

LEISURE, DAILY LIFE, AND EDUCATION IN/FROM THE QUILOMBOLA COMMUNITY OF SÃO JULIÃO – MUCURI VALLEY/MG**Received on:** 10/30/2023**Passed on:** August 23, 2024**License:** *Renata Martins¹*

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ABSTRACT: The current article is an extension of the doctoral study titled "Social Practices, Everyday Life, and Leisure: A Case Study in and with the Quilombola Community of São Julião," conducted in the Interdisciplinary Graduate Program in Leisure Studies at the School of Physical Education, Physiotherapy, and Occupational Therapy of UFMG. The research process was based on a relational methodology aimed at reflecting on the social practices experienced in everyday life and their relation to the field of Leisure Studies. Understanding through living and feeling allowed for an exploration of everyday life as a field of possibilities, with a clear perspective on the role of time and territory in the production of life from an aesthetic, ethical, and communal standpoint.

KEYWORDS: Social practices. Daily. Leisure.

LAZER, COTIDIANO E EDUCAÇÃO NA/DA COMUNIDADE QUILOMBOLA DE SÃO JULIÃO – VALE DO MUCURI/MG

RESUMO: O atual artigo é um desdobramento do estudo de doutorado intitulado “Práticas sociais, cotidiano e lazer: um estudo de caso na e com a Comunidade Quilombola de São Julião”, realizada no Programa de Pós-Graduação Interdisciplinar em Estudos do Lazer, da Escola de Educação Física, Fisioterapia e Terapia Ocupacional da UFMG. O processo de pesquisa foi realizado a partir de uma metodologia relacional

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que se propõe a refletir sobre as práticas sociais vivenciadas no cotidiana e relacionada ao campo de Estudos do Lazer. A compreensão pelo viver e pelo sentir possibilitou um olhar para o cotidiano como campo de possibilidades, tendo clareza sobre o lugar do tempo e do território enquanto produção da vida, numa perspectiva estética, ética e comunal.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Práticas sociais. Cotidiano. Lazer.

Introduction

The study presented herein aimed to understand the meanings that leisure assumes in the daily life of the Quilombola Community of São Julião, which currently has an average population of about 350 inhabitants. Located in the rural area of the municipality of Teófilo Otoni, in the Mucuri Valley, state of Minas Gerais, it is characterized as a place that shelters a community committed to valuing and preserving its cultural experiences. To achieve such understanding, it was necessary to identify and describe the social practices related to this field of study³.

We proposed to understand and value the cultural experiences lived in everyday life, conceiving leisure in relation to education—as a whole, as a context of integrative relations among the subjects' experiences. We approached cultural experience⁴ as a means to problematize other possibilities of ethical, aesthetic, and temporal production of life. We sought to work with elements that would allow reflection on what everyday life invites us to perceive, as well as on the various forms of knowledge production that individuals bring forth through their experiences.

³ The article is an extension of the Ph.D. study “Social practices, daily life and leisure: a case study in and with the quilombola community of São Julião”.

⁴ The choice of “cultural experience” was to avoid referring to something objectified, which fills everyone in the same way, but which, in a certain way, gives meaning to the daily relationships that incarnated social subjects, in a given context, experience. As presented by Lave and Wenger (2022), knowing a general practical rule does not guarantee that whatever generality is enacted will be available in the specific circumstances in which it is relevant. In this sense, any “force of abstraction” is entirely situated in people’s lives and the culture that makes it possible.

Cultural experience and everyday life brought us closer to the notion of “social practices”. Cultural experience and daily life brought us closer to the notion of “social practices”. The term “practice” relates to the body, to embodiment, to bodily experience, to the lived. “Social,” in turn, relates to the notion of the situated, which in Lave and Wenger’s perspective implies a comprehensive understanding that involves the person as a whole—“in activity in and with the world, and in the view that agent, activity, and world mutually constitute one another” (Lave & Wenger, 2022, p. 29).

In this research, which is linked to the Interdisciplinary Program in Leisure Studies, we directed our attention to the “social practices” experienced in everyday life and related to the field of Leisure Studies, without disregarding what Gomes (2014) points out—that in minority contexts it is not always possible to designate a single word or concept to describe festivities, celebrations, rituals, bodily practices, games, and music, among other experiences, although these may indeed express forms of leisure, with their own singular meanings and senses. In this regard, Gomes (2014, p. 7) understands leisure “as a human need and a dimension of culture that constitutes a field of social practices experienced playfully by individuals, being present in everyday life across all times, places, and contexts”.

When addressing social practices lived in everyday life and related to the field of Leisure Studies, we considered Lave and Wenger’s (2022) concept of Legitimate Peripheral Participation (LPP), recognizing the learning of these practices as something that occurs horizontally, taking social practice as a primary generative phenomenon and learning as a characteristic of this phenomenon. By bringing forward the revelry, festivals, drumming, play, among other leisure-related social practices, learning is understood “as an integral aspect of practice (in a historical, generative sense) (...) an

integral element of the social practice that generates the lived world" (Lave & Wenger, 2022, p. 30).

According to the notion of Legitimate Peripheral Participation, by Leave and Wenger (2022), none of the aspects can be considered in isolation, each of them is necessary to define the other, forming a landscape (forms, degrees, textures) of belonging to the community.

The form that the legitimacy of participation takes is a defining characteristic of the means of belonging, so it is not only a crucial condition for learning but also a constituent element of its content. Similarly, regarding "peripherality," it is also very possible that there is no "central participation" in a community of practice. Peripherality suggests that there are multiple ways, varied and more or less engaged and inclusive, of locating oneself in the fields of participation defined by the community. The issue of peripheral participation addresses being located/situated in the social world. The change of situation and perspective is part of the actors' learning trajectories, as well as the development of identities and forms of belonging (Leave; Wenger, 2022, p. 31).

By understanding the cultural experiences and daily life of the São Julião community, and by describing its social practices, it was possible to elucidate the meanings that leisure assumes both from and within everyday life. We sought to make an academic contribution by weaving reflections on the field of Leisure Studies from the everyday life context of a quilombola community, as a way to comprehend life from its aesthetic, ethical, and communal perspectives.

Through a qualitative methodology aimed at valuing the perspective of the individuals involved in the process, we sought to understand social facts imbued with values and subjectivities, attributing to each studied fact its own meaning. The research paths were shaped according to the procedure that Segato (2012) calls "ethnographic listening", emphasizing "knowledge and reflection in response to the questions posed to me by those who, from a classical perspective, would constitute the objects of observation and study" (Segato, 2012, p. 107). We developed the research in such a way

as to make it possible, through the subjects themselves, to trace new paths at any time, so that the writing of the thesis would emerge from what truly matters to them.

Extrapolating the notion of “voice” beyond spoken narrative, we understand it as that which is expressed in multiple ways. The choice of “ethnographic listening” makes possible an intercultural research approach that recognizes the need to listen to what subjects express about their lived realities. Through proximity and attentive listening to both individual and collective subjects, we sought to recognize, together with them, the knowledge that their lives embody—taking everyday life itself as a source of reflective potential. We aimed to build connections with the (re)appropriation of time and materiality that might enable these subjects to reclaim their histories and worldviews as ways of understanding life.

By presenting the social practices experienced in daily life and related to the field of leisure studies within the Quilombola Community of São Julião, we sought to provoke an “other” gaze upon life as a sensitive experience—an effort to render transparent these practices, the everyday, situated processes, memories, and stories, as an exercise in reading the conditions of their own production and of life itself.

Thus, the work was developed in light of what Escobar (2020) calls “collaborative epistemologies,” a possibility for working with an “other” notion of participation within research—one that encourages involvement beyond domesticated and superficial understandings of participation, linking instead to the notion of “communalism”. The author suggests that, if we seek an “other” form of participation, we need “other epistemologies,” ones that transcend the division between researcher and researched community.

Accordingly, the research was organized under a framework in which we assumed responsibility for the production of this work—through theoretical dialogues, methodological processes, and other decisions demanded by academic inquiry. Among these choices was the refusal to position the other—the researched subject—as a mere object of study. Rather, dialogue and relationship emerged as central principles. In the research on which this article is based, the “other” is also a subject in the process—both in data production and in the centrality of practice and voice. It is important to emphasize that it is these subjects who make the development of this research possible, as they share their lives, experiences, and words.

Escobar (2020) argues that we are trapped in a toxic cycle of everyday existence because we sustain modernity’s core beliefs—such as the notion that we are autonomous, separate individuals; that the economy operates independently; that science grants us truth; and that there exists an objective and real world. He contends that the task is to reconnect what modernity has divided and that this is precisely what design now seeks to problematize. The author points out design trends in the Global North and South and what he calls “critical transnational design studies”, so that the idea of interdependence is embraced, overcoming an anthropocentric vision and instigating a desire to operate in the reality of the contemporary world.

Therefore, Escobar (2020) tries to elucidate the idea of interdependence or relationality, stating that

We emerge from a complex web of relations among the human and the more-than-human, and thus the principle we call relationality arises, in one form or another, to make sense of reality. We also refer to this as “radical interdependence,” in the sense that not only is everything related to everything else, but everything depends on the existence of everything else. For something to exist, everything else must exist. We have always lived against this perception, amid all the separations and binaries of modernity. [...] Life is flow; it is interrelation. Everything relates to everything, and therefore, if we learn to inhabit the planet in a pluriversal way—according to

this principle of interdependence—we will have advanced greatly. We would relearn to walk the world as living beings [...] (Escobar, 2020, p. 4).

From these concepts of interrelation, interdependence, and “relationality”, Escobar arrives at the notion of “communalism”, which has emerged in Latin America over the past decade. The author notes that “if we look at the political and vital landscape of today’s peoples, we find ourselves in a situation where there are ‘community fabrics,’ on the one hand—representing all the communal achievements of peoples and collectives resisting the collisions and networks of transnational corporations that seek to appropriate everything” (Escobar, 2020, p. 5). From this perspective, Escobar argues that the communal is a horizon of struggle and a continuous construction of life—yet it is also inhabited by forms of power.

When we analyze the “community fabrics” described by Escobar, we can perceive their proximity to the Quilombola Community of São Julião, which exists and re-exists through complex power relations—both external and internal. The community continually creates and enacts movements that allow its members to sustain a living cultural experience expressed daily in their routines. This is not a return to the past nor a mere continuation of the present; rather, it involves developing economies grounded in communal principles aimed at producing the common, even while engaging with the market.

Escobar (2020) also introduces a concept that is central to this paper. The so-called “politics of the feminine”, previously articulated by other feminist scholars. This concept inaugurates an alternative critical reflection on patriarchal structures that have persisted over the years, intertwined with capitalism and racism—realities that strongly affect communities such as São Julião. Thus, he proposes a feminine strategy that we also adopt herein. We chose to write collectively, mainly alongside two women who

fight daily in the community to build a new scenario in this sense. Thus, as Escobar points out (2020, p. 6), we continue “adopting a rhetoric of value to communal forms of happiness, which can oppose the powerful rhetoric of the project of things, the project of globalization”, bringing to the scene a concept that, according to Escobar (2020), was created by Rita Segato (2012).

The two women with whom we established a more direct relationship within the research are: Kátia⁵, current president of the Associação Vaz Pereira (the first woman ever to hold this position in the community), community leader, farmer, quilombola, daughter-in-law of Pai João Preto and Mãe Augusta; and Carlinha, youth community leader, current secretary of the Associação Vaz Pereira, community health worker (at the time of the research), daughter of Kátia and Range, and granddaughter of Pai João Preto and Mãe Augusta. These two voices will remain enduring presences throughout this thesis.

We also drew upon what Escobar (2020) identifies as a development among different Latin American groups working within participatory epistemologies—what he terms militant participation—which describes the convergence of concrete actions and research experiences. Within this framework, all research must aim at social transformation. Accordingly, we pursued a path of collective construction so that both the outcomes and the writing of this thesis would be of direct interest to the community. Not to mention that we were engaged in an exercise of bringing forth voices, making the writing itself part of a collective process.

⁵Throughout the thesis, non-fictional names and surnames are used, following the criterion of naming the subjects in the same way as they are named in the community’s daily life. The use of names and surnames was established by mutual agreement with those involved, especially Kátia and Carlinha, who held a central role in the production of the research process.

In light of the concept of Legitimate Peripheral Participation proposed by Lave and Wenger (2022), and in the search for an “other gaze”, we worked from collaborative epistemologies through the notion of *comunalidad*, adopting both the politics of the feminine and militant participation within a collective construction inspired by Escobar (2020) and grounded in Rita Segato’s (2012) “ethnographic listening”. From this foundation, we assumed a relational methodological process of research, where each chapter was shaped by the processes that emerged through relational forms and engagement in the everyday life in and with the Quilombola Community of São Julião.

In considering this path of immersion, it is important to clarify that we do not regard this research as an ethnography in the sense that the anthropological field defines an ethnographic construction. However, we do not forgo an ethnographic gaze, particularly regarding what Segato (2012) terms “ethnographic listening”, which involves full-bodied participation and engagement.

We identify with Favret-Saada (2005) in her text “Being Affected”, where she explains that, in attempting to conduct ethnographic research on witchcraft in the French Bocage, she oscillated between two obstacles: if she “participated”, the research would turn into a personal adventure; but if she merely observed and maintained distance, there would be nothing to observe. The author describes this as a methodological process through which she sought to make “participation” an instrument of knowledge. Thus, in her encounters with the bewitched and the unbewitchers, she allowed herself to be affected—without seeking to research, understand, or retain any aspect consciously—yet, upon returning home, she would write a chronicle of the enigmatic events she had experienced.

Favret-Saada (2005) argues that by assuming this position of participation and being affected, one opens a specific form of communication with the natives (whom we prefer to call research subjects), a communication that is always involuntary and devoid of intentionality, whether verbal or non-verbal. The proximity to Favret-Saada's way of conducting research led us, on many occasions throughout our fieldwork, to find ourselves immersed in processes of deep and lasting joy and involvement—and, at times, of anguish—since the rules and limited timelines of the academic world can indeed cast a shadow.

“In those moments, if I am able to forget that I am in the field, that I am at work, if I am able to forget that I have my stock of questions to ask... if I am able to tell myself that communication (ethnographic or not, for that is no longer the issue) is precisely taking place—thus, in this unbearable and incomprehensible manner—then I am directed toward a particular variety of human experiences — being bewitched, for example — because I am affected.” (Favret-Saada, 2005, p. 159-160).

Following these relational processes—and because we allowed ourselves to be affected, we adopted certain research paths that unfolded along three main axes: in the first, we address the paths of immersion as a research experience, describing our initial field immersion and the research choices that emerged throughout this period. In the second, we describe the social practices experienced in everyday life and related to the field of Leisure Studies. As empirical experiences, we present the revelry, play, drumming, and spirituality—topics collectively identified with the community, especially in dialogue with the community leader (Kátia). In the third, we seek to engage in dialogue with authors who ground our discussions on the temporality of subjects, as well as with those who offer contributions to the field of Leisure Studies. Finally, in the concluding remarks, we share other concrete experiences of everyday life by describing a project on access to and permanence of the quilombola youth of São Julião in higher education, along with its outcomes.

Construction of the Paths of Immersion

First, we seek to describe the paths that led us to the Quilombola Community of São Julião, and then we describe the first immersion in the field, at the 5th Quilombola Culture Festival of São Julião, which took place during a period of the Covid-19 pandemic, at the beginning of the second half of 2021.

The 5th Quilombola Culture Festival of São Julião⁶ was a project funded by the Aldir Blanc Law, which provides financial support to the cultural sector. It was organized by the Quilombola Association Vaz Pereira, in partnership with Associação Mucury Cultural, Carretel Cultural, and Mútua Criativa. The Quilombola Association Vaz Pereira is composed of members of the São Julião community, while the other institutions are long-term partners in various projects developed within this context. This festival began 10 (ten) years ago and was originally created to celebrate the birthday of Pereira da Viola, a nationally known folk guitarist who was born in São Julião.

Beginning a research process in the context of a pandemic required some adjustments to our initial plans. At that time, the entire world was adapting to new ways of working and relating to others—and research was no exception. Since our initial goal was to establish a close relationship with the community and its members, we spent some time reflecting on how it would be possible to carry out the research, with the understanding that the dynamics of life itself invite us to explore other forms of connection.

⁶ The invitation to participate in the 5th São Julião Quilombola Culture Festival came less than a week before the event. Due to the pandemic caused by Covid-19, the event was scheduled to take place online, but since the entire community (people over 18 years old) was vaccinated, they decided to have the event in person, with only the community members physically present. The few who came from outside had to strictly follow safety protocols, which included continuous use of N95 or PFF2 masks, use of alcohol gel and social distancing.

Among the points highlighted throughout this first immersion, we perceived the need to discuss and deepen certain themes such as the revelry, play, drumming (*batuque*), spirituality, as well as the unfoldings that these social practices make possible. Based on these identified themes, we collectively built an agenda for the next immersions, scheduled for 2022, during which Kátia presented us with the community's festive and religious calendar. In the second chapter, we describe and seek to understand these aspects, as outlined during this initial immersion.

Describing a Context of Festive Experiences

In addressing festive experiences, we draw on Léa Perez, who argues that, during the celebration, the collective experiences another existence—an alternative vision of themselves—where, for a brief moment, everything becomes possible. She writes that the celebration is a “[...] field of possibility and challenge; it invents/fantasizes other relations of humans with nature, with the world, and with themselves—other ways of connecting—since it sets in motion excess and transgression” (Perez, 2009, p. 12).

A celebration does not refer to an event limited in time and space, but rather to a (fleeting and transitory) time/space of exuberance and explosion of life, of human becoming—something that lies outside and beyond the course of time and duration, yet is anchored in what is yet to come (Perez, 2009, p. 12).

Among the many social practices experienced in daily life and related to the field of Leisure Studies, we collectively decided to focus on three of them, which are presented here as three axes: the revelry, the batuque, and spirituality.

When we arrived in São Julião in the early months of the second semester of 2021, through the first immersions, we sought to trace—together with members of the community—the main social practices that were part of their daily lives and related to

the field of Leisure Studies. Thus, we came to perceive the revelry as central elements, for they structure the community's temporal calendar. This information became relevant for outlining the directions of this research and, consequently, the field immersion schedule.

Throughout the year, four revelry take place in the community of São Julião. To compose the set of practices described herein, we followed the revelry held during 2022. Each of them was introduced into the community in a distinct way and unfolds according to a unique dynamic. Currently, the revelry of Santos Reis, São Sebastião, Santa Luzia, and Bom Jesus are celebrated.

We observed the batuque at different moments in the community—beginning with our first immersion during the Quilombola Culture Festival of São Julião in 2021, and later throughout the revelry in 2022, as well as during rehearsals for performances held outside the community. Thus, what we present in this dissertation reflects what was observed, experienced bodily, and learned through the narratives of the participants.

When speaking with Carlinha about the batuque, she explained that, in her view, batuque is a dance, a quilombola cultural expression connected to religion and to their ancestors—representing the way they used to dance and sing, with meanings linked to spirituality.

The batuque is a dance, it's part of Black culture, but it's also a form of play meant to relax. For example, at the end of each folia—which is a serious ritual, one of devotion and communication with God—after it's over, to unwind, to bring joy, it's as if joy were being brought to that place. Then we perform the batuque in the houses, at the end of each folia. We also perform it in shows—it's really a dance. I think batuque is a dance. (Carlinha)

Through sharing in everyday life, we came to understand “playing the batuque” as a celebratory moment, when people sing and dance to their own songs. Always lively, the group divides into call and response—one group asks, the chorus answers.

The voices are accompanied by instruments such as the accordion, viola, guitar, drum, tambourine, triangle, and sometimes enamel plates and spoons.

In the final axis, that of spirituality, we draw on Travalha (2016), based on Röhr, who argues that the human being is multidimensional, with dimensions (in a division that is not closed, and thus resists limitation) ranging from the densest—biological body—through the sensory, emotional, and mental dimensions (which include logical reasoning), up to the most subtle: the spiritual dimension. Human dimensions may also be understood as immanent (the densest) and transcendent (the spiritual).

From this perspective, Travalha (2016), also based on Röhr, asserts that reflecting on spirituality requires considering the human being in their wholeness—it is impossible to view spirituality in isolation, detached from the other dimensions. In discussing the spiritual dimension, both authors understand that it is always linked to faith and, therefore, spirituality cannot be guaranteed—only witnessed. Moreover, it is not merely a mental act, but something that involves the person as a whole, demanding from the individual a personal commitment, an identification that generates a synchronicity between this sense and the life posture that is assumed.

It is also important to note that, although not every form of spirituality presupposes religion, every religion presupposes spirituality. In São Julião, these two terms are connected, as became evident throughout our field immersion.

In describing the processes of immersion and the festive experiences, our premise was engagement with the subjects and shared construction. This resulted in both the unfolding and the evidence of the practices and voices of those who occupied a central place in the production of life and research processes, as well as in a more reflexive, albeit shared, position of authorship.

Thinking the Relationship Between Leisure, Time, and Territory

Our encounter with this community allowed us to experience, in practice, another way of being and existing in the world—one that is not detached from the globalized contemporary world imposed by capitalism, colonialism, and patriarchy, but that somehow, in a very localized dimension, manages to organize itself, even minimally, to cope with external pressures and ways of life, while maintaining a genuine, organic, and harmonious mode of being in the world.

Considering both the external world and the ways of life in São Julião, and reflecting on the complexity of collaborative forms of doing research, we turned to the ideas presented by Escobar (2020) on “other epistemologies”, which seek to overcome the division between researcher and researched community, bringing design to the forefront as an important space for the production of life and the creation of worlds.

In this regard, we draw closer to Boaventura de Sousa Santos (2019), who offers important reflections on neoliberal hegemony and global dominance in matters related to culture, economy, and epistemologies. He proposes the construction and valorization of new epistemologies, as well as the development of alternative modes of thinking that strengthen the struggle against capitalism, colonialism, and patriarchy—introducing the epistemologies of the South as potential alternatives to surpass the epistemic North.

The proposal of Santos (2019) is not to disregard all knowledge produced in the North, but rather to consider alternatives emerging from modes of knowledge production born out of struggles for rights and against the invisibilization of ways of knowing. The author identifies some of the challenges faced by those who undertake research in this direction, among them methodological reinvention and confrontation with the epistemological foundations of abyssal exclusion. He further argues that a

process of co-knowledge is necessary—one that revolutionizes theory and epistemology by articulating ecologies of knowledge, rearguard intellectuality, and the craftsmanship of practices.

Santos (2019) places the body at the center, arguing that while the epistemologies of the North have “great difficulty in accepting the body in all its emotional and affective density without transforming it into yet another object of study” (Santos, 2019, p. 137), the epistemologies of the South deal with knowledges situated in resistance and in the struggle against oppression. Therefore, these are knowledges that are embodied, materialized in the body—whether individual or collective. “Embodied knowledge manifests itself in living bodies [...] those who engage in the struggle against oppression; they are bodies that suffer from defeat and rejoice in victory. Both individual and collective bodies are social bodies” (Santos, 2019, p. 136).

For the epistemologies of the South, as proposed by Santos (2019), among the multiple corporeal differences, the author highlights what he calls the moribund body, the suffering body, and the joyful body. In this thesis, we focus on the joyful body, as the author describes it:

The third body privileged by the epistemologies of the South is the joyful body, which delights in pleasure, festivity, laughter, dance, song, and eroticism—all in celebration of the joy of the body. Social struggles are not only about death and suffering; they are also about joy and jubilation, happiness and victories, whether large or small, during pauses for regaining strength, or even in difficult moments to revive the spirit of struggle (Santos, 2019, p. 142).

If the epistemologies of the North struggle to value the cognitive dimensions of festivity and celebration—being permeated by guilt and melancholy—the epistemologies of the South recognize these spaces as expressions of vital force and reaffirmations of dignity, which are necessary to the struggle against oppression. They hold epistemological value as they trace their contours through pain and joy, through

the energy embedded in bodies and affections, and through their engagement with spiritual dimensions (Santos, 2019). These reflections help us associate the joyful bodies evoked by Boaventura with those we observed in the festivals, celebrations, and rituals of the Quilombola Community of São Julião—bodies that dance, sing, celebrate, and exercise their faith while simultaneously struggling, existing, and re-existing.

Simas and Rufino (2018), in the book “**Fogo no Mato**”, offer insights into colonialism and its structures, highlighting an agenda that discredits countless forms of existence and knowledge. They discuss the epistemologies of macumba, which seek to transgress colonial structures of knowledge by asserting and legitimizing the existence and wisdom of the subalternized.

We are unsettled by how discourses, cloaked in sincere liberatory intent, often impoverish human potentialities. Educated under normative logic, we fail to recognize syncopated cultures—those that subvert rhythms, break constancies, find unpredictable solutions, and create imaginative ways of filling the void through body, voice, and song. The problem is that to recognize this, we must abandon the comfort of our epistemological sofas and throw ourselves into the crossroads of alterity—not merely as a mechanism of understanding (often sterile), but as a form of shared experience. Syncopation is the art of saying when one does not say, and not saying when one is saying (Simas & Rufino, 2018, p. 19).

Simas and Rufino (2018) thus become key references for this study, which deals with the knowledge produced and lived in the everyday lives of the subjects of the Quilombola Community of São Julião, through an exercise that Arturo Escobar (2020) calls collaborative epistemologies. Through this, we sought to produce a co-authored writing process with the research subjects—tracing paths together, bringing their knowledge to light, and striving to disrupt established structures. In this thesis, a form of knowledge that would historically be discarded under the lens of Northern epistemologies gains power. The one who knows, who in another context would be a research object, becomes here a subject who also determines the paths to be taken.

In this exercise, we sought to establish dialogues with two authors: Antônio Bispo dos Santos (known as Nego Bispo) and Maria Manuel Baptista. The first—a Black Brazilian man, quilombola—enables us to reflect upon the forms of life established in the São Julião community, allowing the reader to understand the place and people to which we refer. The second—a white Portuguese woman and a major scholar in Cultural Studies—provides a theoretical framework through which we aim to contribute to the field of Leisure Studies.

From Nego Bispo, we sought to draw the contours of the territory. For a better understanding and emergence of the experience, after the period of immersion in the field, we return to reading Antônio Bispo dos Santos (Nego Bispo), who works with important notions based on his life story. He describes himself as a quilombola rather than a human being, “a translator of the thought of his people and also a translator of the thought of the colonialist” (Bispo dos Santos, 2018, p. 45). Although he speaks from a different context and about his own community, his reflections helped us deeply understand and articulate much of what we experienced in São Julião.

Bispo dos Santos (2023), right at the beginning of his book “*A terra dá, a terra quer*”, says that since he was ten years old, his uncle began to teach him how to train animals and, after some time sharing his experience, he makes the following reflection:

When I turned ten, I began to tame oxen. That was how I learned that taming and colonizing are the same thing. Both the tamer and the colonizer begin by deterritorializing the attacked being—breaking its identity, removing it from its cosmology, distancing it from its sacred elements, imposing new ways of life, and giving it another name. The process of naming is an attempt to erase one memory so that another may be composed.” (Bispo dos Santos, 2023, p. 11).

From this, he concludes that by mastering the technique of taming, he soon realized that, to confront the colonialist society, he would at times need to transform the enemy’s weapons into defense. Thus, by bringing the ancestral writings of the

grandparent generation—from orality to writing—he proposed denominations that, in academia, we might call concepts. From there, he developed the practice of naming modes and expressions to counter colonialism: “This is what we call the war of denominations: the act of confronting colonial words as a way to weaken them” (Bispo dos Santos, 2023, p. 13).

To weaken *sustainable development*, we brought *biointeraction*; for coincidence, we brought *confluence*; for *synthetic knowledge*, *organic knowledge*; for transport, *transfluence*; for money (or exchange), *sharing*; for *colonization*, *counter-colonization*... and so on (Bispo dos Santos, 2023, p. 14).

Having presented this issue, we point out that we have considered some of the words sown by Nego Bispo, aiming to draw parallels with the Quilombola Community of São Julião.

After describing what we have termed social practices experienced in daily life and related to the field of Leisure Studies, based on participation in the everyday life of the São Julião community, as well as by bringing elements that enable an understanding of the forms of life that exist there, we sought to weave reflections about the field of Leisure Studies, in order to contribute, even initially, to thinking about other forms of research and understanding regarding the territories, times, and relationships that are established.

To make such reflections possible, we corroborate the studies of Maria Manuel Baptista, a Portuguese author who makes important reflections in the field of Cultural Studies. Taking this author as a reference, we worked with the notion of “strong leisure” and “weak leisure,” and we also wove reflections about leisure, time, and temporality, when the author engages in a debate around Heidegger’s being-there, starting from the premise that “the human being is nothing but time, or rather, temporality, and only within this horizon can one self- and other-understand” (Baptista, 2013, p. 174).

By intertwining the theoretical issues of the field of Leisure Studies with the empirical experience lived in São Julião, it is possible to perceive that such social practices do not occur in a dissociated manner—they are connected with life in all its dimensions. We can see them as close to what Baptista (2016), anchored in Inchaurraga (2012), calls “weak leisure”, which relates to non-violence and emancipation, diverging from and tending to weaken the system of contemporary society.

If Westernized capitalist societies need to modify their relationship with temporality, the empirical research in the Quilombola Community of São Julião showed us that, in their own ways, maintaining their traditions, in resistance and struggle, in relationship with ancestry, with divine beings, with themselves and with the environment in which they live, these subjects have promoted, in their ways of being, an idle or leisure time that brings them closer to the humanity of the human being—or rather—that brings them closer to their cosmologies, being organic and diverse, as suggested by Bispo dos Santos (2023).

Thus, we conclude that if human beings, or the diverse ones, are nothing more than temporality, the Quilombola Community of São Julião has been in an intimate relationship with what they are. But this does not mean that it happens easily or freely, for it is necessary to resist daily against what is imposed upon them.

To understand the meanings that leisure establishes in the São Julião community, we brought three points of reflection. The first was the corporeal dimension, where we chose to give centrality to the body in the research process. In our view, more and more studies are needed that seek to establish dialogues with practice. This does not mean placing theory in the background, but considering it as support in the elaboration of understandings of what was seen, felt, lived, shared, tasted, listened

to, by those who know and live the practices related to the field of Leisure Studies. Understanding empiricism as theory in itself, which can (or not) dialogue with other pre-existing theories.

The second was the territory; we understood that it was essential to outline it, since no theory will be able to define or even support the unknown. By outlining the territory, it was possible to perceive from which place we speak, its peculiarities, customs, ways of being and thinking, as well as the concerns that are inherent to it. Thinking in this sense and taking into account the diversity that exists in the current world, we will have very particular realities, so that certain theories will fully dialogue, others partially, and others not at all—and this is not a peculiarity of the field of Leisure Studies, nor even of the community studied.

Finally, we return to time. When establishing a dialogue with the epistemic North to speak about it, it was necessary to outline what kind of time we are referring to in São Julião, since the organization of lived time in that community has little to do with the times established in contemporary capitalist societies. The empirical study showed that the Quilombola Community of São Julião is close to a time that becomes necessary, which Baptista (2013) envisions as an essential way out in the face of the current organization of a contemporary capitalist society. By describing the human being—or here, the diverse ones—as temporality, she proposes living a temporality of leisure/idleness that allows individuals to be critical, capable of weaving reflections about themselves and the world, capable of subverting the order imposed by the system, coming closer to themselves in their essence.

By describing leisure from everyday life, the idea was to think of it in a communal context of existence. Life, in its diversity, has an everyday flow that calls us

to think of the emergence of a leisure that is whole, that is not fractured, that is not the opposite of work, that is a form of expression of praxis, a form of expression of life, a ritual, aesthetic, ethical, and communal form of life. Thus, the social practices experienced in the daily life of this community and related to the field of Leisure Studies are reflected in or are simply the ways of being of this social group.

Thus, we proceed to the final considerations of this paper, where we intended to point out experiences lived in and with the community and possible research paths that demonstrate the external and internal pressures, the importance of their struggles, where leisure is not dissociated.

Final Considerations

We begin the final considerations by revisiting the participatory epistemologies described by Arturo Escobar (2020), bearing in mind the assumption that all research must promote social transformation, being referred to as militant participation. We describe a project for the access and permanence of the youth of São Julião in the university, which says a great deal about the pressures of the globalized world (capitalist, colonialist, and patriarchal) that directly affect community networks, which are all the communal achievements of peoples and collectives against the collisions and networks of transnational corporations that seek to incorporate everything.

This achievement of inclusion, as a possibility of university education, is directly linked to their life histories. Although they are diligent students, dedicated and concerned with issues related to education, they were unable to remain within the university, even being enrolled in a program that, according to its introductory text, “[...] aims at mastery of knowledge from various areas of study, contemplated in the

curricular matrix of the course, aiming not only at mediation in teaching, but also at the production of new knowledge, and a critical stance toward educational situations, assuming a commitment to the contemporary social reality of rural populations [...]” (LEC, 2019, n.p.), whose objective is “to promote the training of teachers contextualized in the reality of rural peoples, an important foundation for the materialization of public policies [...]” (LEC, 2019, n.p.). The university, acting as a tool of the system, still managed to curtail this right. These students discovered in practice that it is not possible to reach certain places without looking at who they are.

Another stage of the methodological process that still needed to be described is that, after the thesis was already written, we held an online meeting with Kátia so that she could have access to the final version of the work. What we call a “meeting” differs from an academic advising session but is equivalent in a sense, as it was a conversation in which we talked about what was evidenced in each axis (which was already known to her), presented the statements in full, the photos that make up the text, and gave her the opportunity to express her opinion about the study, indicating that we were open to discussing any point that should be modified.

In that meeting, we also had access to another piece of information that we agreed was important to include in the thesis, as well as identifying other possibilities for deepening in future research. The subject addressed is related to the daily struggles of women and, more specifically and internally, of the women of the Quilombola Community of São Julião.

This relational process allowed us to describe the festive experiences; it enabled the outlining of the territory so that the ways of being and existing in the world of the São Julião community could emerge, bringing it closer to other quilombola

communities through dialogue with Nego Bispo; and it made it possible to establish a dialogue with elements such as time, territory, and body to reflect on the social practices experienced in daily life that relate to the field of Leisure Studies.

Understanding through living and feeling allowed us to face everyday life as a field of possibilities, being aware of the role of time and territory as productions of life, and, within the established relationships, it was possible to become aware of the history of a place where leisure emerges, ritual emerges, and situated practices emerge from the concrete relations of life. The social practices lived in daily life and related to the field of Leisure Studies of the community under study are an expression of praxis, an expression of life, a ritual, aesthetic, ethical, and communal form.

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