its entirety and, even if he lives intensely with the group he is studying, he does not always spend all his time in their company” (Magnani, 1996: 19-20).

Even when walking around it, your vision will still be limited. What’s the way out? There are two: one, which I call the “village temptation”, consists of fixating on the object of research – a youth hip hops collective, skateboarders’ peaks, Candomblé yard, a soirée on the outskirts – and being limited within its borders, treating it as if it were their “village”. The other temptation is to consider the city itself as a village, but one that has grown too much, gone beyond its limits and to remain at the level of generalities, about a supposed way of life of all its inhabitants, for example.

Such deviations are ruled out by an attitude that I call observation “up close and from within”. This attitude, adopted in the research I supervise at the Urban Anthropology Center Laboratory (LabNAU - USP), stands in contrast to “from afar and from outside”. This is not an insurmountable dichotomy, but two perspectives, two ways of operating: while ethnography begins its observations “up close and from within” – listening, talking, paying attention to details – but always towards broader constituent sections of comprehensive, joint frames of reference.

The cities of Pelotas, Porto Alegre, São Paulo, etc. They are not, therefore, a pile of pieces, they also have a panorama that can be accessed “from afar and from outside”. However, this view is often stuck with the view of demography, for example; or from the perspective of master plans that take the city as a unit. In the case of Anthropology, the city is not the starting point, it is the arrival point. Greater São Paulo, the outskirts of the city of Pelotas, greater Porto Alegre: where does the city end and where does the city begin? Depends on the viewpoint.

And one of them is: who are the residents? This is an important question that ethnography seeks to access by contacting them. These interlocutors belong to fragments, but they also travel around the city through routes, which are not random: the route to work, to the church, to the Candomblé center, to the yard, to the bar, to the park. These paths can be recorded during the research, and the anthropologist can walk with them. The paths show that within a wider space, which is a patch, there are various styles of use, appropriation, sociability and, therefore, various pieces.

An example of how Anthropology approaches the relationship between these actors and the city is the research of one of my former students, Giancarlo Machado

(2014) on skateboarders. For these, Praça Roosevelt, in the center of São Paulo, hosts one of its parts; however, this space is not just theirs, those who are going to take their pets for a walk, the elderly who are going to sunbathe there and there can be conflicts: the bench to sit on, in the skateboarders' view, is a "peak" for your maneuvers. In this square there is also a somewhat unusual occupation, free psychoanalytic care: if in a more secluded corner you see two people sitting opposite each other, you can think of a simple conversation. But no: on the one hand the psychoanalyst and, on the other, certainly, a patient without the resources to pay for conventional treatment. The area of Praça Roosevelt, therefore, is crossed by several sections, covered by different routes and the anthropologist realizes that it is not a homogeneous space.

Another case of ethnographic research, although not directly linked to heritage, shows how looking "up close and from within" works: some time ago, researchers from the Department of Linguistics at USP approached the Urban Anthropology Center to participate in work on Sign language, the sign language of the deaf. Their interest is the formal description of this system, but they do not know where deaf people move around the city, where they meet, live, study. The request for anthropologists was, therefore, to identify the presence of the deaf community in São Paulo and its network of sociability.

My team and I had no experience in this field, but we did not refuse the request and, using an ethnographic approach, we discovered the parts of the deaf in the city, where they meet and develop a very special sociability, in which they cultivate sign language, updating your repertoire of specific signals for each everyday situation. The "up close and inside" perspective then allowed

the identification of parts, trajectories, spots of the deaf in São Paulo, from the Catholic mass given by a priest who was also deaf to the popular June festival at a school – Instituto Santa Teresinha – with presence of deaf people, relatives, Sign language teachers, including the São Paulo Deaf Association among other institutions and spaces frequented by them. The "world of the deaf" began to appear, its circuit: the city of São Paulo for the deaf, therefore, is different. In addition to specific aspects of medicine, speech therapy with proposals for oralization, cochlear implants, etc. They constitute a group that appropriates the city in multiple and creative ways, which allows for discussion about heritage.⁴

PATRIMONY

Regarding heritage itself, today I consider that the circus-theater itself, which I studied during my doctorate, falls into the heritage category because it has a physical framework, a repertoire of pieces and a way of building the body – trapeze artists, dancers, clowns – which go back to a long tradition. But I begin this topic with the report of the research experience in Santana de Parnaíba, carried out in 1984 at the request of CONDEPHAAT (Council for the Defense of Historical, Archaeological, Artistic and Tourist Heritage) on the recommendation of anthropologist Ruth Cardoso.

The small city, which was established as an important colonial village in the mid-17th century, being one of the main starting points for the bandeirantes, had its center listed by the state preservation agency. The problem was that, on the occasions when Condephaat technicians showed up there for a technical visit, they were harassed by the residents: "Hey, here comes the inspector to see if we did something wrong". I remind you here of what I wrote at the beginning of the report:

4. For more details, cf. Chapter VI of: *Da Periferia ao Centro: trajetórias de pesquisa em Antropologia Urbana*, Magnani, 2012, pg. 203-243

“The so-called historic cities are not just scenes of ancient events that still retain, in their layout and houses, the marks of the time; It is necessary to recognize that life goes on there. The relationships between current actors in these scenarios, however, are not always taken into due account by preservation bodies. This omission can be seen in some premises that guide preservationist practice. The first is the assumption that the criteria with which cultural goods are selected and classified are universal and that they are shared homogeneously by all users. The other is to consider the latter as mere obstacles to preservation, since most of the time the relationship between users and preservation bodies is conflicting, whether with regard to the choice criteria or with regard to State intervention through the listing mechanism. This way, the traditional stance of preservation bodies privileges built heritage as an object of study and intervention based on historical and/or artistic criteria, disregarding, in most cases, the set of relationships that are established, in the present, between the heritage and population.” (Magnani, (1984) 2007b:283)

That was the introduction of the research report. The tensions described there were present from the beginning of the ethnography, including the distrust of residents when the researchers arrived in the city. Initially, we noticed the suspicions of the residents, thinking that we were technicians from the preservation agency; So, we had to talk to one and the other, until they were convinced that we weren't there to supervise.

The first distinction we noticed in the field was between the listed historic center and the so-called Vila Nova, outskirts. The second distinction, coming into contact with the oldest residents, is that they are divided – in the words of our interlocutors – between those “inside” and those “outside”. Those “inside” are the Parnaibanos, those who claim 400 years of tradition, consider themselves descendants of bandeirantes. For them, outsiders don't understand anything, they don't recognize

the importance of the bandeirantes; Still in the version of the oldest residents, “those from outside” are subdivided into: foreigners, artists and independent professionals.

Artists, in turn, consider the city to be very good, due to its location close to São Paulo and because it is similar to Embu das Artes, as they can make handicrafts and sell them at fairs. However, they have a certain aversion to the old residents, as they do not understand the issue of crafts and label them as stoners. Foreigners, in turn, went to live in the city because it is quiet and historic: they bought some houses, live there and think that people from Parnaíba do not recognize the architectural value they present; Finally, independent professionals, school teachers, doctors and other professionals go to live in the city, but they do not have a more emotional relationship with it.

As you can see, each of these segments develops a discourse about the others; Therefore, it was necessary to take into consideration, that heritage was inserted in a context marked by a diversity of discourses, tensions and negotiations. But, if the city's residents, as seen so far, do not constitute a homogeneous group, there was a time when everyone met, the parties. The most traditional in the city is the Corpus Christi festival: Santana de Parnaíba is characterized by making that famous “carpet” in the streets where the procession takes place. Residents spend the entire year collecting coffee grounds, dried leaves and flower petals, sand, colored sawdust, etc., for covering and colorful sacred designs on the streets that make up the religious route. For this task, those groups meet, mainly residents who are members of Catholic brotherhoods and artists. On the day of the party, families open their windows and cover the sill with towels, candles in candlesticks and a curtain protects the privacy of the house; Even so, it is possible to glimpse its interior.

There are other festivals, such as São Sebastião, in the celebrations of the city's patron saint: these are specific moments where there is a diversity of meetings, but punctual. Once the ethnography was completed, the report was presented to Condephaat, showing that a city, even with its historic center listed, continues to be alive and changing.

The next experience came from an invitation for me to take over the Coordination of the Cultural Heritage of Paraná, in Curitiba, made up of architects, historians, geographers, consultants, and communication professionals. One of the first measures during this administration was the listing of the Paraná sector of Serra no Mar; then the listing of Fazenda Capão Alto, one of the stops on the Caminho das Tropas, which, as we know, left Rio Grande do Sul, passing through Santa Catarina and Paraná until reaching São Paulo. In the case of Paraná, we worked with the drover landings in the cities of Castro and Lapa, in order to highlight not the brands of the elite, but the way of life of these workers, their way of dressing, where they spent the night, what was happening in the city when the mule troops passed through.

A third project was "The Dam and the Colonists", carried out due to the intention of the Government of the State of Paraná to build a dam on the Passaúna river, which would reach a traditional Polish colony, called Colônia Tomás Coelho, located in the vicinity of the river. In this colony Polish was spoken, houses were built of logs, there were brickworks, transportation was carried out using carts tied to horses. The settlers were farmers, breeders and sold their products in the surrounding cities, mainly in Araucária, the closest municipality.

On the one hand, the State Government intended to build a dam to distribute water in the cities, which would affect the colony. What to do in this situation? The dispute

took place around the limits of the flooding level, but some places were damaged, making it necessary to restore some houses, transfer them to another place, research photo albums, etc.: the work resulted in the publication entitled "The Dam and the Colonists."

The last experience I would like to share, during my tenure at the Department of Culture with heritage, was a partnership with ``*Universidade Estadual de Londrina*``. Contact with professor Ana Cleide Chiarotti de Almeida resulted in cooperation between the state Cultural Heritage Coordination (CPC) and the Cultural Collection Protection Inventory (IPAC) of this city in northern Paraná. The interest for heritage lays in the fact that Londrina was a relatively new city, without a collection generally valued like that of "historic" cities – such as Ouro Preto, Diamantina... by the way, I highlighted the fact that Londrina is a of the few cities, besides Maringá, Cambé, Cambará, that Lévi-Strauss named on his route towards Mato Grosso. In *Tristes Trópicos*, already mentioned, he shows how in these new cities the contemporary urban arrangement, in which their streets are transversal and others parallel, goes back to the grid style of Mesopotamian cities: "Londrina was already an organized city with its main street, its business center, its artisans' neighborhood and its residential area. (op. cit.:284). Five thousand years ago, the cities of the Old World designed the cities of the new world, he concludes.

Discussing heritage in new cities was a challenge, as they did not have a collection of works comparable to those in Santana de Parnaíba or the so-called historic cities of Minas Gerais. One of the researches was on wooden architecture, which was not done haphazardly, there were rules and norms developed by local carpenters. Therefore, a survey was carried out of the structure of these houses, how the internal spaces were

divided, and their relationship with the surroundings. This last topic has a lot to do with the theme of “the invisible: where do some of its protagonists live and work? What is your way of life?”

The following experience is a little more current: the listing of “*Parque do Povo*”, which is also closely related to the concerns of this event. “*Parque do Povo*” was a remnant, a survivor of floodplain football fields in São Paulo from the times when the winding Tietê River provided spaces on its banks, used for picnics and football matches by residents, until the moment when it was rectified and surrounded by marginal avenues. However, the “*Parque do Povo*” field resisted as an enclave in an upper-middle class neighborhood, Itaim Bibi.

The conflict was brewing: those who were going to play there were people living on the outskirts, on a dirt field, with their own style of playing football: different bodies, clothes, words. There was a circus there too, as well as parties and picnics.

The main argument for the process of listing the geographical area of this Park was leisure practices and popular culture: it was a space that housed the tradition of floodplain football games and maintained a specific sociability. Therefore, there was an appropriation of the city by different social actors, which justified the importance of listing the space. However, this process was marked by tensions and protests from residents of the prime area. Sometime after the area’s listing, the Park was declassified by the City Hall itself. An excerpt from the city hall website about “*Parque do Povo*” provides an example and is enlightening:

“The park is located in an area that belonged to “*Caixa Econômica Federal*” and the National Social Security Institute. For more than 20 years, around 11 sports associations irregularly exploited the site. The City Council obtained the transfer of

use of the space in 2006. The educational and environmental project developed at the site includes 7 self-explanatory trails, on which plants will be distributed, which are part of the park’s botanical collections. Among them is the collection of aromatic and medicinal plants that make up a Sensitive Garden. The Garden’s species awaken touch, smell and taste. People can touch, smell and even bite leaves of plants and trees to get to know them.”

As you can see, this description has nothing to do with the 20-year practice that sports associations carried out in the space or with those social actors on the outskirts who had the park as a leisure area.

Finally, one last experience related to the theme of heritage, very contemporary: in 2018, a team from LabNAU was invited by the “*Zanettini Arqueologia*” Company to, together with archaeologists, historians and architects, carry out an assessment of the damage caused by the collapse of the Fundão Dam, maintained by Vale do Rio Doce Company in Mariana, Minas Gerais. The disaster, as is known, caused impacts along the entire length of “*Rio Doce*”, up to its mouth in Espírito Santo, destroying churches, houses, making parties, ways of life and forms of work, neighborhood relations in short, everything unfeasible... The Public Ministry requested a survey of the damage in order to compensate the directly affected populations, which for anthropologists posed very specific questions: working alongside architects, archaeologists, historians and geographers. In the case of architectural heritage there was a very clear issue: churches, houses, places of residence were destroyed; for archaeologists, the damage was also material: archaeological sites were altered. And for anthropologists, dealing with the so-called “intangible heritage”? How to characterize and assess the damage caused by the dam collapse to the circuit of traditional festivals and religious rites?

The tailings from the dam not only organically polluted the river, but directly impacted cultural practices, such as artisanal fishing, football camps, as well as celebrations such as baptisms in the water. And more than that, it resulted in the dissolution of neighborhood spaces, also preventing the holding of religious festivals that have a specific day or week, but are prepared throughout the year. The partygoers go to each other's houses, take the images, pray, there is a whole preparation that culminates on the day of the party. This entire preparation was destabilized because neighborhood and even kinship ties were disrupted. The same can be said about football championships, dismantled not only by the destruction of the fields, but by the disorganization of the teams.

Other unusual points of this research were the issue of secrecy – it was necessary to sign a confidentiality agreement – and other methodological adaptations to comply with the requirements of the judicial process. For example, carrying out fieldwork with GPS to mark conversation points with interlocutors. And as required by the Public Prosecutor's Office, the statements had to be signed: imagine what it means for a person to say what they are feeling in that situation and have to sign their statement: the distrust was total. It was necessary to build the relationship with them carefully to differentiate the ethnographers' actions.

An impasse that arose at the end of the research was the Public Prosecutor's Office's demand that the field notebooks be made available: our position was that the field notebook is not disclosed, it is a personal work instrument. It is worth remembering the famous controversy surrounding the publication of Bronislaw Malinowski's diaries. The field reports, based on observations and scribbles in the notebook, can be shared with researchers, because it is already a first

elaboration. But they wanted field notebooks to be made available to prove the contacts made, just as architects and archaeologists do with their drawings and photos.

And the great difficulty, which was not resolved, was how the results of ethnographic research would be used to assess the damage and quantify reparations. In the case of a destroyed or damaged church, there are material parameters that constitute more concrete bases for assessment and subsequent compensation by the company that caused the disaster. But what about the impossibility of holding the São Gonçalo Festival?

The Christmas festival of Folia de Reis? How much are they worth? How can we compensate party-goers who can no longer fulfill their devotion collectively? To do so, another field strategy, lasting longer, would have been necessary to assess what these losses meant for their way of life.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

To conclude, I highlight the opportunity to resume a trajectory in the area of heritage, from the perspective of Anthropology. Certainly, this discipline, alongside others such as History, Architecture, Geography, Archeology, offers a specific contribution to make based on its theoretical framework and method of recording and observation.

The "up close and inside" perspective, typical of the ethnographic method, is articulated with another – the description of the scenario, the identification of the actors and the unveiling of the rules that organize the behavior of the actors in the scenario in question. Over successive trips to the field, this description becomes richer, as was shown, for example, in Santana de Parnaíba. In this case, the different readings that the actors made of each other, in different scenarios throughout the year – at parties or in everyday life – were fundamental to understanding heritage as

something alive and not fossilized.

In the city of Pelotas, as was possible to see when reading other texts. There is a concern to take these different narratives into account, based on the speech of actors who are often invisible. If the statements of these residents are not taken into consideration, the issue of heritage is reduced to mansions, to a homogeneous, dominant vision, leaving aside questions such as: what is the legacy of the descendants of slaves? How important are sweet shops and their traditional rural recipes?

Heritage is neither homogeneous nor static. Careful research can show interactions over time between settings, equipment and heritage knowledge based on the appreciation of residents, visitors and tourists, as research shows. Even listed material assets are subject to different interpretations and controversies – as can be seen with recent actions on monuments of controversial historical figures: revision or erasure? ⁵ Certainly, the anthropological approach can contribute, together with that of other disciplines, to relativize stereotypical views, even though its contribution traditionally remains in the field of intangible heritage.

5. See the article “Controversial brands from the past: revision or erasure”: in <https://journals.openedition.org/corpusarchivos/4284>

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