

**PLAYFUL REVOLUTIONS IN PROTECTED AREAS:  
THE MEANINGS OF THE CAIÇARA LEISURE PRACTICES IN THE COSTA  
DO SOL STATE PARK (RJ)<sup>1</sup>**

**Received on:** April 06, 2024

**Passed on:** August 23, 2024

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**ABSTRACT:** The field of leisure studies translates, to a large extent, a modern-westernized worldview, inherited from a historical perspective of a homogenizing Cartesian tradition. From this perspective, the different dimensions of existence have been fragmented, in order to explain reality, by a simplistic and limited perspective. However, this movement tends to silence complex experiences, especially in the territories of the Global South. In order to contribute to a decolonial discussion on the topic, the objective of this article is to decode the meaning of leisure practices in the narratives of caiçara populations, in connection with the Costa do Sol State Park, a Protected Area (PA) of Full Protection that integrates a diversified mosaic of protected areas in the state of Rio de Janeiro. As a methodological path, the research was based on

<sup>1</sup> This paper was supported by the Coordination for the Improvement of Higher Education Personnel – Brazil (CAPES) – Funding Code 001, through doctoral scholarships, and by the National Council for Scientific and Technological Development (CNPq).

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a bibliographic survey and the production of caiçara narratives. Attentive listening to these narratives made it possible to identify 12 interpretative axes on the counter-hegemonic meanings of leisure in the PA in question. From the local perspective, the meaning of leisure is mainly linked to the struggle for social transformation, based on the playful experience of culture in the daily life of the community, based on engagement to strengthen social ties and connect with nature.

**KEYWORDS:** Leisure. Protected areas. Caiçaras.

**REVOLUÇÕES BRINCANTES EM ÁREAS PROTEGIDAS: OS  
SIGNIFICADOS DAS PRÁTICAS DE LAZER CAIÇARA NO PARQUE  
ESTADUAL DA COSTA DO SOL (RJ)**

**RESUMO:** O campo dos estudos do lazer traduz, em grande parte, uma visão de mundo moderno-ocidentalizado, herdada de uma perspectiva histórica de tradição cartesiana homogeneizante. Sob esta perspectiva, as diferentes dimensões da existência vêm sendo fragmentadas, com o intuito de explicar a realidade, por uma perspectiva simplista e limitada. No entanto, esse movimento tende a silenciar experiências complexas, sobretudo nos territórios do *Sul Global*. No sentido de contribuir para uma discussão epistemológica descolonial sobre o tema, o objetivo deste artigo é decodificar o significado das práticas de lazer nas narrativas das populações caiçaras, em conexão com o Parque Estadual da Costa do Sol, uma Unidade de Conservação (UC) de Proteção Integral que integra um mosaico diversificado de áreas protegidas, no estado do Rio de Janeiro. Como caminho metodológico, a pesquisa se apoiou em levantamento bibliográfico e na produção de narrativas caiçaras. A escuta atenta dessas narrativas possibilitou a identificação de 12 eixos interpretativos sobre os significados contra hegemônicos de lazer na UC em questão. Sob a perspectiva local, o significado do lazer está vinculado, principalmente, à luta pela transformação social, a partir da vivência lúdica da cultura no cotidiano comunitário, com base no engajamento para o fortalecimento dos laços sociais e para a conexão com a natureza.

**PALAVRAS-CHAVE:** Lazer. Áreas protegidas. Caiçaras.

## Introduction

The Western paradigm of simplification and fragmentation of reality is at the core of the narratives that structure the dominant modern-colonial way of thinking. This mode of perceiving the world is based on the logic of Cartesian rationality, which dissociates subject and object, body and mind, reason and emotion, nature and culture (Morin; Kern, 1995). However, this hegemonic development model, sustained by a

single worldview, tends not to recognize the complex constellation of counter-hegemonic ways of life, organization, and community reproduction, which are especially vibrant in the Global South (Krenak, 2019; 2020).

In this context, it is important to acknowledge that among the counter-hegemonic collective practices capable of creating dialogical spaces and exchanges of experiences among social actors, the playful experience of cultural practices through leisure represents a real potential to inspire new forms of collective creation in social and environmental relations.

However, this potential path is permeated with obstacles, as the very field of leisure studies is influenced by a colonial, predominantly functionalist perspective that has, since its inception, privileged the notion of leisure as an escape from the discomfort caused by long working hours (GOMES *et al.*, 2009; AROSTEGUY, 2018). Over time, this perspective has also been associated with the growing desire to escape the discomfort of the civilizational crisis (MAURÍCIO *et al.*, 2021). Another influential perspective in this field is the market-oriented view of leisure, aligned with the assumptions of global capitalism, which interprets leisure in conjunction with the mass entertainment industry, with the clear objective of stimulating the production of desires and consumption (MASCARENHAS, 2005).

In counterflow to this trend, this article is inspired by a counter-hegemonic and Latin American perspective on leisure, following Gomes' (2017) invitation to challenge the "theoretical colonization" of this field of study. This perspective seeks to identify theoretical, conceptual, and methodological insights for documenting community knowledge and cultural practices related to leisure in Latin America (Gomes *et al.*,

2009; Gomes, 2011), many of which have been silenced and rendered invisible by epistemological imposition and subjective colonization.

Based on this background, the purpose of this article is to decode the meaning of leisure practices in the narratives of the Caiçara populations in connection with the Costa do Sol State Park (CSST). This is a multi-sectoral Protected Area (PA) composed of 43 fragments, covering 9,790.44 hectares, and one of the main Full Protection Protected Areas in the state of Rio de Janeiro, both in terms of biodiversity and tourism flows.

Located in the Costa do Sol Tourist Region (CSTR) and under intense pressure from the tourism and real estate sectors, this PA is also essential for safeguarding local nature and culture. It maintains significant remnants of the Atlantic Forest and coastal ecosystems, as well as traditional ways of life in quilombola, Caiçara, and artisanal fishing communities. In this regard, this paper is relevant for rescuing community practices that have been silenced by cultural homogenization and a hegemonic perspective on leisure, shaped by a capitalist/neoliberal development model that assigns a utilitarian meaning to nature and culture. Thus, the study seeks to illuminate the diversity of possible forms of leisure imbued with counter-hegemonic meanings, as experienced by the Caiçara collectives. These groups are the focus of the present study due to their importance and regional leadership in the struggle for recognition as a traditional community within the CSTR.

Based on the formulated objective, this article is organized into five sections, in addition to this introduction. The first presents the research methodology. The second synthesizes the discussion on leisure from a community and Latin American perspective. The third provides a brief overview of community leisure in the Protected

Area under study. The fourth section presents the research findings. The Final Considerations provided herein summarize the reflections resulting from this academic immersion, seeking to outline insights that may help decode the counter-hegemonic meanings of leisure in the studied territory, while also aiming to inspire future research on the subject.

## **Methodology**

The research on bibliography began with the definition of a set of relevant terms for the research question, such as “Leisure”, “Traditional Peoples and Communities”, “Caiçaras”, “Decoloniality”, “Protected Areas”, and “Latin America”, used in combination in Portuguese and Spanish. To systematize the theoretical framework gathered, the qualitative data analysis tool ATLAS.ti (Version 9.1.7) was used. This German software enables the organization and management of bibliographic references into hermeneutic units, structured by thematic axes, bringing together authors and citations, thus facilitating the development and interpretation of conceptual maps.

Beyond the Latin American theoretical framework on the subject, this article also draws on reflections derived from the process of participant observation during immersion in community experiences in the research field, CSSP, between 2021 and 2023. These experiences were recorded in a Fieldnotes to put into practice the exercise of epistemic reconstruction on the topic, based on lived realities.

To understand the meanings of leisure from a community perspective in the studied context, the methodological approach adopted was the “planting” of sensitive listening (Barbier, 1998; Cerqueira et al., 2011). This method allows the researcher to detach from their own set of values, meanings, and references, enabling them to

approach the interlocutor's enunciation, which is constructed based on their worldview and meaningful lived experiences. In this research, sensitive listening was supported by generative questions about the topic in focus, seeking to understand leisure practices in their multiple dimensions from a perspective situated and contextualized in the reality of the studied territory.

The listening process took an individual approach, although, in some cases, due to the age of the collaborator and mobility difficulties, a family member participated as an interlocutor. The selection of research collaborators followed the guidance of the network of recommendations (Costa; Mendes, 2014), in which one interlocutor indicates another, allowing the researcher to trace the relationship networks established among social groups in the studied territory.

To produce these narratives, permission was also requested to record audio using an electronic device during meetings with research collaborators. The audio recordings were transcribed in full and later reviewed by the researcher. This approach aimed to identify community perceptions of leisure and to document the cultural practices involved, as experienced in the local dimension of this social group's daily life.

After immersion in the field and a careful reading of the Caiçara narratives obtained, 12 interpretative axes on the meanings of Caiçara leisure were subsequently defined. Following this, specific narratives were selected to illustrate the arguments presented within each interpretative framework.

Through engagement in the territory, it was also possible to participate in collective celebrations, demonstrations for rights advocacy, social gatherings, community pedagogical interventions, and other local initiatives.

For the systematization and analysis of the collected material, three stages were developed based on Content Analysis (BARDIN, 2016): 1) Organization and reading of the material obtained in the field; 2) Definition of thematic categories, subsequently organized into twelve thematic axes of analysis; and 3) Interpretation of the results based on the information obtained in the field, complemented by secondary data sources.

Based on the described methodological steps, the following sections aim to synthesize reflections on community leisure, focusing on the Caiçara populations residing in the area of CSSP' jurisdiction.

### **Towards a Community and Latin American Perspective on Leisure in Protected Areas**

Industrialized, urban and modern society, although faced with complex issues in contemporary times, still seems to be limited to what Morin and Kern (1995) consider as the “great paradigm of the West”. This paradigm is governed by a disjunctive and reductionist logic that strips reality of its systemic and integrated dimensions, reducing the complexity of phenomena to colonial-modern matrices of meaning, as reflected in the division between nature and culture (QUIJANO, 2005; WALSH, 2013; KRENAK, 2019).

In the field of leisure studies specifically, much of the literature has framed this debate within discursive polarities such as work versus leisure, compulsory versus free time, productivity versus idleness—clear evidence of the influence of Eurocentric thought in this domain (GOMES; ELIZALDE, 2012; AROSTEGUY, 2018). This is because the pioneering role of European authors in the discussion of this subject has

shaped a dominant perception that reaffirms the Industrial Revolution of the eighteenth century as the moment when the very notion of leisure emerged, alongside the consecration of the social division of labor (STOPPA; ISAYAMA, 2017; BAHIA, 2018). However, this assertion should be questioned as part of the myths of modernity, according to the argument put forth by Gomes (2017)<sup>5</sup>.

The simplistic and linear analytical approach, based on a homogenizing interpretation of the subject, has led to a superficial and marginal treatment of the field of leisure, subordinating it to the discussion of paid work time from a functionalist perspective, as a counterbalance to the exhausting routines of contemporary life, as repeatedly discussed by Gomes et al. (2009), Arosteguy (2018), Maurício et al. (2021), among others (2021), among others. This perspective on leisure, understood in opposition to work, has frequently resulted in what could be considered a devaluation of free time (Marcellino, 2001), given the values embedded in the prevailing productivity-driven system, which has given rise to a "society of exhaustion," as discussed by Han (2017).

In this sense, the author emphasizes mental illnesses and relational difficulties today, resulting, in part, from the overvaluation and maximization of the sense of individual performance linked to work. Furthermore, the meaning of leisure in association with the need for escape from the malaise of civilization often leads to the assumption of standardized and massified choices for enjoying free time (RAIMUNDO, 2019).

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<sup>5</sup> This also implies the need to problematize the origin of leisure, in the historical context of recognition of free time as a labor right, based on the demand for better working conditions, including paid vacations and reduced working hours, as frequently discussed in specialized literature. This is because this perspective neglects the possibilities of leisure practices that precede this historical landmark.



Regarding this tendency towards standardization, Bruhns (2000) discusses that the discourse on pleasure, temporary fun, as well as the exaltation of well-being, is usually associated with leisure practices in nature, often through a type of appeal that privileges contemporary hedonism.

In the case of Latin America, in particular, the search for free time in connection with nature occurs, to a large extent, in association with the tourist experience in coastal areas, characterized by great scenic and landscape beauty (CRUZ, 2022), historically inhabited by traditional peoples and communities and one of the priority focuses for public policies for the protection of nature, in terms of the creation of PAs, in order to contain the growing process of biodiversity loss in the Latin American context.

Also for this reason, the public use of protected areas (PAs), in terms of leisure and tourism initiatives, research, education and environmental interpretation, in conjunction with other biodiversity conservation objectives, has been increasingly valued in terms of public policies (VALLEJO, 2015). And even though the collective appropriation of APs can enable spiritual, cultural and pedagogical experiences that materialize as potential ways to raise society's awareness of the sense of belonging to nature (IRVING, 2019; NASRI, 2021), what is observed, recurrently, is the materialization, in these areas, of what could be called “simulacrum leisure”, which is carried out through the commodification of cultures and natures, decoded to be “consumed”, through recreational spectacles, above all, to meet the demands of the urban middle and upper classes during their free time (RAIMUNDO, 2019).

It is also important to consider, in this context, the impacts and risks that the colonial worldview, guided by the entertainment industry and aimed at promoting leisure and mass tourism in APs, has been generating in the territories, translated into

the commercial appreciation of land, real estate speculation, gentrification processes, in addition to generating perverse incentives for excessive summer flows and, above all, liabilities of social exclusion and invisibility of local communities (CRUZ, 2022). Furthermore, the spectacularization of these environments through the market contributes to reinforcing the sense of division between nature and culture, privileging the dissemination of a Western-modern perspective in these territories, devaluing the ways of life of local communities.

Considering the importance of recognizing other worldviews connected to the reading of APs as “common use goods” (RODRIGUES; IRVING, 2015), associated with the sense of inseparability between nature and culture, in a prospective horizon of reconstruction of public policies in the current context of the country, this article defends a new interpretative path for leisure associated with APs. A path situated in an inclusive and plural perspective of approach connected, also, to the commitment to social engagement, appreciation of local cultures and effective participation of the actors involved in the decision-making process, also aiming at a community and Latin American epistemological construction for leisure.

In this movement of epistemological excavation aimed at revealing other possible readings for leisure in APs, it is worth highlighting that, in the daily lives of many peoples and traditional communities in Latin America, there is no distinction between working time and time without work, family and domestic obligations, for example. Thus, in the case of social groups in which the production and consumption model is not directly subject to the logic of capitalism, the playful, spontaneous, creative and hedonic aspects, generally associated with leisure, are often part of work relations, which are not necessarily dissociated from other dimensions of daily

existence, such as those related to the enjoyment of culture, spiritual and sacred experiences, experimentation with games and play, songs and dances, conviviality and individual and collective learning (AROSTEGUY, 2018).

For this reason, the recognition of the organization of community practices in the different territories of Latin America allows us to understand leisure as a human need and a way for social interaction in everyday life (GOMES, 2014). Considered an expression of culture, leisure therefore represents a space-time of experience, experimentation and social re-edition of symbols, representations, cults, rites and myths that create a sense of shared identity between individuals and between the communities involved. Through this interpretative lens, leisure constitutes an important dimension of human life (GOMES; ELIZALDE, 2012).

However, according to the same authors, there seems to be a concrete difficulty in understanding and systematizing leisure practices associated with popular culture, due to the fact that parties, celebrations, games, body expressions and experiences of sociability, although they express unique meanings for those who practice them, are sometimes not defined by means of a specific terminology or analogous to *leisure*<sup>6</sup> or *loisir*<sup>7</sup>, concepts internationally coined to designate these practices, according to the same logic that is problematized here.

For this movement to be possible, it seems fundamental to start with a careful look at the different senses and meanings attributed to leisure, also considering its practice as a singular process, in a space-time dynamic that tends to allow the reinvention of oneself, of others and of the environment that supports the process. Therefore, leisure can be recognized as a possible path towards a certain subversion in

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<sup>6</sup> Term of English origin.

<sup>7</sup> Term of French origin.

relation to the binary and reductive matrices of meanings of reality, consolidated by capitalist logic, according to the current neoliberal bias and Western epistemic imposition.

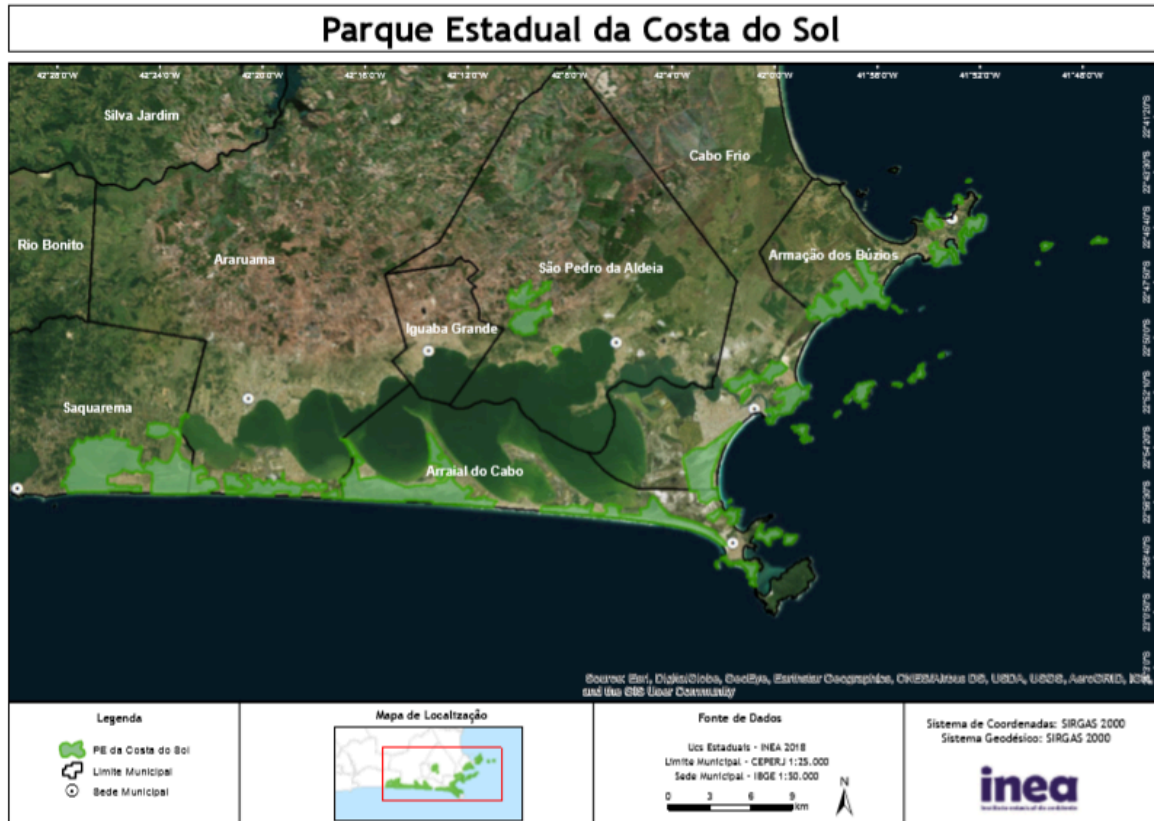
Considering the arguments presented, it is important to recognize, in the epistemological arena and in the political action plan, a permanent tension between the ideologies that feed and feedback the tendency towards the so-called “simulacrum leisure”, based on strategies of spectacularizing nature and making cultures invisible; and, on the other hand, the powerful community resistance that leads initiatives to value and disseminate their history and culture, through leisure, as discussed below, in the case of the Costa do Sol State Park.

### **Leisure Activities in Costa do Sol State Park (CSST)**

CSSP represents one of the main Integral Protection PAs in the state of Rio de Janeiro, having been created in April 2011, by Decree No. 42,929, by popular demand, with the purpose of preserving remnants of the Atlantic Forest and other associated marine and continental ecosystems, and supporting the recovery of already degraded areas in the region (RIO DE JANEIRO, 2011), being under the administrative responsibility of the State Environmental Institute (INEA), in the state of Rio de Janeiro.

The spatial configuration of CSSP is pedagogically presented in **Figure 1**, below.

**Figure 1:** Schematic figure of the Costa do Sol State Park



**Source:** Rio de Janeiro, 2019.

This is an emblematic park for the state not only because of the biodiversity it maintains, but also because of its scenic and landscape beauty, located in one of the main regions that attracts “Sun and Beach” tourist flows, in addition to being one of the most visited in the Brazilian and international context.

Thus, tourism promoted in the region, guided by the type of seaside leisure, involves nautical activities such as diving, stand up paddleboarding, windsurfing, kitesurfing and boat trips, which is the main vector of regional economic development, but also one of the main sources of risk to the local socio-environmental dynamics. The municipality of Armação dos Búzios, for example, partially covered by the park, is an icon for “Sun and Beach” tourism in the region and concentrates approximately 10% of

all foreign tourist flows in Brazil (IOT, 2018), inducing massive and seasonal flows of visitors to the entire CSSP region.

Also for this reason, this is the region with one of the highest rates of growth in population density in the state of Rio de Janeiro in recent decades (IBGE, 2010). This process seems to date back to the beginning of the 1950s, when the summer movement intensified in the region, where until then, only communities of artisanal fishermen, caíçaros and quilombolas were concentrated in villages that became the focus of second homes, aimed at the population with high purchasing power coming from the metropolises (FONSECA, 2011).

This trend therefore represents a serious risk to the integrity of regional ecosystems associated with coastal landscapes, including beaches, lagoons, islands, caves, crevices, headlands, rocky shores and dunes, protected by approximately 40 PAs of Integral Protection and Sustainable Use (MMA, 2024), some of which even overlap with the CSSP, which constitutes a non-formalized mosaic of protected areas.

In addition to the risks associated with tourism and real estate developments for the integrity of local ecosystems, an important challenge for regional development refers to the limited infrastructure for supplying water, energy and basic sanitation services, which is heavily pressured by the high flows of floating population in the region, which translates into one of the worst indicators for the supply of these services in the state of Rio de Janeiro (DIAS, 2010; RIO DE JANEIRO, 2015). Thus, the temporary shortage of basic services, due to massive tourism and leisure, tends to cause serious harm to the daily lives of residents who often move from there during the vacation period and long weekends to other municipalities that do not face the same type of problem.

It is also worth mentioning that, given the growing appreciation of areas with natural vegetation, mainly close to the sea, historically occupied by traditional peoples and communities, a process of gentrification has also been taking place, which has resulted, as a consequence, in the exclusion of these social actors to peripheral points of the cities, far from the coast (ALCÂNTARA, 2018; NAZARIO, 2022), due to the installation, in the region, of housing for classes with high purchasing power, which has consequently generated an increase in local living costs (TEIXEIRA, 2017). In this exclusionary movement, it is worth emphasizing that many of the region's PAs partially overlap with traditional territories of artisanal fishermen, caiçara populations, shellfish gatherers and 11 quilombola communities (FCP, 2024).

Thus, despite housing considerable wealth, in terms of natural and cultural heritage, important challenges still need to be faced, in terms of organizing leisure practices and mass tourism, which have contributed to the generation of high levels of tension and regional social liabilities.

This scenario tends to make it difficult and, at times, even impossible to continue traditional practices, including those associated with fishing and shellfish collection, among others. Thus, the regional socioeconomic dynamics expressed since the 1960s, mainly through salt extraction and fish capture (DIAS, 2010; RIO DE JANEIRO, 2010) have been intensely transformed in recent years, with the current predominance of activities associated with the oil and gas industry, the provision of services linked to trade aimed at tourism and the real estate market (IBGE, 2010; IOT, 2018).

In this context of increasing “spectacularization of nature” for the market and invisibility of local cultures, in 2021, an association was created to safeguard Caiçara culture, bringing together more than 80 leaders from the region who seek recognition as

a traditional community. According to Diegues (1988), caiçaras are communities located on the coast of the states of Paraná, São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro, whose ways of life are connected to the sea, standing out for their activity, above all, fishing. The leisure practices of this social group, analyzed through the production of narratives, represent the core of the present research, the results of which are systematized below.



## INTERPRETING THE COUNTER-HEGEMONIC MEANINGS OF LEISURE IN CSSP

**Table 1:** Synthesis matrix on the meanings of leisure through caiçara narratives in the CSSP insertion area.

Analytical Axes	Meanings	Caiçara narratives
Struggle, resistance, demand, subversion and community micropolitics.	Leisure is understood as a potential way to question social structures that often reproduce historical forms of violence and oppression. Socio-environmental struggles and demands, through political demonstrations, land occupations and other interventions in the territory, seek to give visibility and recognition to the rights of local communities and the value of their socio-cultural heritage, in addition to outlining paths for transforming reality. Community micropolicies play an important role in building “artisanal” and collective, locally-based solutions to everyday challenges faced by hegemonic forces in the territory.	“The women, among their actions, want to provide culture through the telling of stories experienced by the caiçaras themselves, the preparation of typical food, handicrafts and, mainly, the experience of fishing and agriculture cultivated in the fields for years. Since then, a group has been fighting to rescue the culture of our city by returning to the origins of women who, in addition to working outside the home, were responsible for the home, the children, were washerwomen, cooks, cleaners, fishing net makers, washers, flour makers, climbers, mat makers, in short, they could never have been of little importance to economic and social history. So, we have been fighting all this time for this, to safeguard our history”.
Affirmation of constitutional rights, exercise of citizenship and democracy	As a constitutional right in the Brazilian context and in other Latin American countries, the practice of leisure is interpreted as a way to exercise citizenship and participate in the field of daily negotiations of the meanings and symbols of culture. It encompasses implications for collective decisions, social agreements and the exercise of community coexistence. It also reaffirms the collective's priority values and objectives, seeking to combat social exclusion, inequity and injustice in the Latin American context. It can be understood as an opportunity for careful reflection, in the sense of other <i>modus operandi</i> and <i>vivendi</i> that can, in turn, inspire inclusive public policies.	“We are asking the mayor to take care of that well, because that well has a very strong emotional memory and could become a tourist attraction. We are asking him to create a tourist-cultural point, because there could be someone there telling the story of the well (...) So, this is our fight. We are asking. There are places where the well is completely abandoned, you see. Totally abandoned! A very beautiful emotional memory. The well was part of women's history. Telling about the well, the tradition. The story of the washerwomen of the well is an event that took place in the Caiçara community, where mothers washed clothes while the children played, and the daughters brought food from home and also learned to wash clothes. A legacy of a traditional caiçara culture”.

Emancipation, autonomy and freedom of expression	In opposition to the trend towards long working hours, leisure is understood according to a dynamic of space/time privileged for the development of autonomy, critical capacity and the emancipation of the subject and collectives. Because it represents a power of action in the sense of challenging the productivist logic and the maintenance of the status quo, its expression tends to be socially controlled by the mass industry that commercializes and depoliticizes leisure or by religious institutions that associate it with “sin”. However, encouraging its practice can contribute to outlining alternative designs for self-management of the territory, collective empowerment for the co-production of reality, in addition to circular and solidarity-based economic systems.	“What do we need to move forward with tourism here? It’s class consciousness, but more than that, (...) it’s knowledge of the world. It’s reading the world. Who am I in society? Where can I go in society? What do I want to achieve? Does society have to corner me in this place? No, society doesn’t have to corner me in this place. No one has to corner me in this place. I can go wherever I want to go.”
Collective identity, social memory and shared experience of culture.	As it represents the expression of culture, leisure represents a dynamic of space/time of experience, experimentation and social re-edition of symbols, representations, cults, rites and myths that create a sense of common identity. The production of narratives and oral stories, by integrating social memory, allows us to safeguard and transmit knowledge that provides meaning to everyday practices. Furthermore, community pacts and standards are drawn up and redrawn based on individual and collective understandings about the management and occupation of the territory.	“We sit there on the pier and listen to people tell the whole story wrong. We look at it and think: 'how can people tell a story that isn't true?'. Tell us that this was the house of Roberto Carlos, etc. Why don't you tell us that this was the house of a fisherwoman who fought? They want to tell us something that doesn't make sense to us.”
Conviviality, sharing, solidarity, feeling of belonging and affection.	In the context of valuing community life, as a counterpoint to the individualism and competitiveness that largely characterize the homogenizing perspective of the world, community leisure can contribute to strengthening social ties, producing affections that strengthen the sense of belonging to the “common”, in addition to pacts built according to an ethic that guides life in the collective. Furthermore, it tends to contribute to community organization and reproduction processes, even inspiring social technologies to address local challenges.	<p>“As children, we were raised with the whole family getting along, all together. The children here, in this well, washing. We took food to our mother, she left it at home, so we brought food to our mother here. If there was one, two, three, four, everyone ate the same food. Everyone shared just one meal, because everyone was one family. It was like that.”</p> <p>“We knew everyone...neighbors...it was really nice. Nowadays, with these subdivisions I told you about, we get a bit lost, there are a lot of people from outside, right. What a shame!”</p>

Playfulness and social experimentation.	In response to the rationality that sterilizes life, parties, games, dance, music, poetry, and painting, street theater, popular celebrations, conversation, sports activities, among many other social manifestations, constitute opportunities and expressions of playful enjoyment of culture, in its spontaneous and hedonic aspects.	“Typical festival, the Reis de Boi. A person would enter downstairs, no one knew who it was. I was bringing people together, with music, outside. I was gathering people. When I saw it, there were more than 30, 40 people. Only one would go under the Ox and take turns with someone when he was tired. So there was this really good party.”
Comprehensive health, human development and quality of life.	When integrated with other dimensions of existence, including work, leisure can inspire care practices, connected to the perspective of “Well-Being”, according to the commitment to quality of life for all, also considering the notion of integral health and valuing the traditional knowledge of midwives, herbalists and healers. From this perspective, leisure can contribute to influencing the construction of value systems and behavioral change associated with the commitment to individual and collective development.	“And here, if my mother had a baby, the neighbors would come to my house to help take care of it, wash clothes, clean the house. Everyone was like that, helping each other. Nowadays, you get sick, nobody knows, nobody finds out. Each one in their own square. I remember my aunt lived around here, my aunt was a midwife. And my cousin was having a baby. And my aunt said: “Oh, the stork is going to bring the baby.” Everyone was outside, waiting for the stork to come and bring it. And we didn’t see anything, and then we heard a child crying inside the house”.
Socio-educational intervention, popular education and transmission of knowledge and practices.	Community philosophies that provide a sense of cohesion to the group underpin leisure practices and the decoding of ancestral teachings about ways of being and acting in the collective. Community leaders are at the forefront of conducting these practices and circulating the transmission of traditional knowledge. Communication channels are established for this purpose and shared learning occurs within the group, for the development of collective analytical and critical capabilities.	“You see now that they are even calling us to tell the story in schools. We are already receiving invitations to take the story to students. That's our intention too, to make a book so that children know what happened before. This is our intention and we are already being recognized. People already know that caiçaras exist. People ask what caiçara is. Caiçara is someone who is born in front of the beach, the sea, the daughter of a fisherman, because we are part of fishing too”.

<p>Connection, spirituality, worship of the sacred and mysticism.</p>	<p>Introspective practices of meditation, relaxation, contemplation, spiritual connection with nature and with oneself and transcendental experiences constitute the collective practice of leisure that are not just limited to the dimension of cognition. They go beyond the limits of reason and science, to constitute subjective and magical elements that animate and dynamize beliefs and reverence for the sacred, contributing to the construction of ethical relationships also with non-human elements.</p>	<p>“My mother, when she was fishing, she said that she came there with her friend, a Boi Tatá came through the forest breaking everything, with a torch in his hand inside the forest. And they ran, ran... They really said it was Boi Tatá. It wasn't a fisherman's story, no. They even said it was Boi Tatá. They were afraid. They were afraid. And Boi Tatá, inside the forest, breaking through all the vegetation, only left them when he arrived here in the Field. It's really good, telling these stories.”</p> <p>“When they had seven children and the seventh was not given away, he became a Werewolf, so there were those ditches in the streets, where the pigs stayed and the Werewolves also threw themselves into that mud. We slept with the windows open and saw.”</p>
<p>Creativity and inventiveness.</p>	<p>With the inversion of the analytical perspective of the world, practices previously interpreted as antitheses to work and considered unproductive and peripheral by the logic of dominant Western thought (such as the arts and experiences of body expression, for example) begin to be understood as ways to create meanings of being in the world, revealing countless possibilities for the reinvention of alternative community practices to the current hegemonic system.</p>	<p>"Right now, we are in a process where our dream is to have our own headquarters because if a tourist arrives, we know how to tell our story. So, we can have someone there making a fishing net. One of the women weaving a net and teaching others. A place for visitors, where people can see our history in a picture, embroidering our story onto a rug to place in a frame. Each one tells their own story, and we bring them together. It's like stitching, really. You take little pieces and tell: 'Oh, I remember this'. One remembers one thing, another remembers something else, and before we know it, we've created an entire wall with our history”.</p>

Liveliness, joy and enchantment.	The recognition of knowledge solely apprehended through Cartesian rationality and scientifically proven to explain reality lies at the core of humanity's disenchantment with the world, stemming from the loss of subjective and imaginary elements that once sustained the sense of belonging to nature and the communal spirit. The reduction of life to the capitalist machinery thus results in the impoverishment of existential meaning. In resistance to this process, counter-hegemonic leisure seeks to forge circular and inclusive pathways for the production of life in the territory, while also fostering the re-enchantment of public spaces through their collective meaning-making, appropriation, and occupation.	"This land is wonderful. I am enchanted; there's no way to say otherwise. You can see it. I want to bring this story. But it's not tourism with the aim of exploiting the tourist, but rather informing them. Educational".
Devotion and Inseparability with Nature.	Leisure is understood as a practice developed based on the sense of inseparability between human beings and nature, which is regarded as sacred and vital, carrying a devotional and ancestral meaning. In this case, both work and leisure are linked to the sense of belonging to nature, which also plays a crucial role in ensuring food and water security. Thus, it is a process guided by wisdom and reverence for the natural cycles of the land's regeneration, fostering sustainable and enduring practices with a long-term perspective.	<p>"That's why if you ask me where my psychologist is, I'll tell you exactly where. I get floats for all my friends, and we just float in the sea. I have a bunch of floats, so I tie one here and another there when it's windy, and we all stay in a circle, playing and relaxing. It's been almost a month since I last dived. I'm already feeling stressed".</p> <p>"I don't fight with people; I only defend the sea. People come here and complain about the sea spray when the ocean is rough, but the sea and the wind have feelings".</p>

**Source:** Prepared by the author (2023), based on participant observation in community initiatives, registered by Fieldnotes and complemented by readings by Gomes et al. (2009), Carvalho (2010), Gomes (2014), Costa e Mendes (2014), Bispo dos Santos (2015), Krenak (2019), Raimundo (2019), Rufino (2019), Simas (2021), Maurício *et al.* (2021) and Ferdinand (2022).

Based on the synthesis of the previous table, which systematizes some of the community narratives about leisure, it is possible to affirm that the Eurocentric perspective on the subject fails to encompass the complexity involved in its practice within the territories of the *Global South*. This is because the meanings of leisure are multiple and diverse, permeating discussions in the fields of popular education, integral health practices, identity formation processes, complex relationships with nature and the sacred, among many other nuances of collective life. In this sense, the various existential dimensions seem to be integrated and fluid in everyday life and cannot be understood as separate from the broader dynamics of society.

Furthermore, the practice of leisure tends to contribute to the reinvention of modes of conviviality, strengthening affective bonds that are often subjected to attempts at fraying and rupture as a result of capitalist and neoliberal logics in these territories. Another important point to consider in this debate refers to the exogenous pressures imposed on these territories, which seek to "sterilize," homogenize, and disenchant life in the Global South through historically constructed mechanisms of oppression and domination, framed by a colonialist perspective.

In opposition to this movement, community leisure practices tend to foster a sense of spontaneity, hedonism, and playful enjoyment of culture, enhancing avenues for the reaffirmation and recreation of collective life. Thus, it can be argued that leisure practices, in this context, express a non-fragmented space-time dimension, inherently incorporated into the lived reality of the communities involved, serving as a viable path for the re-enchantment of community life.

For this reason, careful observation and sensitive listening seem to represent powerful approaches for understanding the counter-hegemonic perspective on leisure—not through the replication and diffusion of pre-conceived concepts, but rather through the apprehension of the lived reality itself, by immersing in the "here and now" within these territories.

### **Final Considerations**

Based on the discussion proposed in this article, it seems possible to affirm that, in the region of CSSP' insertion, there is a dynamic expression of diverse leisure practices as counter-hegemonic experiences lived by the collectives of traditional peoples and communities, among which the caiçaras were the primary focus of observation in this research. These practices stem from different worldviews, cultural values, and an intrinsic and inseparable relationship with nature in their daily lives.

The results obtained also illustrated that the ludic, hedonistic, and pleasurable elements associated with leisure in Global North societies—based on a notion of time and space disconnected from other dimensions of life and daily routines—are not recognized and/or decoded in the same way by the caiçara group studied. This is because, in the context of the Global South, leisure practices are intertwined with the construction of sociability, territorial resistance, and traditional forms of labor, such as fishing, shellfish and fruit gathering, and handicraft production.

This does not mean that labor activities are not perceived as arduous or that community life is not difficult. However, collective play seems to soften the harshness of daily life and re-enchant the reality that the hegemonic capitalist system has been

disenchanting. From this perspective, leisure can take on a different meaning, as this community practice is not guided by market logic but by a human and affective perspective of the world. In other words, it seems possible to affirm that leisure, based on plural and diverse cosmovisions, represents a potential avenue for deviating from the rationalist and economicist devices of power structuring in these territories—devices that disenchant and weaken the experience of life.

It is precisely in this sense that leisure can be considered a breach, or even a gap in space-time, to question and seek transformation, at the level of collectives, against the colonialism of power and knowledge that has historically strained the communities of the Global South. From this perspective, in contexts considered minoritized, peripheral, and subalternized—but which, in reality, encompass the majority of the population in the Global South—leisure practices may enable counter-hegemonic constructions based on alternative ways of being and relating to the world. Therefore, leisure, when experienced on foundations other than those of Westernized traditions, seems to enhance the construction of a sense of belonging to cultures and natures, demystifying Cartesian and dichotomous relationships in this regard.

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