

UNVEILING BANAL SPACE: EVERYDAY ESSENCE AND THE PROCESS OF SPATIAL AWARENESS OF AGENTS LINKED TO HIP-HOP IN SÃO PAULO-SP AND SÃO LUÍS-MA

Desvendando o espaço banal: essência cotidiana e o processo de tomada de consciência espacial dos agentes ligados ao Hip-Hop em São Paulo-SP e São Luís-MA

Desvelando el espacio banal: esencia cotidiana y el proceso de consciencia espacial de agentes vinculados al Hip-Hop en São Paulo-SP y São Luís-MA



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ABSTRACT

The article examines the concept of everyday essence to understand geographical reality, highlighting materiality, immateriality, and resistance in places. The methodology consists of a theoretical review and dialogues with interlocutors in fieldwork. It argues that everyday essence structures banal space and connects resistance to counter-rationality. The state's role and urban planning are critically examined, questioning the limits of selective modernity and contemporary acceleration. Finally, it reflects on disruptive spatial practices that strengthen the emancipation of subjects and their territorialities.

Keywords: Geographic Space; place; Everyday Life; Essence.

RESUMO

O artigo analisa a essência cotidiana como noção para compreender a realidade geográfica, articulando materialidade, imaterialidade e resistência nos lugares. A metodologia inclui revisão teórica e diálogos com interlocutores em trabalhos de campo. Argumenta-se que ela estrutura o espaço banal e vincula a resistência à contrarracionalidade. Problematisa-se o papel do Estado e do planejamento urbano, questionando os limites da modernidade seletiva e da aceleração contemporânea. Por fim, reflete-se sobre práticas espaciais disruptivas que fortalecem a emancipação dos sujeitos e suas territorialidades.

Palavras-chave: Espaço Geográfico; Lugar; Cotidiano; Essência.

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RESUMEN

El artículo analiza la esencia cotidiana como noción para comprender la realidad geográfica, articulando materialidad, inmaterialidad y resistencia en los lugares. La metodología incluye revisión teórica y diálogos con interlocutores en trabajo de campo. Se argumenta que la esencia cotidiana estructura el espacio banal y vincula la resistencia con la contrarracionalidad. Se problematiza el papel del Estado y la planificación urbana, cuestionando los límites de la modernidad selectiva y la aceleración contemporánea. Finalmente, se reflexiona sobre prácticas espaciales disruptivas que fortalecen la emancipación de los sujetos y sus territorialidades.

Palabras clave: Geografía Electoral; Elecciones ejecutivas; Oeiras (PI); SIG.

This theoretical and empirical article focuses on mobilizing two interdisciplinary concepts: essence and everyday life. Geographical science aims to understand the tangible reality of places, and without a consistent methodological framework, achieving this goal becomes difficult. To begin with, one must understand banal space (Santos, 1999; 2000a; 2000b) as a category for comprehending geographical space.

In the banal space, made up of techniques and norms, actions and practices, inheritances and presentations of events, all dominant and dominated agents transform reality in a conflicting manner. In this space, objects (*technospheres*) and actions (*psychospheres*) contradict and complement each other in a hierarchical and supportive manner in the happenings of places and everyday life (Santos, 1996; 2000a), such as large cities and their metropolitan areas.

The goal is to interpret this movement, manifested in the everyday essence and defined as the translation of geographic manifestations (projects, activities, objects, communications) in places. In the material and immaterial dimensions, authentically combining these elements creates sensitive content in the subjects' lives and within the various contexts of the place and the uses made of the territory. Thus, it represents a possibility for action and a search for the liberation of the self in places and their surroundings (social dynamics) as a form of expression of human subjectivity.

The research argues that everyday essence is the principle of all movements in space. As a result, efforts are focused on approaching the concept of place¹ in its most intimate form, everyday life. The place is constituted independently of locations, situations,

¹ According to Milton Santos (1996, p. 322), the place (a shared daily life) "is the irreplaceable theater of human passions, responsible, through communicative action, for the most diverse manifestations of spontaneity and creativity". Complementing the reflection, in the words of Samira Kahil, the "place is itself extremely complex and already contains within itself all possibilities, so to speak, the world in preparation, so that we cannot foresee all possibilities. It is in the place that we find the propensities and tendencies of realization of the world".



and world views in everyday life. As a spatial dimension, everyday life carries an essence that contributes to the formation of the subject through their practices and actions, which are mediated and produce objects (artifacts for the most varied purposes). Ultimately, the essence of everyday life is inherent in the place itself.

This article presents the concept of everyday essence as a mobilized notion, highlighting its connection to rootedness in places and the environment, as well as the existence of the self and individuals in everyday life.

Before examining the problem of everyday essence, readers and even "intellectuals" in bad faith must be alerted that this notion/idea does not refer to the essence of *being in* and *for itself* from a Sartrean perspective², but as the situation to which the self belongs, which is fundamental for recognizing its own existence. The essence of the poor is not defined by their marginalization, nor is the identity of the rich solely based on living in a gated community, or vice versa. Instead, their respective lives reflect how they interpret the realities of their environment.

However, what is the essence, and what is everyday life? The answer to both concepts is already defined as the essence itself. The search for an answer that conveys the form-content of things reveals their essence by presenting their characteristics or through the adjectives used.

By essence, we seek to answer the question about the "what?" of things and also the "why" of what is being observed. "What?" refers to memory, restlessness, and the provocation delimited by the answer itself. The "why" presents the essence of what cannot be or what is observed in its concrete reality (Abbagnano, 2007, p. 359).

Milton Santos (2000a, p. 134) states that everyday life is "a flexible fabric of relationships, adaptable to new circumstances, always in motion." Nevertheless, a singular definition still invites deeper examination. The focus shifts towards understanding what is essential for daily life to function as it does.

The research methodology involved a set of bibliographical reviews, interdisciplinary theoretical reviews, and fieldwork carried out in São Luís-MA and São Paulo-SP, through dialogues (semi-structured interviews) with subjects directly linked to Hip-Hop Culture³ in

² SARTRE, J. P. Existentialism is a humanism. Translator: Rita Correia Guedes Source: *L'Existentialisme est un Humanisme*, Les Éditions Nagel, Paris, 1970.

³ Hip-Hop is a "street culture" based on four artistic elements: Graffiti (graphic expression), Street Dance (cinematic movements), Deejaying (DJ), and Master of Ceremonies (MC) (both aural displays). Each element can be understood as a dimension of culture arising from the relations of agents with the urbanized environment, based on scarcity, change, and survival.



their respective places of action. A central question was posed to all the research interlocutors, namely: how does the place where you live shape your essence? The selection of Hip-Hop as a means to express the concept of everyday essence has been the focus of research for the past twelve years. This research explores Hip-Hop's role as an artistic, political, and cultural manifestation in various locations and its potential for transforming socio-spatial conditions, particularly in metropolitan peripheries and slums.

The simultaneous presence of actions and objects within our lived environment, particularly concerning the constant reality of the self and others, allows us to recognize that "the times and spaces of existence continue to be shaped by the rules and limits of everyday life" (Ribeiro, 2000, p. 23). We will discuss the constitution of the notion of everyday essence, which emerges from the dimensions of the non-appropriable, the info-communicational, and the dimensions of reality. The final considerations consist of a reflective synthesis.

2 IN EVERYDAY LIFE, THE ESSENCE: DIMENSIONS OF THE NON-APPROPRIABLE

The elements of everyday life are essential to its very existence; they include the motivations, impulses, simultaneities, and instantaneity of events, acts, and practices that drive its flow and give content to countless forms. Essence has no space-time, whereas everyday life does. All the objects and actions within it embody its essence. Considering the essence of everyday life leads us to an experience that cannot be quantified, rooted in the core sensations and feelings that energize existence. Ways (social practices) operate that bring out the critical, creative, and motivating sense of the self in places. According to Simmel (2013, p. 253), "man in such development presupposes something external to him." Therefore, exteriority, or more specifically, surroundings, influence the constitution of everyday events and happenings in the face of geographical situations.

The environment provokes the search for rights. The right to a place, to the city, accessibility, mobility, and dignity, in other words, the right to live. Here, we have the everyday dimension based on conflicts and tensions, which nourish vitality through the mobilization and promotion of action. Milton Santos draws attention to the issue of the environment and its ecology, where "part of the demands refer to a localized, enraged and impoverished ecology, instead of fighting for a comprehensive ecology, which addresses problems from their own roots" (Santos, 2012, p. 64).

In hegemonic rationality, the ecology of the place and its surroundings is confused with the values of the capitalist mode of production, embedded in the discourse of



sustainability that "by definition, is disrespectful of values, from the gifts of nature to the life of [humanity]" (Santos, 2012, p. 64). To perceive one's surroundings is to consider the presence of the other, manifesting itself from everyday life to the place. Thus, one observes in a set of actions how subjects emerge and confront hegemonic rationality, giving rise to other rationalities.

The philosopher Bruce Bégout contributes to this trajectory in his reflections regarding *koinology*⁴. For the author, everyday life is the:

[...] place par excellence of the most natural evidence of our existence, habitual beliefs, traditional determinations, typical expectations, and pre-established intentions; in short, the place of everything that is experienced as normal and indisputable (Bégout, 2009, p. 10).

It is worth considering whether the essence of everyday life could be the meaning of existence itself. To understand this idea, we must consider the ideological aspects of our lived reality. Ideology is understood here as a cultural, intellectual, and symbolic construction that transforms and reproduces power relations. It is not understood as a doctrine, but as the locus of representation of the different ways of expressing concrete reality. In this way, the concept found in the ideology of everyday life (Bakhtin & Volochínov, 2006) was adopted, demonstrating how groups of individuals position themselves within their specific realities. It involves their actions, how they organize the workforce, and how life is reproduced. According to Bakhtin & Volochínov (2006, p. 121), the "ideology of everyday life constitutes the domain of the disordered interior and exterior word, not fixed in a system, which accompanies each of our acts or gestures and each of our states of consciousness".

The statements pertaining to the *ideology of everyday life* were useful in understanding the contexts, communicative acts, meanings, and ideology in actions as a process of formation of subjects (interlocutors), acting directly in everyday life. They aided considerations of how place and surroundings have weight in the constitution of subjects in their everyday essence. Thus, attention turns to the dimension of sensitive perception, heightening the senses, where communicational and social densities are more notable⁵.

⁴ According to Bégout (2009, p. 12), "With this term we designate the philosophical analysis of what is common and everyday. Koinology represents a fundamental study on the essence of everyday life, on its origins and its purposes, on its practice and its means".

⁵ Communicational density results from the scale/time of the action, from the co-presence in everyday life, which is full of conflicts and solidarities between the agents of the action. "Communicational relations [...] are generated in the place, and only in the place, despite the origin, by chance distant, of the objects, the men and the orders that move them" (Santos, 1996a, p. 258). They result from internal exchanges and extensive sharing throughout the territory. It is in the communicational sphere that social density is defined, in turn, "produced in

The dimension of the non-appropriable is defined in the subjects' subjectivity and constitutive singularity, as a response to the place where they live, move around, and relate to others. Regarding the meaning of place and its singularity, Massey (2000, p. 184) states, "what gives a place its specificity is not a long and internalized history, but the fact that it is constructed from a particular constellation of social relations, which meet and intertwine in a particular *locus*". The author reiterates that place, in its singular sense, is a place of encounter and emphasizes, "instead of thinking of places as areas with borders around them, one can imagine them as moments articulated in networks of social relations and understanding".

Given the norms and laws of their respective places, the agents involved in Hip-Hop in the favelas of São Paulo-SP and São Luís-MA protect the tactics and strategies innate to their own experiences. To act from necessity and for survival is often determined by moments and instants, whether in agreements with the local community or the government on a day of action. Examples include a musical show in a public square organized by the Xemalami collective in the Jardim Reimberg neighborhood in the Grajaú district of the metropolis of São Paulo and an artistic manifesto or leafleting on the streets under the leadership of the *Núcleo de Mulheres Preta Anastácias* on Rua da Vala in the João Paulo neighborhood in the city of São Luís, or a truncated communication with the military police in both situations. What the subject perceives, feels, and how they act is specific to their composition and the place where they live. Even when they are aware of their actions, spontaneity is not neglected. This is how everyday essence is non-appropriable and cannot be quantified, tabulated, or equated to assess its density.

Thus, this dynamic, heterogeneous character, bearing multiple singularities, especially in the era known as globalization, is a combination of tension points between the market and those who think of it differently, as a possibility. The above context can only be apprehended, or rather, understood through everyday life, as a geographical category.

For Santos, everyday life is a category of existence that "lends itself to a geographical treatment of the lived world" (Santos, 1996a, p. 315). It considers systems of objects, systems of actions, luminous and opaque technical artifacts, and fast and slow time in its events. Therefore, everyday life is a "fundamental component of space, a structure controlling action, a limit or an invitation to action" (Santos, 1994a, p. 103). Everyday life

the fermentation of men in the same closed space [...] driven by passion, and leading to a global, holistic perception of the world and men" (idem, p. 318), especially in metropolises, where personal, intentional and contradictory bonds are more intense.



"reaches a larger dimension and contains history, geography, society, and nature. The resulting ideology is an ideology of everyday life" (Silva, 1995, p. 28).

In the words of Roberto Cara (1995, p. 71),

The axis of everyday life moves in time and space. In this sense, it could be said that it is different for each individual and, therefore, differs according to sex, age, and social class. On the contrary, everyday life is the same for everyone; it means a permanent, undifferentiated point of time and space.

Therefore, everyday life is a motivator that supports the representations of lived space, the uses of territory, sociability, and territorialities as a spatial and temporal dimension of global and local data. We are moving towards defining everyday life as the materiality and immateriality that form banal space. In it, everyday life becomes the opening for possibilities at every moment, given its spontaneity (Santos, 1996b), existing in places. There is a renewed formation of an internal set of relationships between individuals, subjects, agents, and the objects that compose them, such as all external information and communication in their surroundings. In this way, the very existence of the place induces the formation of its essence.

Per this article's objective, we aim to achieve a geographical perspective of this essence. Like others, this category is endowed with polysemy. Benne Den (2008) provokes reflection by stating that essence is a "combination of art and technique" (p. 19), and goes further, "in essence we are on the inside what we are on the outside" (p. 25). Clearly, this author's statements arise from his psychotheological reflections; however, using a geographical interpretation, it is possible to state that art and technique are the products of actions and objects, the relationships of subjects with their place. Essence itself is perceived in its form-content, since "space is the synthesis, always provisional, between social content and spatial forms" (Santos, 1996a, p. 109).

Given the need to capture their creative force, from the historical and dialectical materialist method, everyday objects appear as such. Therefore, their origin is their essence, and it is up to science to unveil the hidden core that is contained in forms and investigate their most intimate connections (Carli, 2011). A possible methodological path is to perceive the form, function, structure, and process that make up the everyday essence; a perspective that can be extended to analyzing the landscape movement, such as the appearance-essence existing in places.



Ranieri Carli (2011, p. 50) argues that history is the interval between essence and appearance. This idea can be further explored through the concept of totality: both essence and appearance are integral components of the totality of relationships that shape our everyday lives. Beyond the data of totality, everyday life also involves the production of ordinary spaces, where the primary focus is on the relationship between the agent (the subject) and their environment. In essence, this relationship serves as the foundation for geographical connections.

Another key contribution to the concept of essence in geographical interpretation is credited to Coimbra and Leitão (2003). The authors emphasize the individual's way of being and regard the concept of place as a key element in psychology, which acts as a support "produced and producer of subjectivities, the territory [place] of knowledge-power points, among others, to some constructions, such as that of essentiality and the individual's way-of-being" (Coimbra & Leitão, 2003, p. 09). As a product of historical significance, the place is defined by multiple events that manifest in the form of objects, flows, and actions, including the movements of society, "are always being, will always be being done" (idem, 2003, p. 50) revealing what is ephemeral and heterogeneous in its essence.

The individual who has approached the concept discussed in this article most closely is Kátia Martins (2019). She reflected on the essence of place as an understanding of lived experiences. Drawing inspiration from the phenomenological framework proposed by geographer Yi-Fu Tuan, Martins states (2019, p. 59) that:

The essence of places is shaped by each individual's experiences in their daily life. This relationship with a place, or even between different places, encompasses not only geographical locations but also the surrounding environments. Cultural exchanges and expressions manifest in various forms, highlighting the interconnectedness of these experiences.

There is a complementarity between borders and forms that are present, which become integral to the daily life of the place. Notably, these "in-between places" express the surroundings from which value is attributed to the everyday essence. According to Martins (2019, p. 59), "these frontier 'in-between places' can be present in the streets, in the neighborhoods, in the outskirts and centers of cities, as these places symbolize spaces of cultural expression". Therefore, "each subject has their own and individual perception of the lived place, and these apprehensions will depend on the experiences constructed by each subject throughout their life" (Martins, 2019, p. 93).

In this sense, the environment is significant since the dynamics of spatial transformations and their subspaces (such as the city, especially the metropolises) are exposed to selective modernity and are thus products of this modernization. The environment is becoming more prominent as the quest for rights emerges from the population. The value of the land is shaped by social relations and is influenced by its material and immaterial aspects. This value is determined by how the land is used and understood in its context. "Existence can be interpreted from the relations directly observed between men and between men and the environment" (Santos, 2000a, p. 98).

The unequal production of places and the material and immaterial artificialization of relationships significantly impact places' social, political, moral, economic, and cultural spheres. This trend leads to total alienation from space. To perceive the environment is to claim rights, a self with its legitimate existence and, above all, awareness of its place, because it is the one who experiences it daily.

Capturing the essence of everyday life is about understanding the existence of the self. Sartre says: "existence precedes essence". However, the philosopher is referring to the existence and essence of self (individual and subject). Before the self recognizes and legitimizes its existence to form its essence, a place exists, defined by a set of objects and actions nourished by the notion defended here. Existentialism refers to the self and its subjectivity. Essentialism concerns place, everyday life, and the spontaneity of events that occur within it. "What exists is transitory; reality is in perpetual movement" (Carli, 2011, p. 57), like geographic space, in eternal metamorphosis.

According to Bégout (2009, p. 12), "however, the essential character of everyday life does not reside in this particular phenomenality-that which occurs every day - but rather in the genesis of this manifestation". The place itself is the space of rationality, or rather, of rationalities. There is a contradiction that both complements and sustains the concrete reality of globalization, which violently impacts places. However, it also leads to the occasional singular and disruptive manifestation of the use of banal space. The self, itself an agent, recognizes its own existence in the place and the everyday essence. According to Bégout (2009, p. 18),

Everyday life is, without a doubt, the most potent element of human existence that founds the essence of all life. Even though experience changes, everyday life has a notable **genetic density**, durable stability, and tenacity, something that genuinely resists. It is the cement of experience, formed slowly but surely by the self-consolidating accumulation of our dreams, habits, and customs (emphasis added).

Emphasis is placed on the genetic density present in daily life, which conveys information relevant to recognizing the existence of beings. In this way, place and everyday experiences reveal their strengths. Everything in its surroundings, exterior and frontier, acts as a catalyst for forming agents in places. In the words of Sartre (1970, p. 10), humanity is:

[...] only, not only as he conceives himself, but also as he wants himself; as he conceives himself after existence, as he wants himself after this impulse towards existence. Man is nothing more than what he makes of himself: this is the first principle of existentialism. This is also what we call subjectivity.

Individual subjectivity, or so to speak, human subjectivity, is the first principle of existentialism. It is defined by the cogito, how the self always thinks and will always be for itself and the other. According to Sartre (1970, p. 33),

[...] in the cogito I discover not only myself, but also others. Through thinking, contrary to the philosophy of Descartes, contrary to the philosophy of Kant, we apprehend ourselves in relation to the other, and the other is as true for us as we are ourselves. Thus, the man who reaches himself directly through the cogito also discovers all others and discovers them as being the very condition of his existence.

The position of this "other", as defined by Sartre, is interpreted here as the relationship between objects, actions, and the environment. This set of systems is essential for the self's existence. Selves exist as objects in themselves and actions of agents for themselves, recognizing their own existence. This complementary difference is crucial for understanding Sartre's ideas about the relationship between object systems and action systems. Recognizing the existence of the self for itself is a process in forming its own essence. "It is in everyday life that we become observers of ourselves and others, that is, of the other, of others and the world, therefore, of territory" (Mesquista, 1995, p. 19).

In the discussions covered thus far, we encounter a bifurcation regarding two forms of essence: the everyday essence and that of the agent (self). These concepts are widely examined in this thesis. In this sense, for Sartre (1970, p. 08), the essence of self is a "set of techniques and qualities that allow its production and definition". If the self always exists for itself and the existence of the other, "there is a relationship between subjectivity and intersubjectivity, and it is from this perspective that man decides what he is and what others are" (idem, p. 33).

Thus, agents recognize their existence through the essence of everyday life. When they understand their existence, they shape their essence (the construction of self). Place,

everyday life, and the dynamic social surroundings form the geographical basis for our investigations, while maintaining a rigorous method in this slippery and complex field. Before identities, feelings, ideologies, functions, discourses, morals, judgments, tastes, and desires take form in subjects (potentially undetermined), it is essential to consider their everyday essence. Thus, the dimension of the non-appropriable is found in the spontaneity of the place and the subjectivity of the self.

3 "DESCENDING" *PSYCHOSPHERE* AND "ASCENDING" *PSYCHOSPHERE*: INFO-COMMUNICATIONS DIMENSIONS OF EVERYDAY ESSENCE

Santos (1996; 2000a) clearly presents the relevance of the operability of technospheres and psychospheres, emphasizing the psychosphere as a central element that leads to action. The qualification of the psychosphere as "descending" and "ascending" emphasizes their specificities without distorting their original concepts.

In this context, the dimensions oriented by information and communication are crucial to shaping the everyday essence. To inform means to assign (selective) forms, while to communicate involves conveying selected content. In our time, the informational and communicational dimensions are undergoing a hecatomb due to contemporary acceleration and "have in their essence a social dynamic" (Soares, 2005, p. 15035).

As a methodological principle, banal space is designed around shared life in the inseparable combination of vectors of external and internal orders of places in everyday life. In its space-time dimension, the totality of banal space is fragmented, especially in the period of globalization. This fragmentation is due to the different levels of selectivity in the organization of territories, implying the unequal production of places and their economic, political, institutional, and cultural content (Santos, 2002).

Technical artifacts, or technospheres (Santos, 1996; 2000a), such as the Internet and its entire infrastructure, including advertising, shape how sociability occurs in places, making them more fluid (or not) and artificial. On the other hand, the informational and communicational dimensions are products of the *psychosphere* (Santos, 1996; 2000a) and are how social and political behaviors are established. Thus, as an immaterial product, there can be two types of psychosphere: a "descending" psychosphere and an "ascending" psychosphere.

The descending psychosphere is the info-communicational variable of hegemonic action, which shapes the sphere of rationality (Santos, 1994b), making objects and everyday actions functional within the domain of regulation and competitiveness. In turn, the

ascending psychosphere is the info-communicational variable for counter-hegemonic action. It ensures counter-rationality in how territory is used and enables the appropriation of objects through actions and practices of solidarity that react to the imposition of a single way of thinking and contribute to the production of subjectivities. In the words of Coimbra & Leitão (2003, p. 09), "it is, therefore, these productions of subjectivities that construct and define the ways of thinking, perceiving, feeling and acting in the world, being forged by the different social equipments".

The intersection of the vectors, the descending (verticalizing) psychosphere and the ascending (horizontalizing) psychosphere, occurs through transversality. The transversal axis, the knot or point of contradictions, conflicts, crises, resistance, co-optations, cooperations and even solidarities (organic, organizational and emotional) is where the info-communicational dimension in everyday life is found. The disputes and agreements regarding each subject's subjective internal interests only occur in their concrete reality through this condition.

Here are two examples of how the way of thinking (cogito) is shaped by the relief of the descending and ascending psychospheres: the first refers to those who formulate and enforce structural-urban poverty; the other pertains to those who create strategies and tactics to survive and overcome structural-urban poverty—the pronoun "who" indicates the agent-self as the protagonist of their own story. Therefore, in the everyday essence, some will defend their interests/intentionality (individual conception of the other) in the subjective formation at the behest of capital, and others, in contrast, will resist it. As Santos (1994b, p. 34) says, "whatever it may be, it seems, however, that the basis of reactive action is the shared space in everyday life."

For example, in the relationship with agents linked to Hip-Hop Culture in São Paulo and São Luís-MA, the forces of the descending and ascending psychospheres can be viewed from different perspectives, which are interconnected. Hip-Hop and RAP are currently said to be experiencing their best moment, both financially and in terms of cultural and musical recognition, with the maxim: the favela won. The discourse of a descending, more neoliberal psychosphere is not found among the agents working for these peripheral cultures in Brazil, with a few exceptions. At the same time and in the same space, peripheral areas continue to experience structural urban poverty and the failure of the rule of law to foster and establish full citizenship for the peripheral population.

There is a notable and intense process of transformation of the form-content of technical, normative, and informational densities, which conflict with communicational,

social, and, without overstatement, existential densities. The presence of an exclusionary State and the absence of a democratic State are mechanisms that underestimate the whole population in a short timeframe, in which events reveal the confusion of spirits.

In the descending and ascending psychospheres, there is an external influence on the self in everyday life, and the more intimate formation of its essence. Consequently, there will be different productions of knowledge in external and internal places, such as business knowledge, academic knowledge, local knowledge, and even common sense (except for its restrictions). How the self thinks is reflected in how it acts, and its surroundings are utterly relevant, as it is social density data. Value is due to the "scale of effective action based on space [where] the divorce between the ultimate seat of action and its result grows" (Santos, 1994b, p. 34). This cannot lose ground, or rather, space.

4 EVERYDAY ESSENCE: DIMENSIONS OF REALITIES

Reality is not unique; like everyday life, its forms and essences are multiple. The dimensions of reality are formed by shared everyday life. Each place, regardless of where it is, imposes distinct ways of undergoing all the experiences acquired by agents in their life trajectories in society. Some people will enjoy and maintain their privileges, such as the bourgeoisie and, in a bold and unyielding manner, the middle classes. However, a segment of the population lives with scarcity and lacks access to basic needs. They strive daily to overcome structural violence such as poverty, hunger, and racism; their strongest virtue is their desire for better days.

These two population groups have a density of distinct experiences (situations, habits, customs, traditions, among others) (inherited and/or experienced) that occur based on the availability of time. Therefore, time is their scale of action, the duration of the events they participate in (Santos, 1994b; 1996a), including the systems of technical objects mediating this movement.

Santos (1994b, p. 79) states that "time is given by men. The concrete time of men is a practical temporalization, the movement of the World within each one and, therefore, a particular interpretation of Time by each group, each social class, each individual". However, when everyday life is called into question, the first act of the self is to reinforce its existence and depending on the links with its soil, to manifest its territoriality.

For Bégout (2009, p. 18-19), at each moment, "a singular event can open a gap in its solid and constant form, thereby reintroducing the original concern that it considered to

have been eradicated". In the case of urban metropolises, from the horizontal spatial perspective of those *below* (Santos, 2001), Santos (1994b, p. 79) argues that:

co-presence teaches people about difference. That is why the city is a place for education and re-education. The larger the city, the more numerous and significant the movements, the vaster and denser the co-presence, and the greater the lessons and learning.

A sociocultural movement can emerge anytime in an urban metropolis and disrupt its functional balance. These situations include organized hip-hop movements, funk raves, street soccer, organic food production and distribution centers in urban gardens, solidarity kitchens, popular (community) college preparatory courses, and women's fronts for housing rights. Here we focus on actions linked to hip-hop culture. Its origin stems from a sense of restlessness and discomfort, existing on the horizon of extreme peripheral slum areas, forcibly referred to as communities (Pereira; Castro; Cheibub, 2019). There are extensive *opaque spaces* (Santos, 1994b) in these locations, whose reality is strange and unusual for their residents, as they live with the most perverse content of globalization, which contrasts with *luminous spaces* (Santos, 1994b). A concept of belonging helps protect self-esteem in the context of structural urban poverty. The environment can undermine one's ego and pride, highlighting the need to strengthen reflective thinking⁶.

According to Sartre (1970, p. 34), "it is always necessary to be in the world." In this context, Milton Santos (1994b, p. 34) asserts that "the basis of reactive action is the shared space in everyday life." The essence of everyday life results from the quest to understand our surroundings, not just as a physical environment (technosphere) influenced by those who control urban spaces, through real estate speculation, gentrification, and the standardization of lifestyles, but also as a resource for transformative action in the pursuit of freedom⁷.

I am unsure of how much freedom exists within a utopian vision. However, there is hope in politics when the population becomes aware of its dissatisfaction with the lack of progress. This dissatisfaction often includes various social classes and individuals in traditional communities who feel "uncomfortable" or "uninterested" in the progress dictated

⁶ Reflection based on reading the work "Black Skin, White Masks" by Frantz Fanon. For more information, see: FANON, Frantz [1925–1961] Black Skin, White Masks / Frantz Fanon; original title: *Peau noire, masques blancs*; translated by Sebastião Nascimento and with the collaboration of Raquel Camargo; foreword by Grada Kilomba; afterword by Deivison Faustino; complementary texts by Francis Jeanson and Paul Gilroy. São Paulo: Ubu Editora, 2020/320 pp.

⁷ "This recognition is the path to autonomy, but it can also be the path to the search for possession and power, depending on the choice made, whether individually or collectively" (Mesquita, 1995, p. 85).

by the current political climate, since a minority of the demographic framework is only content with maintaining its privileges. In this regard, Santos (2000a, pp. 115-116) states that.

A banal philosophy begins to take hold in people's minds with the discovery, authorized by everyday life, of the non-autonomy of actions and their results. This is common to all people, no matter how different their situations are. But it is another thing to go beyond the discovery of difference and reach its awareness.

For Silvia Petersen (1995, p. 33), the:

[...] consciousness that attributes meaning to facts is affected by the experiences to which the social being is subject, and this experience is decisive in the sense that it exerts pressure on the existing social consciousness and raises new questions.

As the place changes, the subject reacts to this transformation, which can be experienced in daily life through their choices and involvement. This is the desired outcome!

In discussions with research participants from the slums of the Grajaú District in the southernmost part of São Paulo and neighborhoods in São Luís, Maranhão, the goal was to identify the presence of everyday essence. A key aspect that stands out is that all individuals involved in these exchanges are members of Hip-Hop Culture, engaging in both personal and collective projects that adhere to the principles of this popular cultural movement.

Our conversations with the participants aimed to understand their historical experiences as active subjects. We focused on their concrete realities and the ethical, moral, and social principles that shape their context. We explored their differing perceptions of the world, their life experiences, and their reaction-response to others. The focus is on the daily ideology of social leaders who actively work in their respective favelas. They were asked the following question: How do your living place and surroundings contribute to shaping your identity? Their accounts are given below:

"The essence is the fundamental part. From the Center to here [Grajaú] you notice the change and the contrasts, you know? The relationships, you know? The geography changes, the layout of the neighborhood, with all these houses crammed together you don't even have privacy to date, everyone is compressed and packed together. The further back you go, the greater the difficulties, the greater the problems with relationships, hunger, access, intolerance, and the treatment by the police is different. On Paulista [avenue] it's one way, here it's no soft treatment. And RAP [musical genre] gave me this vision of the outskirts,

because we have to realize where we are and understand that about a more sensible, more responsible attitude towards our own lives. RAP was fundamental!" - Drez (Xemalami)⁸.

"The street shapes and interferes in my essence, regardless of what it is, the street is our essence, but I have no way of explaining it. Everything is part of tomorrow" - Pepê "Pietra" Marginal Poet⁹.

"My surroundings completely influence my essence, especially when it comes to making my RAP. There is a huge collectivity in my neighborhood, and all of this has changed me completely" - Nat 100 Vulgo (GrajaMinas and Produto Bruto)¹⁰.

"My life is here in Grajaú, in Jardim Reimberg, I will never leave here. What reinforces this essence are the encounters between people and the place. It's a mix of longing for what happened and thinking about what can be done from there. It's a great source of inspiration to be with people from your neighborhood, who make art and sing RAP" - Lua Guimarães (Xemalami and Produto Bruto)¹¹.

"We grow up in the slums with so many negative things... police attacks, friends who get lost in crime to survive or earn an income, and then you see a project like Xemalami with chess, you see people from the slums helping... I lost my father early, and my mother was always my biggest supporter... like, you see the lives of your friends, even though they are in the same place, each one has their own life. Sometimes it is sad, but you find happiness, and that is very surprising. This essence is perhaps all of this, above all, a willpower in the slums to do things together. If you see your slum falling apart with tragic moments, you end up losing the taste for your neighborhood. The thing is to do something to change, be it a cultural activity, or something that can bring people together to do something together. When everyone gets together it is beautiful to see, right, and it shows their strength! The essence is collectivity" - Hyt (Xemalami)¹².

"Where we live is fundamental. I was practically born here. I got to know Hip-Hop here, and there is a very strong issue here: the presence of the CCN (Centro de Cultura Negra). So, I was raised with batucada [Brazilian percussion], but it was through Hip-Hop that I recognized myself as black. Here on Rua da Vala, which is actually called Rua da Malária, but it is the favela of João Paulo. It is a favela that is in the main commercial center of São Luís. Look here [electric fence on the wall of a convent], this is a physical division, and I learned a lot from this, because it is a physical division. My father was a carpenter there [the convent]. You know that song: Do you see that building, young man? I helped to build it. It was a time of suffering. There were four buses. Two to go, two to come back¹³. I see my father in this song. So, I feel it in my skin. Maybe if I wasn't here, maybe I wouldn't have thrown myself so much into the world. As a child, I had to go through two private schools to get an education. "I would go to school, and the kids would insult me, because they knew I was from Rua da Vala. And

⁸ Field interview with Drez (Xemalami) at "La Toca", in Jardim Reimberg, Grajaú, São Paulo-SP, on July 10, 2022.

⁹ Field interview with Pepê at Praça do Reggae, Historic Center of São Luís-MA, on January 5, 2022.

¹⁰ Field interview with Nat 100vulgo at Jardim Reimberg, on July 9, 2022.

¹¹ Field interview with Lua Guimarães in Jardim Reimberg, on July 9, 2022.

¹² Field interview with Hyt (Xemalami) at Jardim Reimberg, on July 9, 2022.

¹³ Zé Geraldo. Cidadão. Zé Geraldo. Sony Music Entertainment (Brasil), 1979.

that aggravates me. Even with this issue that tries to define me, I made it to University. My daily life here is drug trafficking, violence, solidarity, and the flooding when it rains is part of who I am" - Preta Lu (Quilombo Urbano and Núcleo Preta Anastácia)¹⁴.

The daily ideologies expressed in the speakers' discourse reveal a closer social connection to the conditions of production and reproduction in everyday life. In everyday communication (Damiani, 2011), the subject of the enunciative act is active and aware of their state of consciousness within which they strive to achieve what is possible within the constraints of necessity, which demonstrates their own incompleteness. Although they are situated in reality, they are not confined by it. They exhibit responsive actions in response to inherited and projected causes and unexpected events. In their concrete conditions of existence, subjects rework their experiences and actions. The subject and their discourse are formed through action and the relationships of otherness and intersubjectivity in the environment.

In urban peripheries, where the experience of scarcity is glaring, the practices and actions of agents lead to greater awareness. As Sartre (1970, p. 27) notes, "reality does not exist except in action" under "the influence of the environment" (idem, p. 29), which enables informed decisions. When the subject is aware of their existence, they exercise freedom by constructing their own action in the individual (subjective) and collective (intersubjective) spheres.

According to Mesquita (1995, p. 85), "consciousness, which is recognizing oneself as a subject, is achieved through contact with the other, with others, and in the multiple relationships we maintain with them". Based on the level of engagement one has with the shared community and the extent of their actions it is possible to overcome the void of ignorance. This can lead to a more creative situation and open opportunities for action. In Sartre's view, this spur of awareness arises from a feeling of anguish for the self, which is defined by the act of engagement. The author above and the interlocutors in the research assert that "choice is possible in some sense, but it is impossible not to choose."

The metropolis, whether in São Luís-MA or São Paulo-SP, is the concrete essence of materialities and social interactions, reflected in various representations of reality. Thus, there is a temporality of actions in society and spatial dimensions. Globalization imposes multiple ways of acting within these temporalities. The pace of large corporations differs significantly from that of the average citizen navigating their daily routines in the job market.

¹⁴ Field interview with Preta Lu on Rua da Vala, João Paulo, São Luís-MA, on January 12, 2022.

Both global and local actions impact urban areas, where speed is expected. However, this fast-paced environment coexists with the slower rhythms of everyday activities and interactions among various groups, agents, and individuals.

The segregation in metropolises in the existence of *luminous* and *opaque spaces* follows a repetitive pattern established by urban planners and planning. In *luminous spaces*, the impetus of globalizing speed is perverse, fueled by competitiveness and fantastical images (fabulations of life). In *opaque spaces*, local slowness is intensified by coexistence, sustained by solidarity, and reality itself (naked and raw). From this slowness, ordinary agents, especially the poor, draw their strength.

The concept of subjectivity and embodied collectives arises from various temporalities that span short, medium, and long durations, representing different scales of action. These collectives are formed during slow time, which involves non-hegemonic actions, in contrast to fast time, characterized by hegemonic and hegemonized actions. According to Santos (1994b, p. 42), in his permanent dialectic, "there is a conflict between the time of hegemonic actors and non-hegemonic or hegemonized actors. This is how, based on the use of space and time, such diverse daily lives are defined [...]".

MCs, rappers, and hip-hop artists are formed and are creators of local leaderships that demarcate their sociological and geographical boundaries. The multiple faces of the same subject navigate through different temporalities and scales, which shape these agents, who, even with differing worldviews, share a common goal. Their practices and actions can form a network of sociability (D'andrea, 2013; Silva, 2018).

The geographical conditions of the Grajaú District in São Paulo-SP and the peripheral neighborhoods of São Luís-MA are notable for their significant aspects of Brazilian socio-spatial formation, such as population density, the composition of the economically active population, the neglect of education, unemployment, and the deepening of urban-structural poverty. Additionally, the manifestations of RAP and Hip-Hop in these marginalized areas can be perceived as resistance movements rooted in the essence of everyday life.

It is understood that no group of subjects represents a movement's entirety, unless the group itself is the movement. Everything is defined in relation to the purposes expressed by these individuals. Daily practice reveals the action of subject groups, such as the exemplary leadership that made possible the imminent dialogues of the Grajaú District in São Paulo-SP and the slums of São Luís-MA. Such practice reflects engagement in the

questioning and creative act to overcome the structural violence contained in structural-urban poverty, an artifice of a unique rationality.

5 FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

From the everyday essence - a blend of reason and emotion, the ordinary and the banal - we sought to explore the connections of reality and the forms of manifestation in places, as processes and elements for awakening consciousness in the formation of ordinary citizens into collective subjects. This was exemplified through fieldwork with subjects linked to Hip-Hop Culture in their respective situations. These are subjects whose resistance seeks to break with ignorance, maintain hope, and conquer freedom, with other views and interpretations from the geographical perspective of reality.

This reflection demonstrates that the everyday essence and its dimensions, exposed and applied as a mobilized notion, potentially represent the relationship with rootedness in places and the environment, the existence of the self and subjects in everyday life. This article synthesizes more comprehensive and ongoing research, revealing that the everyday essence is an expression of geographic contents (objects, actions, fixed objects, flows). This group of contents forms a material and immaterial combination delicately contained in the life of the self. It manifests itself authentically in the various situations of the space that has been practiced, is being practiced, and will be practiced in the future. We discussed the attempt of all the contents (given their delimitation) and all the agents that compose and contribute to the dynamization of banal space.

The essence of the debate centers on acknowledging the presence in various places and ways of experiencing it. Initially, being in a place is not a matter of choice; it is simply where one exists. However, defining, desiring, and being concerned about one's current place is to enter a realm of dispute, as the interplay of different data can lead to potential transformations in both rational and counter-rational perspectives of one's reality. This process enables individuals to reflect on themselves, their relationships with others, and their immediate environment, fostering a sense of co-presence and coexistence in spaces.

This relationship of co-presence fosters desires, needs, proposals, and actions that lead to the demand and exercise of citizenship in a consultative, participatory, and deliberate way in the face of the problems of the metropolis in its state of crisis. Thus, it contributes,

for example, to promoting public policies for the common good. At this crossroads stands the kingdom of hope.

Hope is not only about believing but also about putting it into practice in other places, situations, or realities. In this way, the kingdom of hope is built on the actions of collective and collectivized subjects. Thus, it is essential to internalize the geographical perspective on everyday life because this is where manifestations of totality (concrete reality) are reflected and built. The universal and the singular create a dialectical relationship that helps us understand the current period.

New research agendas must be developed to theoretically and methodologically explore and reveal concerns based on everyday experiences, such as: How can state action, territorial, and urban planning consider other management practices to overcome the challenges posed by selective modernity and contemporary acceleration? What public policies or collective self-management actions arise from examining everyday life in its essence? Can the construction of another initiative, even if unnoticed, lead to this desired realm? What do everyday essences mean in the production of hegemonic space and everyday life, where political extremisms arise?

Questions and investigative horizons increasingly need to be anchored in geographical methods and related interdisciplinary dialogues, which contribute to discovering more in-depth answers. This approach also highlights urban territoriality.

Nothing new has been stated for those who skeptically view the emphasis on resistance within geography. However, is it necessary to reflect on whether there is a reference to epistemological long-windedness? We believe there is none. Its architecture is recognized by emphasizing resistance, or rather, by removing the fetish from its practice. Instead of just an idea, we have a geographical concept that can be used appropriately, such as counter-rationality. "Places, from this point of view, can be seen as an intermediary between the World and the individual" (Santos, 1996a, p. 314) in everyday life. To achieve this, it is essential to acknowledge the existence of the self and the significance of its everyday essence. We must also be mindful of the awareness that has emerged during this period, characterized by globalization and various forms of resistance to narrow-minded thinking.

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