



## Body and territory: A discussion on university multicamping

### Corpo e território: Uma discussão sobre a *multicampia* universitária

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#### ABSTRACT

This article discussing the relationship between multicampus universities and the concepts of territory and body. The methodology is based on a qualitative approach of descriptive nature, combined with literature review and documental analysis. The legal analysis regarding racial quotas for universities revealed the parameters that support the inclusion of social categories. The discussion concerns multicampus universities in addition to its territorial aspects. It was concluded that the body expresses culture, knowledge, mobility, and power, while the university supports, as a territory, presence, knowledge, and cultural exchange, triggering a critical analysis over the multicampus universities, as an expression of multiple territories and bodies.

**Keywords:** Body, Territory, Multicampus University, Culture, Ethnic Group.

#### 1 INTRODUCTION

The concept of territory and its correlates such as territoriality, space, deterritorialization and reterritorialization are affected by polysemy, while the concept of body - corporeality, corporality and corpolitical - permeate several areas of knowledge, from Philosophy, through Biology, Health, Education, Anthropology, without forgetting the arts, especially dance.

The major challenges of this production are: to singularize the appropriation of each of the highlighted concepts, interrelate them in the field of education, focusing on university



*multicampia*. There is an inherence of the *multicampi* university model with the territorial theme, as elucidated by the theorist Rogério Haesbart, supported by the geophilosophical constructions of Milton Santos, that the territory is the space built and lived by human corporeal beings. Universities are social institutions of educational category, built by social actors and reformulated and maintained by them.

Trying to understand the relationships between these concepts, the following questions are proposed: Is there a territoriality minimally constituted from the body? What are the territorial implications of *multicampus* in ethnic communities? Is the *multicampus* university space understood as a form of access to identity territories? All these questions are not answered in this scientific article, but they give the dimension of the problem presented here.

The relevance of the theme is supported by Haesbaert's (2020) provocation, based on the conceptual pun: "body-territory" and "territory-body". The importance of the theme is linked to the discussion about university, academic subjects, knowledge and inclusive territories. The topicality of the theme is perennial, because as long as there is a higher education institution, there will be students, teachers and administrative staff in territorial action.

The structure of the paper is divided into two sections, namely: the first deals with the approach of the concepts of territory and body; the second section presents the repercussions on Multicampia, followed by the final considerations.

For this purpose, a qualitative approach of a descriptive nature was used, based on a literature review, and aimed to raise provocations around the concepts mentioned and the implications of these in the context of multicampia.

## **2 CONCEPTUAL APPROACH**

### **2.1 TERRITORY**

The space is far beyond the physical plane, because it is a reflection of the social, historical and cultural fact, since "it is both producer and product; determinant and determined; a revealer that allows to be deciphered by those same to whom it reveals" (SANTOS, 1986, p.130). Based on Deleuze and Guattari (1997), it is perceived that territorialization is an expression of the territory and is linked to its functions, so that "it is the act of rhythm made expressive, or components of means made qualitative" (DELEUZE; GUATTARI, 1997, p. 388), therefore, to discuss territorialization is to address the expressiveness of the territory, especially in political, social, cultural aspects, the latter re-engage the diffusion of knowledge and knowledge. For Ribeiro (2009, p.26), "the concept of territory refers to both formal aspects, as well as aspects



related to the meaning of these forms (spatial ideologies, representations and value systems)". Thus, it can be stated that "the power of the territorial bond reveals that space is invested with not only material values, but also ethical, spiritual, symbolic and affective values" (RIBEIRO, 2009, p.26) and therefore, the "cultural territory precedes the political territory and precedes the economic space [...] The territory is a place shared in everyday life, creator of roots and bonds of belonging and symbols" (RIBEIRO, 2009, p.26). The territory is a historical product, "which in the field of human and social sciences can build knowledge about human territoriality" (FURTADO, 2014, p.451).

In short, it is understood that the territory does not concern only the materiality of space, because there is no territory outside social relations (HAESBAERT, 2009). Thus, the "territory takes shape not only through inscription in physical space, but in narratives, as it is also organized discursively" (FURTADO, 2014, p. 444) in social relations. In this sense, to be based on territory or territoriality is to investigate interactive processes, which permeate Higher Education. The territorial perspective of the *multicampus* university is emphasized, based on its capillarity, which allows approximation with regional demands and with ethnic and cultural manifestations.

It is understood that space is territorialized from the body (minimal form) to the most comprehensive forms, since "they unfold thus from the territories of/in the body, intimate (starting with the maternal womb), to what we can call world territories, the Earth as a cultural-natural pluriverse or set of worlds" (HAESBAERT , 2020, p. 76).

## 2.2 BODY

The body is one of the topics much discussed today. "The existence of man is bodily" (BRETON, 2011. p. 7), it is by having a body that is exposed in the world and from it, builds the world and at the same time by it is built.

There are many theoretical perspectives to answer what the body is. Since Western thought, of classical tradition, with the philosophy of Plato, who defended the thesis of duality: body and soul, understanding the body as a "prison of the soul", a view also widespread in medieval philosophy. Modernity has maintained a dual body view, albeit in a different way from previous conceptions, however, somehow, it seems to us, these dualisms, especially in modern molds, still retain some residual meaning in contemporary epistemological statutes, insofar as they are conceptual references that are very suitable for scientific perspectives of a positivist nature, which unfold in: target of criticism or refutable concepts.



From the quarrel between rationalism and empiricism of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the discussion around sensible and intellectual knowledge brought repercussions to the concept of body and many conceptions were engendered. For Descartes' philosophy, for example, man is understood as composed of a material and an immaterial part, which somehow communicate. This view has brought epistemological embarrassments to the definition of the human being thought of as a totality. One of the difficulties that arises is the problem of reduction. How to think about the body without denying it, as matter, not reducible to thought, if thinking about it is already a way of reducing it to thought? With the advance of the sciences, particularly biology, previously accepted considerations have been reformulated and the definition of human being, taken, is sustained by scientific explanations, of a more positivist nature, which tends to reduce psychic processes to consciousness, considered as biological, neurophysiological processes (admitting only a physicalist ontology).

From the twentieth century, the issue of corporeality gained significant evidence, thinkers such as Merleau-Ponty, Latour, Heidegger, Foucault, among others, focused on this theme. Among the various implications and developments that the body encompasses, the importance of body models that are constituted from historically situated experiences and that outline what can be called "a revolution" of the body stands out. "From philosophy to psychoanalysis, through anthropology, history, sociology, comparative literature, theology, cultural studies [...]" (ORTEGA, 2008, p.189), they discuss the statutes of the body.

Among the multiple studies presented, the social constructivist perspective, which "is historically linked to the figure of Foucault, [...] however, the post-Foucauldians (feminists, theorists of the study of culture and race, gays and lesbians, among others) who defend the most extreme versions of this position" (ORTEGA, 2008, p. 191), will intensify and claim the place of the body.

The body, as a symbolic construction, maintains a relationship with the world, has a perception of the world, of itself and of others, through its embodied existence.

From the point of view of political and social relations, and from the understanding of the body as a possibility of establishing relationships with other bodies and as a point of insertion in the world, the dominant power acts on it. They understand it as a central point of control and, consequently, the place par excellence of the exercise of training and domination, through disciplinary practices, focusing on individual bodies, their habits, instincts, feelings, emotions, exercising a true control of life itself, through biopower (FOUCAULT, 2014).



This control is no longer of individuals, but of masses of individuals. The body is constituted as the first territory of domination, through this new form of power, which emerges in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, which has in the territory-body its object of domination. These will be controlled from appropriations and subtle dominations that focus directly on them, through disciplinary practices that shape it according to established interests of a new political model, which will manage the territory and bodies. Thus, it can be understood that relations between men occur not only through a rational construction of values and truth, but also through a dynamic of power. It is in the demarcation of power spaces that bodies are formed and interested in a certain way, "[...] directly immersed in a political field; power relations have immediate reach over it, they invest it, mark it, direct it, supplicate it, subject it to work, force it to ceremonies, demand signs from it" (FOUCAULT, 2014, p.29).

The body, as a territory, suffers the imposition of power in the control of its time, of its displacements; it matters how they are moving within the spaces, infringing possibilities and impossibilities of mobilization, determining where, when they can move in the territories that are under their judgment. In this way, the training of bodies through the control of their "body-territories" must be placed in a standardized way. "This investment in the body" is closely linked to its use. It is a useful and docile body, in the sense of a body to perform work and little claiming, that interests power in a patriarchal capitalist economic-political society.

Returning to the perspective of the social construction of bodies, these are constantly constructed and reconstructed, since, at birth, there is already a politically organized society and already accepted patterns of behavior. There is a set of established norms and as these change, so does the conception of the body. In this sense, bodies are immersed in a culture and subject to historical ruptures. The body is constructed and reconstructed from its world experiences, discursive practices, involved in a culturally set system. Minority groups: blacks, Indians, LGBTQIAP+ take the lead and claim the space of non-normative corporeality.

It asks about identities: collective and individual, focusing on the definition of the "I", which is much more like a polyphony of subjectivity (GUATTARI, 1992, p. 155). Bodies are spatially exposed and communicate through their trajectories and movements that form their corporeality. In this assertion, thinking about bodies is thinking about the spaces in which they are located, as a dimension of human practices (SOUSA, 2009).



### 3 REPERCUSSIONS OF MULTICAMPING

#### 3.1 TERRITORIAL REPERCUSSIONS

The *multicampi* university is a territory that reflects social and cultural aspects, therefore it is a territoriality of relationships mediated by bodies. Each *campus* is a territory of: professional training; power dispute; manifestation of knowledge; knowledge production; culture and personal relationships, for Ribeiro; Menezes; Campos (2016, p. 153) "the production, socialization and use of knowledge and information, [...] constitute sociocultural processes and their practices and relationships are inscribed in space and in the production of space itself".

There are some territorial repercussions of and in the university, namely: a) space for the production of knowledge; b) space for the reception of knowledge; c) space for professional training. In any of the spatial formats mentioned, existential territories are present, which can be called bodies, in addition to university territories that enable social integration, permeated by the exchange of knowledge and knowledge acquisition.

##### 3.1.1 Multicampus university and its various ethnicities

Historically, access to Brazilian universities was mostly for whites or a few mixed-race students, but since the advent of the quota policy in the 21st century, a profusion of other ethnicities has gained access. Law 12.711/2012, which establishes that Federal Universities must reserve places for black, brown and indigenous people in undergraduate courses, has the following criteria: low income, race and public school education.

The discussion on race and ethnicity is quite complex due to the approximations of the terms and their social and political distancing. According to Santos (2010), "race and ethnicity" are two concepts related to different areas. While one refers to biological elements, the other focuses on social elements. The legislation regarding the quota system adopts the terminology "race" and not ethnicity.

The self-declaration<sup>1</sup> of ethnic belonging, for blacks, is one of the validation mechanisms of the access system to higher education. The same does not occur for the validation of quotas for indigenous people and quilombolas, for whom documents proving their ethnic belonging are required.

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<sup>1</sup>Art. 3 In each federal institution of higher education, the vacancies referred to in art. 1 of this Law will be filled, by course and shift, by self-declared black, brown and indigenous people, in a proportion at least equal to that of black, brown and indigenous people in the population of the unit of the Federation where the institution is located, according to the last census of the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE). (emphasis added) (BRASIL, 2012)



Ethnicity has the body as its territory, and the latter occupies the university with its various ethnic groups, namely: indigenous, black, quilombolas and gypsies. These territorialized bodies or this embodied university territory "cannot be treated in a neutral and universal way, as it has race, sexuality and gender - in addition, of course, to age (generational range) and socioeconomic class" (HAESBAERT, 2020, p.77). Based on Santos (2009), it is understood that each living body is a space and has its space: it produces itself in space and produces space.

### 3.2 BODY REPERCUSSIONS

Equating the space that the body occupies in the educational process, refers in a certain way to the understanding of bodies as territories that fill the university space and the university as a territory that makes up the state space.

We could affirm that the understanding of the body, from the Cartesian assumptions, as an automaton, relegating its importance to a secondary instance, considered the intellectual capacity, as its defining part and placed sensitivity under suspicion. In contemporary times, although harsh criticisms have been implemented to this view, the body still seems to occupy a role "[...] accessory in the formation of the human being" (NÓBREGA, 2005, p. 603).

It is always necessary to consider that the bodies that occupy schools carry within them their histories, their memories, their senses of belonging. However, it seems that in a way there is a standardization of this diversity. Boaventura de Souza Santos (2010) emphasizes that the mission of the university would be to think and understand its own historical time. In this sense, its role would be to welcome ethnic multidiversity. If the university, through its quota systems, opened its space to give visibility to those who were invisible, it cannot neglect diversity. One of the issues that must be observed is the relationship that the various ethnicities have with the conception of body and space. Since bodies are spatialized, and thus constitute themselves from this relationship. For Haesbaert (2020), "the body cannot be treated in a neutral and universal way, as it has race, sexuality, and gender [...]" (HAESBAERT, 2020, p.77).

The university based on the Eurocentric model, as a "privileged place for the production of high culture and advanced scientific knowledge [...]" (SANTOS, 2010, p. 193), was forcibly modified in the post-war period, and especially from the 1960s, when discussions emerged about the conceptualization of the university as a production of high culture, since popular culture gained strength from post-modernity. "High culture is a subject-culture, while popular culture is an object-culture, object of the emerging sciences, [...] quickly converted into university sciences" (SANTOS, 2010, p. 194).



The dilemma imposed on the university was whether to retain the old position of elite culture or to broaden its conception of culture. Within this context, *multicampus* universities, which are geographically distributed in various regions, safeguard different cultures, different formations of body-territories.

The relations between territory and body are permeated by relations of struggle, of resistance, since it is the body - territory, the first space of occupation in the confrontation of forces. One can think of the body as a "fighting tool". Foucault (2014) has already pointed out that it is in the bodies that power is exercised, acting it, disciplining it, but it should not be forgotten that it is the bodies-territories that exercise resistance. This space of resistance for Latin American culture, according to Haesbaert (2020, p. 77), "occurred especially through discussions about gender from feminist movements and, more specifically, from indigenous women". In this way, mass culture can modify the functional structure of universities, as they are part of its territory.

It is observed, today, that a large amount of research is done in this direction. However, it seems to us that the implementation of these studies is still incipient. The discussion about body/corporeality occupies a secondary role in the training process. It is necessary to understand the dimensions, the unfolding of the study of the body, of the bodies - territories as "tools" of resistance.

### 3.3 UNIVERSITY AS A SPACE OF R- EXISTENCE

The Brazilian university is an educational institution that trains individuals for social insertion. In the last twenty years, from the struggles in favor of the regulation of racial quotas, it has been possible for the eschewed cultures and their ethnosaberes space of visibility and resistance.

The opening of affirmative actions leads us to reflect on the Eurocentric heritage that directed the process of university formation, which may still safeguard a "coloniality of power, marked by a slave and patriarchal heritage, where class, race and gender violence proliferate to this day" (HAESBAERT, 2020, p. 76). According to the perspective of r-existence, we could say that these subaltern groups claim their place and their role in society by facing constituted, entrenched models.

Even recognizing that Federal Law No. 12.711/2012 guaranteed access to public universities for other ethnicities, it is necessary to reflect on the effectiveness of affirmative actions. The maintenance and effectiveness of these actions will depend, to a certain extent, on the capacity of r-existence that involves its agents and, more broadly, society itself.





#### 4 FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

The university is a territory that is sustained by mobility, presence, sharing of knowledge, cultural exchange, dissemination and production of knowledge, *multicampia* being an expression of multiple territories (spaces) and their ethnic, social and resistance bodies.

The body is the smallest individual territorial unit and in it culture is expressed, knowledge is produced, and this is the link between *multicampus* university territories and bodies permeated with culture and identity. Affirmative actions provide access to bodies-territories in university territories, enabling the resistance of ethnic groups.

It is reiterated that there is a relationship of conflicting forces between the territories as a *locus of power* of knowledge and the embodied subjects who resist existing on the margins of society and make university education one of the paths to social insertion.

The path taken in this article contemplated the conceptualization of territory and body, substantiating the discussion by relating it to the *multicampus* university, proposing a look at the perspectives of its multiple territories and the presence of its bodies-territories with their cultural and ethnic nuances, which can be welcomed in their diversity.



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