NARRATIVAS À MARGEM: DESLOCAR EPISTEMES PARA UMA METODOLOGIA DO COMUM NARRATIVES ON THE MARGINS: SHIFTING EPISTEMES FOR A METHODOLOGY OF THE COMMON

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Abstract

The conjecture of political, economic, and social instability that plagues the West in contemporaneity summons us to discuss epistemological premises as agencies of the urban issues in its coloniality, pointing towards the necessary rupture of a discursive authorization regime which renders narratives on the margins of hegemonic urban production invisible. To revise such premises implies

denaturalizing the *modus operandi* of western urban planning, causing modes of subjectivation that escape the normativity imposed by the patriarchal and neoliberal system to emerge, and enabling urban practices which restore the common (Dardot, Laval, 2017) as alternative rationality to capitalism and as a complex composition of differences. From the acknowledgment of narrative as an epistemology of experience, the methodology seeks to cartograph the historically erased and excluded narratives of the city, in order to update and broaden the limits of research methods in urban studies, in view of the complexity of the contemporary city. Ricoeur's (1994) mimetic spiral allows us to operate urban drifts and interventions as narrated experience to glance at the singularities that compose the heterogeneity of the common and to bring out other arguments about the living city, capable of shifting the coloniality of knowledge that still prevails in urban planning.

1   Introduction: concerns

The non-extendable necessity to decolonize knowledge in our contemporaneity is accompanied by the inquietude which the historically academic epistemological and methodological tools, once supposed to be unbreakable, could not avoid, even conducting us to the unprecedented barbarism of modern capitalism. Thereby our rationality, synthetic ability, and transformation have conducted us to inoperability and to the embarrassing fact of being unable to find alternatives to reverse their aspects and symptoms. "It is easier to imagine an end to the world than an end to capitalism" – affirmation endorsed by countless intellectuals. (Jameson, 1997; Zizek, 2015)[1].

The blind spot of this not at all consoling affirmation is in the perspective of those who imagine, of which devices agentiate, exercise or stifle our imagination and our faculty to imagine new possibilities. Many centuries have passed in which imagination has been colonized by a single world-conception, encompassing the dimensions of time and space. We verify the fact that a model of thought[2] has succeeded in infecting the world with its monoculture of linear time[3] (Souza Santos, 2006) at the expense of the extermination of countless other possibilities of affirmation of the world. It is evident that there is, in the unnoticed history of human thought, an infinite biodiversity that puts in doubt the omnipotence of white western thought.

Thinking of cities in the present requires awareness of such matters, taken less as scenarios or contexts than as epistemological premises which should reorient our actions in urban research as well as the complexity called upon by those premises. In the subject of adopting different perspectives of urban reality it is fundamental to question what has been naturalized as city and as landscape in order to attend to that which has not remained, to those who have been pushed to the margins or eliminated in order to leverage urban planning as an instrument for exclusion and extermination of certain social groups. It falls under the responsibility of knowledge operators, including planners, to experiment new compositions so as to contest old and hegemonic practices of governing the truth of beings.

This text answers to the proposition "question of method", which provokes urban researchers to rethink the idea of method as a predefined path based on a set of principles. We understand that, in order to address urban issues, it is fundamental to review colonialist epistemological principles, so as to review the ways of researching and updating them in a critical perspective. We reflect hereby about how far opening up to non-hegemonic narratives can dislocate such coloniality and the ways of thinking, inviting us to think of method in its processual, open, and unfinished condition.

Cities were born from a new relation between man and nature, derived from human settlement and dominance over a territory for planting crops. They were built as a fruit of the imagination, from the articulated work of many people (Rolnik, 2012) and their multiple knowledge, shared by experiencing a common life. However, since the implantation of hegemonic thought, based on rationalization and universalization and sedimented in 19th century Europe, the production of urban space has been conducted by a white man elite that has built a political and technical state bureaucracy, grounded in scientific knowledge.

As a result of the Athens Charter (CIAM, 1933), a manifesto that promoted functional/rational urban planning by separating and ranking the functions of modern daily life and proposing a renovation of old consolidated urban centers as well as appointing the automobile as the prime solution for mobility, fragmented, dispersed, unfair, inequal, socially and environmentally unsustainable cities were produced. Such cities also reflect an economic structure in which material production is comprehended as the sole key to prosperity. Human bodies

are racialized, sexualized, commercialized, controlled, incarcerated, and transformed into gears of a machine that both consumes and produces goods, where land and knowledge, once shared, have become individually owned goods as opposed to resources for the collective rights of fruition.

Rolnik (2019) contributes to the discussion by alerting about the shift from *life-oriented landscapes* to *income-oriented landscapes*. The author argues about the global process of financialization and its expression in the spectacular landscapes of singular architectures which, through neoliberal urban planning, authorizes countless processes of forced removals, impoverishing the lives of enormous populational contingents throughout the world. Pinpointing the utopias of urban intervention originated in the western European epicenter as the origin of the discipline of urbanism, Rolnik (2019, p. 27) highlights "the role of such operations of *de-re-territorialization* in its colonialist imposition to the countries at the periphery of capitalism".

The ceaseless movement of reconfiguration in these landscapes of supposed urban requalification, moved by financial capital and filled with the abstract signs of private property and functionality, calls us to rethink political and cultural foundations and to claim the decolonization of thought in cities regarding mainly that which has been on the margins of the mechanisms of capitalist production (Rolnik, 2019).

The necessary criticism of urban planning and its role in the maintenance of the status quo of neoliberal capitalist system demands a conceptual and methodological repositioning in urban studies, in the effort to question the public-private dichotomization that grounds social inequity and deepens territory precariousness, strongly marked by ethno-racial elements.

It seems pertinent hereby to approach the discussions on common studies by Dardot and Laval (2017) as an endeavor towards an alternative rationality to the present political and economic system and as a complex composition of differences. According to the authors (Dardot, Laval, 2017, p.16), "the *common* has become an effective principle for struggles and movements that for two decades resist the dynamics of capital and lead to original forms of action and discourse", naming "a regime of practices, struggles, institutions and researches that open the doors to a non-capitalist future" (Dardot, Laval, 2017, p. 18).

From this new rationality, which operates matters of social, cultural, political, environmental and economic order, and that may provide power to discourses traditionally denied or appeased by the capitalistic regime, we defend narrative as an epistemology for accessing multiple experiences *in* and *of* the city. To operate urban research from a narrative approach is to "give way to a radically singular and impersonal disposition: a researcher and a world able to be created and destroyed – more so than being affirmed or discovered" (Mizoguchi, 2015, p. 207).

Paul Ricoeur (1994, p. 85) even relates *experience* and *narrative* by arguing that "there is between the activity of telling a story and the temporal character of human experience a correlation which is not purely accidental but presents a form of transcultural necessity". Narrative is constituted, then, as an episteme for paving a methodological path which assumes human experience as a foundational question, opening up the comprehension of reality by means of the always unique inventive capacity of the one who narrates.

This text intends to discuss the agency of epistemological premises on urban issues in its colonialist constitution as well as the necessary rupture of a discursive authorization regime which renders narratives on the margins of hegemonic urban production invisible. The proposed agency concerns the investigation of methodologies that operate such singularities, assuming them as speech and listening devices that, emerging from processes of territory erasure, are able to claim the *common* as a heterogeneous plan which tenses the *modus operandi* of contemporary urbanism.

2   Epistemological shifts: fissures in the coloniality of the urban

All research is moved by interests. Interests which do not fail to go through a desire for knowledge of the one who investigates. An explorer needs a starting impulse to map a plan, as well as a purpose to orient their route. When it comes to academic research, Michel Foucault (1998) acknowledges that it is possible to distinguish between two forms of obstinacy to move a philosopher: one that seeks a complementary accumulation of knowledge from that which is already known and one which "allows [the philosopher] to separate from themselves" (Foucault, 1998, p. 13) as if they were drifting in a desert.

In the first option, the researcher emerges, in a more predictable way, amid a labyrinth, prefabricated[4] by the technologies of power/knowledge. Guided by a road they deem to be more comfortable, they seek only to overcome external obstacles and, strong, heroic, quantitatively satisfied, and awarded with legitimacy, to find a way out. The challenge that we pursue, as a research laboratory, resembles the second case: to wander through a desert, instead of a prefabricated labyrinth. A desert that promotes "as much as possible, the deviation of one who knows" (Foucault, 1998, p. 13). In a desert there is no starting point, route options,

external obstacles. There is indeed a subject who must move themselves from the inside, find out that their survival depends on the obstinacy to strip off what was known, becoming another as demanded by the desert.

The research group *Margem Laboratório de Narrativas Urbanas* (Margin Laboratory of Urban Narratives), attached to the Graduate Program in Urban and Regional Planning (PROPUR) at the Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul (UFRGS) has been mapping the city of Porto Alegre, the southernmost state capital in Brazil, located in the state of Rio Grande do Sul, in partnership with social movements whose agendas focus on the right to the city. The objective of this investigative practice is to access the daily narratives that constitute the urban landscape, of those who led erased, denied, or neglected modes of existence by urban planning policies. In view of the worrying neoliberal agenda operating the city as a commodity and of a state that should protect its heritage, its inhabitants and its public services being managed by speculators, driven by the excessive accumulation of economic power, our cities suffer and agonize.

The great contemporary Latin American cities are both cause and consequence of the European imperialist civilizing process (Souza Santos, 2006), which, from its beginnings, has been dedicated to expanding its culture and converting different peoples to its worldview, to its metaphysics, in order to favor its dominance and exploration. To support this project, European states have refined their power technologies in order to guarantee sovereignty over the lives and deaths of these populations. Such is the subject explored by Michel Foucault (2005) in his course at the *Collège de France*, entitled "Society Must Be Defended". For him, the sovereign strategy of modern capitalism is found in what he calls the "biological continuum of the human species" (Foucault, 2005, p. 305), in which power, roughly speaking, operates in order to establish the biological dominion of a race in relation to another, triggering, within the population, a war or an extermination of different social groups that lasts infinitely as long as sovereignty is maintained.

Foucault (2005) arrived at such a philosophical proposition through his studies on biopolitics, affirming it to have been originated in the European totalitarian states of the second half of the 20th century. However, it was Achile Mbembe (2018), a black Cameroonian philosopher who, at the beginning of the 21st century, pointed out such a power technology as originally inspired by the colonialist project of the Americas, long before Nazism and Stalinism, as proposed by Foucault (2005), and its first acknowledgement when white European victims were exterminated (Mbembe, 2018). Such is the importance of the historical and conceptual impact only rewritten by the decolonialization of knowledge, which depends inevitably on an epistemological proposer from a different place, from a different origin, from a different point of view: of those whose truth is incarnate in their own bodies[5].

Ibáñez (2016), when proposing the resignification of the extrativist and colonial city, defies Latin American urbanists (planners) to be encouraged and problematize that which they have been accepting and normalizing as space and modes of life in cities, that have come to be understood as synonyms of "urbanizing" and "civilizing". There is no other way to discover and rediscover ourselves so that we can unveil new articulations and new horizons for the continent.

This displacement alone is enough to irreversibly damage contingent realities, once fertile and regarded as primitive, archaic, and unusable[6]. The question that deserves attention is: through which forces, motivations and interests has the city become the foundation of an effectively colonialist system, exalted by the greed of a culture that condemns every difference at its service? Should we then destroy it and make a new beginning? Besides being counterproductive, that would be repeating the opponent's rhetoric. By assuming the city to be a historical phenomenon that both produces and destroys subjectivities, it would convey them to be coated with the concept of territory.

Every city forms itself. Cardoso Filho (2016) helps us understand the intrinsic relations among such elements from the way the ideas of externality and internality, time, and space were historically built. He defends that the matter composing that which is external to us is not inert or a simple scenario of relations that transform us. That we, as human beings, are extensive folds of such matter, capable of organizing and moving, "there being neither absolute externality nor internality outside of the situated and historical processes in which they were produced" (Cardoso Filho, 2016). That is, even though urban conglomerates have been built in the light of colonial thought, they possess the faculty to induce other flows of relations, other experiences, other uses, other reality mechanisms.

We hereby explore the simultaneity between object (sensitive data) and subject (one who surpasses themselves in the act of experiencing) and between time and space, under the conception of experience as proposed by Deleuze and Guattari (2010). The city is established from experience, although at the mercy of colonialist power. And the emergency of narratives that escape the hegemony of colonialist discourse may bring other truths about the subject and their spatio-temporal experience in the city. Cruz (2017) calls our attention to the hegemony of colonialist narrative based on the myth of modernity, which has been founded on both the suppression of spacial multiplicity and the reduction of temporality into singular time.

It is by refusing the usual way of thinking and by doing that we wish to operate our methodological assumptions. Thus, we propose a methodology capable of advocating for bodies and voices that, in order to remain lit, even dwindling and threatened daily, have had to reframe and resignify the world in order to be included in it. Bodies, voices, and territorialities which contain in themselves other modes of existing and persisting, of making sense of time and space, of beings and things which appeal through the legitimacy of their values and inspire those who perceive themselves as having no way out of such a system.

With the incipient visibility of decolonial knowledge being a result of the struggle, courage and affirmation of the so-called minority identities, the path is unlocked to imagine and create new tactics and strategies that show, immobilize and deprogram the necropolitical mechanism of modern societies' structuring coloniality, subtly sophisticated and presumably imperishable, capturing and perverting any potent settlements capable of turning the city into a polyphonic time-space, contagious with the unpredictability of encounters. The frailty of the system lies precisely in what is believed to be controlled, and the more the margins rise and become empowered, the greater the effort to recognize them and bring them into the participatory and deliberative fields of the city, the more drowned in their own emptiness are those frail bodies of meritless-born winners.

Nevertheless, this constant and irreversible deflagration of the system's frailty, added to its survival, inherently inseparable from imposition and brutality, is what tends to provoke a desperately fascist and militarized answer to contain the inevitable resistances from the *margins*. Pelbart's (2019) proposition, inspired by David Lapoujade, is hereby valid, found on the back cover of his most recent work: "*Ensaios do Assombro*": "to not remain in the weakness of only cultivating strength, but having the strength to live up to one's own weakness".

We understand as *margins* the less recognized groups in social hierarchies or those considered more vulnerable. Those who, in reality, constitute the majority of the population living in the "commodity city": bodies of different genders, sexualities, races, cultures, ages. Those who, paradoxically, are an impoverished numerical majority, on the *margins* of the plans and projects that produce Brazilian cities and which are framed by the official planning and development paradigms as recipients or users of policies, always in a position of subordination.

Those are deterritorialized bodies, deprived of rights, made invisible and marginalized by the State, which, although treated by the neoliberal planning model as a "mass of leftovers", resist, organize, fight, are insurgent and with their voices and bodies point to the urgency of rethinking and changing methods, instruments, and the structuring criteria of the urban discipline. It is necessary to make other narratives visible, to map the city to denounce inequalities, to think intersectionally, to value the diversity of knowledge and the experiences of bodies in the city and to understand nature as an inseparable part of our existence.

Margem Lab invests in the construction of knowledge based on contact and experience. This means putting ourselves in a pedagogical non-hierarchical process, sharing our skills and intellectual resources with subjects, communities, organizations, and social movements who are having their rights to existence, to the city, and to the land threatened or neglected by the State. We seek, in the expression of their narratives, to learn different views of being in the city, which puts tension on our own experience as privileged subjects. This is what the displacement of self is about, the deviation that Foucault (1998) defends in philosophical activity. Who has more support to understand what it is to move through public spaces than people in street condition[7] or waste collectors? Who is better able to deepen and implement self-management and sharing relationships, if not the self-managing residents of an occupation? Who should be consulted about the environmental tragedy if not the native peoples who have protected nature since ancient times? Who has more property to debate and propose public policies than those who need it?

3   Narratives on the margins and mapping as an act

The epistemological assumptions drawn from decolonial thinking as a necessary revision to the historical construction of knowledge and the theoretical-practical discipline of urbanism; the search for the *common* as a set of heterogeneities, key to a radical democracy, and alternative to the capitalist system; finally, from the narrative as an episteme based on experience, we are invited to think about the *Margem Lab* methodology based on cartography as an accompaniment to subjectivation processes in the city. Cartographic research is hereby understood from the perspective of Kastrup and Passos (2013), as a way of accessing the *common plan*, whilst at the same time constructing it. Based on the propositions of Deleuze and Guattari, the authors defend the common as a heterogeneous plan that "operates the communication among singularities, being pre-individual and collective" (Kastrup, Passos, 2013, p. 264).

The research project called "Narratives on the margins: the public and common dimension of the landscape in the city of Porto Alegre/RS" aims to investigate the arguments that influence the public and common

dimension of the urban and peri-urban landscape of Porto Alegre from narratives constituted on the margins of the city's hegemonic urban production. Porto Alegre, capital of the southernmost Brazilian State of Rio Grande do Sul, has hosted relevant initiatives in the dispute towards the democratization of the right to the city and the construction of the thought of another possible world through the implementation of the Participatory Budget – *Orçamento Participativo*, or OP, started in 1989 – and the realization of four editions of the World Social Forum – *Fórum Social Mundial*, or FSM (2001, 2002, 2003 and 2005). Although these pioneering initiatives demonstrate their importance in the eyes of the world, they have hardly changed the scenario of increasing socio-spatial segregation and inequality.

To think of a methodology that goes beyond the idealization of this period and that recognizes its misconceptions is to perceive that it is not enough for the government to simply consult the population in meetings, open to society, about their prioritized demands and include them in the Annual Budget Law, and that the urban diagnostics be participatory as recommended by the City Statute (Federal Law 10.257 / 2001). It also implies to consider that urbanization and its developmental model carry a colonialized subjectivity, which will never break the segmentation of gender, race, and class as long as decision-making and technical, cultural, ethical and aesthetic techniques keep coming from an elite formed mostly of white men who are builders of a political and technical state bureaucracy based on Eurocentric scientific knowledge.

In the present research, we seek to map urban and peri-urban landscapes where the public and the common are in conflict in the territory, by approaching subjects, communities, local organizations and social movements that are at the epicenter of the conflicts produced by the neoliberal system, which currently leads the urban planning in Porto Alegre. Therefore, we hereby outline an ethical-political stance that assumes cartography as a research-intervention of such reality, blurring the lines between the researching subject and the subjects participating in the research.

This approximation between researcher and participating subjects is only effective if the conception that the researcher predisposes a cognitive and sapient advantage over the researched subject, supposedly unable to understand what oppresses them and what is at stake, is abolished. Jacques Rancière (2017), in his work "The Ignorant Schoolmaster", draws attention to the *explanatory order of the world*[8], whose validity maintains the *status quo* of the master as the absolute detainer of knowledge, and the apprentice as a subject unable to apprehend the world through their own experience.

The researchers who make up the active group in this research are hereby understood as cartographers, "ignorant masters" who produce narratives along with the participating subjects, in search of a process of knowledge emancipation. Understanding, as explained by Rancière (2017, p. 36), that "thought is not an attribute of the thinking substance, but an attribute of humanity", we place ourselves at the service of emancipation as the subjects' recognition of their intellectual nature.

The methodological procedures that structure the research allude to the inseparability between theoretical and practical activities. The constant intermediation between the mapping of narratives on the margins and the group's internal theoretical seminars[9] allow us to interchange the concepts from the studied bibliography with the knowledge located in the daily lives of the subjects and communities who we interact with in the production of narratives. The bibliography addressed in the seminars emerges as the experience and the contact with difference causes strangeness, internal displacements and, consequently, new problematizations. Concomitantly, decolonial literature brings us closer to subjects and communities on the margins of hegemonic urban production and favors the ethical and vigilant stance of the field researcher's own *ethos*.

The approach and the outline of the empirical field takes place in the researchers-cartographers' urban practices, which are grouped in two axes: [1] urban and peri-urban drifts as practices of sensitive recognition of the city; [2] development of reflective and artistic activities with communities or groups whose approximation to the cartographers occurs through networks of struggle for the right to the city and the territory in Porto Alegre (themes always related to the public and common dimension of the landscape). In both sets of cartographic practices, we utilize field diaries, photography and audiovisuals as tools, seeking to make use of them together with the subjects participating in the research.

We understand that, just as landscapes result from political and cultural agencies of a certain context, their images are liable to be re-signified in diverse language instruments based on the benjaminian need to "brush history against the grain"[10]. In this sense, during the drifts and urban interventions, we seek to make the tools and ways of recording the experience collective, so that the speeches and gestures of the involved subjects and communities focus on what should in fact be made visible in their struggles for the right to the city. The editing of such records is also a collective exercise between researchers and participants, operating the interchange between technical/scientific knowledge and the knowledge located in everyday experience. We

understand that these subjects' way of viewing and affirming the city is what can shift our gaze as researchers in the direction of an urban narrativity agentiated by multiplicity and difference[11].

The cartography of narratives on the margins produced throughout the research composes a narrative archive, whose central idea is, on the one hand, to operate assemblies (Benjamin 2006; Didi-Huberman 2007) by indicial (Barthes, 2011) and *chronotopic* approaches (Bakhtin 1989); on the other hand, to provoke the appropriation of the material produced by the participating subjects, so that they can have them available for their own media and activities. This archive enables an analytical stage of the discursivities produced on and about the margins of the city: in a sort of archeology of the contemporary, the cartographers immerse themselves in the narrative *corpus* by means of an interpretive activity, in order to explore the indicators explained by Barthes et al. (2011) as paradigmatic enactments or implicit crossings that give meaning to the report. This indicial knowledge is mediated by the spatio-temporal relations of the *chronotope* proposed by Bakhtin (1989) as compositional supports of the space where it is possible to glimpse the traces of time.

We name narrative archive a type of incomplete and unfinished collection in which the narratives produced in cartographic practices are registered. Operating it through the assembly procedure (Benjamin, 2006; Didi-Huberman, 2007) and utilizing the records of urban experiences is what allows us to open up Ricoeur's (1994) narrative configuration in order to understand how the intertwining of discursivities on the city margins erases the city as a unique and universal discourse. Our methodological perspective is that the indicial and *chronotopic* crossings offer arguments about the urban landscape that shift the sense of public towards the common. It seems relevant to us that this collection, open to new concepts and experiences, in material and virtual support, has been discussed and built with the subjects and communities involved. Their voices and views in this multiple and fragmentary narrative series contribute to the emancipatory process of knowledge plotted by the cartographers-researchers.

The cartography of narratives on the margins, its assembly and argumentative rereading on what constitutes the public and what is common in the urban landscape of the city are consonant with Ricoeur's (1994) mimetic spiral: the cartographic practices of urban drift and intervention compound the *prefiguration*, in which discursivities emerge from the act of living to become narrated experiences; the assembly activity proposed with the narrative archive operates the *configuration*, in which the intelligibility and intertextuality among narratives shape the fabric of intrigue in which we hope to glimpse the singularities that make up the heterogeneous plan of the common; and, finally, there is *refiguration* as a reading of the plot of arguments that can make agency of a reality that escapes the hegemonic normativity which generates the landscapes of spectacle.

The research actually achieves its objectives to the extent that the narratives, co-produced between cartographers and participating subjects, expand the arguments towards a sense of public that goes beyond the public-private dichotomy, and affirm the common as a combative rationality to the capitalist system governing our cities. This co-production occurs, therefore, in the sharing of the sensitive experiences of the city among those involved in the urban drifts and interventions, in the sharing of tools and ways of recording these experiences and, finally, in the procedural and joint construction of the narrative collection operated by assemblies[12]. The arguments that result from these assemblies seek to organize a counter-narrative, empowering historically subordinated voices and creating fissures in the colonialist, unequal, and segregating by nature urbanism.

4   Final considerations

Researching the urban from a narrative and decoloniality logic allows the tangle of everyday stories, narrated from conditions of vulnerability and precariousness, to configure the city based on other assumptions. This occurs, for example, at the moment when the subjects' right to speak is expanded, and listening platforms are created in which other subjects, in similar conditions, are able to recognize themselves. The struggle for the right to the city also involves activating ways of research that expand the places of speech and listening with procedures that can quickly be apprehended without the need for mediation. Updating research methods in a critical perspective means assuming, as researchers, an ethical-political stance that embraces the contemporary complexity of the urban in ways of thinking and acting oriented to the autonomy and emancipation of knowledge.

We understand that a political body performs the city to the extent that it is able to form part of its time-space, producing an event capable of causing cracks in the explanatory order of things. The set of arguments that structure counter-narratives, capable of facing the dominant discourse of capital, must collaborate in this performance; it must bring up the discussion of intersectionality, its effects on the constitution of the unequal city and destabilize *income-oriented landscapes* in order to make room for *life-oriented landscapes* (Rolnik, 2019).

It is necessary to recognize, in the academic scope of urban studies, the importance of constructing knowledge through experience, narrative, performativity, artistic expression, multiple corporealities and testimonies. Likewise, to recognize the importance of contact between technical/scientific knowledge and knowledge located in everyday experience. Only then will we be able, in fact, to fissure urban colonialism, to desecrate thought preconceived from overseas and to stop turning our backs on the margins and their entire history of resistance, struggle, and city building. In addition to written, imagery and audiovisual productions, what we aspire for is also to enable, share and build information and tools for the emancipation of subjects, communities, organizations, and social movements (Rancière, 2017).

We seek to legitimize the power of narrative as an epistemology for understanding contemporary processes of subjectivation that influence and are influenced by the territory in dispute. The cartography of the margins must make agency of the political bodies (those of the participating subject and the researcher) for the autonomous exercise of citizenship and human rights, for the incidence of other ways of being in urban reality and for a mobilization that opposes monopoly and monoculture interventions in the political spheres of city planning, administration and management. It is important to pave the way for urban practices that restore the common (Dardot, Laval, 2017) as an alternative rationality to capitalism and as a complex composition of differences. Not only because it is legitimate, but also because it calls for redemptive and resistant alternatives to Western civilizing barbarism.

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1 The idea that there seems to be no way out of this system, or as said by Jameson (1997) and Zizek (2015) that it is easier to imagine an end to the world than an end to capitalism reveals how globalization distorts the sense of historicity in society. It is not idly that dystopias and fictions, which speak more about our present than our future, point to the apocalypse as an irreparable event in the future. Jameson believes that to be a repressed sense of history.

2 Without ignoring the complexity of such model and its historical contingencies, what we intend to outline is its pretension to make itself exclusive in statements of truth.

3 Concept by Boaventura de Souza Santos who points Eurocentric narrative as responsible for the conception of unidirectional history, compressing to the same plot the totality of space, time, cultures, peoples, and territories. Taken from: Cruz, V. (2017) 'Geografia e pensamento descolonial: notas sobre um diálogo necessário para a renovação do pensamento crítico', in Cruz, V., Oliveira, D. (eds.), *Geografia e giro descolonial. Experiências, ideias e horizontes de renovação do pensamento crítico*, Letra Capital, Rio de Janeiro, pp. 15-36.

4 In allusion to Jorge Luis Borges' short story *Os dois reis e os dois labirintos*, in Borges, J. L., 2008. *Aleph*, Companhia das Letras, São Paulo.

5 Valter do Carmo Cruz also said: "This process of constituting the coloniality of power, of knowledge, of being and nature has its inaugural moment in the Iberian conquest of the American continent. From the Iberian domain, two processes articulate our later history: modernity and the colonial organization of the world. With the beginning of colonialism in America, not only did the colonial organization of the world originate, but, at the same time, the colonial constitution of knowledge, languages, memory, and the imaginary" (Lander, 2005). In this way, the civilizing project of modernity is inaugurated, which seeks to affirm and celebrate Europe's particular historical experience as something universal and superior, through elements such as rationalism, humanism, science, the idea of progress, the State, etc. But, on the other hand, in this process, other matrices of rationalities, other forms of reason, other civilizing projects, other worldviews, with other knowledge, languages, memories and imaginaries were denied and subordinated" (Cruz, 2017, p. 19).Lander, E., 2005. *A colonialidade do saber: eurocentrismo e ciências sociais latino-americanas*, CLACSO, Buenos Aires.

6 "In this perspective, those who fail to join this inexorable march of history are destined to disappear. Other forms of being, other forms of societal organization, other forms of knowledge are made not only different, but needy, archaic, primitive, traditional, pre-modern and, as Lander states, are situated at an earlier time of the historical development of humanity, which, in the imaginary of progress, emphasizes its inferiority" (Cruz, 2017, p. 21).

7 The choice of referring to street dwellers as people in street condition was a conceptual one. According to Patrice Schuch and Ivaldo Gehlen, "The rupture between the terminology 'street dwellers' and 'people in street condition' and/or 'population in street condition' was, therefore, meaningful of a whole political movement whose goal was, on the one hand, to draw attention to the situationality of street experience and, on the

other, to fight stigmatization processes of such population, defining them from a conception of street dwelling as a possible way of living as opposed to a lack or a need — of a home or place of fixed habitation (Magni, 1994; Magni, 2006; Schuch, 2007; Schuch et al., 2008). Schuch, P., Gehlen, I., 2012. 'A "situação de rua" para além de determinismos: explorações conceituais', in Dornelles, AE., Obst, J., Silva, M. B. (eds.), *A Rua em Movimento: debates acerca da população adulta em situação de rua na cidade de Porto Alegre*, Didática Editora do Brasil, Belo Horizonte, pp. 11-26. Available at: http://lproweb.procempa.com.br/pmpa/prefpoa/fasc/usu_doc/a_rua_em_movimento.pdf.

8 "Explanation is not necessary to remedy an incapacity to understand. On the contrary, that very incapacity provides the structuring fiction of the explicative conception of the world. It is the explicator who needs the incapable and not the other way around; it is he who constitutes the incapable as such. To explain something to someone is first of all to show him he cannot understand it by himself. Before being the act of the pedagogue, explication is the myth of pedagogy, the parable of a world divided into knowing minds and ignorant ones, ripe minds, and immature ones, the capable and the incapable, the intelligent and the stupid. The explicator's special trick consists of this double inaugural gesture. On the one hand, he decrees the absolute beginning: it is only now that the act of learning will begin. On the other, having thrown a veil of ignorance over everything that is to be learned, he appoints himself to the task of lifting it" (Rancièrem 1991, p. 6-7).

9 The seminars take place twice a year with a reading and debating dynamic in small groups, and later a collective writing among all groups (composed of images and text fragments) operating the conceptual crossings related to the theme of the ongoing research. We work with contemporary authors who propose epistemological and methodological breaks in the tradition of thought on subject, history, and the city.

10 Thesis VII, of the Theses on the Concept of History (Benjamin, 1981), deals with criticisms of historicism, in which cultural problems are addressed. "The destructive moment: demolition of universal history, elimination of the epic element, no identification with the winner. History must be brushed against the grain" (Benjamin, 1981).

11 An example of urban intervention carried out from the collective appropriation of photographic and audiovisual tools was entitled "*Mo[nu]mento e cidade*", produced during the 21st Brazilian Congress of Architects in 2019, in the southern Brazilian city of Porto Alegre. The ephemeral architecture and expanded cinema intervention, designed by architects Lívia Koeche and Pedro Leggerini, was carried out in collaboration with leaders of the *Baronesa Resiste* Collective, the National Movement for the Struggle for Housing (*Movimento Nacional de Luta pela Moradia* - MNLM) and *Margem_Laboratório de Narrativas Urbanas* researchers. It consisted of a large white cube built with construction work scaffolding and semitransparent canvas that involved the equestrian statue erected in honor of Manuel Luís Osório, Brazilian Army Cavalry patron and hero of the Paraguayan War. The bronze monument sits on top of a large granite base surrounded by a water mirror in the central portion of the old *Praça da Alfândega*, at Porto Alegre's Historic District. In this white cube that surrounded the bust of the war hero, scenes and audio from forced evictions that took place in the city in the later few months were projected. The production of many of the records used in the projection, the choice and editing of images, voices, and words that composed the multiple narrative exposed on the public square was the result of a collective work among the participating researchers and social movements. The break in discursive authorization regime that operated by making the silenced voices visible references a story against the grain, where the "monument to the losers" is established, through voice and movement, over the "monument to the winner".

12 Another example of methodological shift operated by *Margem_Lab* is the podcast "*Cartas das Periferias*", developed in conjunction with other research and extension groups at UFRGS and militants in the struggle for housing. The project is a tool to make the daily narratives of peripheral territories visible, crossed by the impact of the generalized crisis of the Covid-19 virus, which, due to the symptoms of urban inequality explained here, are ignored by public management. This action is intended to be a space for collective mobilization among communities, offering resources for a policy of emancipation, solidarity and listening to their realities and demands.

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