

Space as substance and substrate of action in networked social mobilizations

O espaço como substância e substrato da ação em mobilizações
sociais em rede

El espacio como sustancia y sustrato de la acción en las
movilizações sociales en red

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Abstract

This work discusses the constitution of social mobilizations in a network, highlighted as a phenomenon of extensive and ostensible debate due to its recency and particularity. Its emergence is reflected from its reproduction in space, characterizing spatialities of insurgency and urbanity, insofar as its sociopolitical content is detonated. Through a bibliographic review, the enunciation of space is articulated as a consubstantial object to the insurgency, being support, language and tool simultaneously.

Keywords: Social mobilization. Space. Network. Agency. Insurgency.

Resumo

O texto discute a constituição das mobilizações sociais em rede, marcadas como um fenômeno de debate extensivo e ostensivo por sua recência e particularidade. Reflete-se sua emergência a partir de sua reprodução no espaço, caracterizando espacialidades de insurgência e de cidadania, na medida em que seu conteúdo sociopolítico é detonado. Por meio de uma revisão bibliográfica, articula-se a enunciação do espaço como objeto consubstancial à insurgência, sendo-lhe suporte, linguagem e ferramenta simultaneamente.

Palavras-chave: Mobilização social. Espaço. Rede. Agência. Insurgência.

Resumen

El texto discute la constitución de movilizaciones sociales en red, marcadas como un fenómeno de amplio y ostensible debate por su actualidad y particularidad. Su surgimiento se refleja a partir de su reproducción en el espacio, caracterizando espacialidades de la insurgencia y la vida de la ciudad, a medida que se detona su contenido sociopolítico. A



través de una revisión bibliográfica, se articula la enunciación del espacio como objeto consustancial a la insurgencia, siendo soporte, lenguaje y herramienta a la vez.

Palabras-clave: Movilización social. Espacio. Red. Agencia. Insurrección.

Introdução

A mobilization is first and foremost an influx. Of information, narratives, tactics, events, repercussions, images, and gestures. Influxes whose ballast is their condition of production and the very scope of their insurgent and tacit message. Social mobilization, the movement, protest, and action are expansive and long-tailed contingencies that intensify their activation as they reproduce, and even when they fade away, they still constitute a productive flow.

Networked social mobilizations refer to the very latest forms of insurgent manifestations that have challenged public opinion, evaded traditional media dynamics, and bewildered sociopolitical interpretation, both governmental and academic. Among its examples, we can highlight the Arab Spring in North Africa and the Middle East (JOFFE, 2011), the Spanish 15M (FERNANDEZ-PLANELS, PAMPOLS, & FIGUEROAS-MAZ, 2013), the Chilean Penguin Revolution (BETTENCOURT, 2016), the Portuguese “*geração à rasca*” (COSTA, 2018), the Greek protests in Syntagma Square (Barbosa, 2016), the American Occupy Wall Street movement (CALHOUN, 2013), and the Brazilian case of the June 2013 Protests (SANTOS, 2017), among others.

Among the framing characteristics of this typology of actions are their networked deployment, the spatial operation across multiple regional and territorial scales in unity, the mobilization of online social networks and digital technologies, the absence of formal entity leadership, organizational horizontality, the marked effervescence in their reproduction, and the metabolic volatility in their decline (SANTOS, 2020a).

As a political act, a networked social mobilization is a localized, contextualized, and factual exercise of sociopolitical action. In this sense, they are bodily investments, that is, an activity crafted through the actions of individuals who physically—whether

by occupying physical or virtual spaces - shape political endeavors and compositions, with a focus on the everyday experience, which is both the city (*polis*)¹ and politics.

As corporeality and materiality, the mobilizations are still screens². Screens as monitors of the extent of the corpography³ developed in the streets and receptacles of the multiple meanings derived from this exercise; meanings intrinsic to the direction of political action and any human composition in everyday space. Every screen relies on a production framework and a captive audience, not always passive, but always spectator – and emancipated (RANCIÈRE, 2012).

Within these screens of mobilization, meanings operate that are not incidental but constitutive of a praxis; that is, they are practices, aesthetics, and performances that are part of the mobilized language, while also being elements of sociopolitical navigation and insurgent textuality of participating individuals. From a mobilization emerges its communication, vital for its deeper meaning as well as its shallower meaning; from its expectation as well as its prerogative. From its perspective, as well as its prognosis.

With the supply of events and examples over the past two decades, and considering the paradigmatic and contextual shift in global agency and potency exercises, whether through network dynamics or through digital communication interaction that gives rise to new sociopolitical performances, it is important to highlight that the context of networked social mobilizations shares in space – constituting spatialities - their scope and message, becoming an exercise in insurgency and citizenship.

Therefore, this article examines the inter and intrarelations between space and networked social mobilizations to the extent that the exercise of sociopolitical dispute produces spaces of insurgency and citizenship in their constitution and reproduction. Initially, space is reflected upon as the substance of the constitution of mobilized action,

¹Regarding the Greek city-state models. Here the term is taken from the semantic field of the city and its spatial, territorial, social, cultural and political meanings. From the word *polis* comes the configuration of meanings of the city and also the vernacular branch of the word politics.

²According to Baudrillard's concept of "total screen" (2011).

³As per the concept articulated by Jacques (2006) and revisited by Nascimento (2016), where alternative and rebellious exercises of occupying urban space are interposed by subjects in dissent with oppressive or divisive practices and agendas. Such exercises are political in the sense that they delineate practices, gestures, and aesthetic and symbolic performances.

and finally, the spatial sign is examined as the substrate of social participation in networked social mobilizations. Assuming space as the locus of mobilization, the focus is directed towards mobilization within space, as an intervening and projective element, through the provision of a literature review.

The substance of social mobilization

Social mobilization presupposes encounters. The first of these is the individual's encounter with themselves in the activation of their agency as an actor. The second is an encounter of equal and different individuals. In this encounter, perspectives align through a sharing of reality, intersecting through social situations, triggering affections, and identities (whether pre-existing or momentary, singular or multiple).

Contrary to utilitarian images that suggest neutrality, there are supportive subjective flexions in this process. The encounter between subjects goes beyond mere identification through shared motivations and callings, imbuing the objects that demand action with an identity. Furthermore, according to the author, movements involve cultural gestures, where insurgent elements are gestural and forged in everyday experience (BRANDÃO, 2004).

It is within this context that one transitions from an individual subject to a scenario of collective subjects. Based on this premise, Agier (2011, p. 2581) emphasizes that:

The subject of politics is formed through shared words and relationships with others not assigned to their identity. Politics emanates from a part of the whole that is more than the sum of its parts (with its own preconceived ideas), it is not tied to the composition and divisions of the social body, thus distinguishing itself from any identity politics. Therefore, something must happen outside and beyond the ordinary for politics to occur. This something depends on the existence of what is called, in ritual, a symbolic mediation: an identifying third party transforms a multitude of nameless individuals into a community during the ritual moment, before they each return home, strengthened by the ritual but alone again in the world and within their 'own' social category. For the human defined as an individual in the midst of a society of individuals, everything changes in a similar way when they experience a brief ritual moment of identification with the community, a brief moment of happiness [...].

This existential sharing, ignited by the situational context, emotions, and memory, creates a collective political body marked by solidarity, endowed with objects and directions, originating from locations and mobilities, if not (re)creating them. A sense of community is formed that transforms aggressive outbursts into a shared experience. An “us” emerges that allows the construction of new perspectives, images, and emotions about oneself and reality, in motion (BRANDÃO, 2004).

Collectivity or the attribute of something that aggregates individuals, giving rise to campaigns or communities, is a construction as ancient as it is mythical. It is an entity that holds the “faith” that is institutional – sometimes referred to as civilization, sometimes as the State, sometimes as society, they all rest on and serve it. Collectivity is an indelible symbolic mark for social, cultural, economic, and political disputes, constructions, and accomplishments.

Martín-Barbero (2001) discusses the romantic construction of the idea of the people as a piece of what one wants to establish as a nation, but a piece marked by organic homogeneity. This functional community would be the reason and source of all social action embedded in projects that would constitute the lofty concept of a nation. However, in this conception, a paternalistic attitude would be adopted towards the people, with only a few individuals playing the role of saviors and protectors of the people's history.

According to Gohn (2018), the people encompassed the middle layers of the population, representing an average individual. This category included workers and all kinds of people living in urban peripheries. The author draws attention to a notion of the people and the popular marked by class. Those less assisted and affected by reality would be included in this concept, which ultimately also held political identity and could be opportunistically used as such by other agents.

From this homogenized and class-based treatment emerged the reading of what is popular as an attribute of those from peripheral and precarious layers. The people rise as a crutch for the construction of an altruistic and idealistic notion of the nation, from which everything that does not represent such a concept is stripped away. What emerges from the people becomes popular and, therefore, requires redemption, not worthy of political prominence, only as an object of discourse and benefits.

The popular becomes a cultural category, nourished by what is produced and experienced in the less privileged layers and those not participating in an aristocracy worthy of the *polis*. This popular attribute simultaneously receives a depoliticized interpretation – and mandatory, as politicization should not be attributed to the people – and a cultural downgrade, since what emanates from it is seen as the opposite of what is cultured (MARTIN-BARBERO, 2001).

The attribute of what is popular would be inscribed in a situation of cultural differentiation. The popular would fall short of the cultured, non-popular ideal. Returning to the rationalistic and idealized paternalism of the term “people,” we find a scenario in which the collective of individuals is subject only to cultural gestures, not partaking in the public in a political sense (HARDT & NEGRI, 2005). The agency of the people as an entity is subtracted, relegating it to a cultural condition – albeit a false one – of degradation.

This measure would exclude what is and comes from the people from the realms of the political: their objects, rituals, decisions, and protocols. Kept away from politicization and relegated to a cultural condition of degradation, the people become pawns for maneuvers under the publicized justification of being what constitutes the nation, its soul, or other romantic constructs of the terminology (HARDT & NEGRI, 2005; 2006).

This notion was dissolved by the concept and context of social class. The division of society into classes and the rise of the theoretical assumptions of the term do not only establish a sociological or political panorama of public order. This terminology endows the people entity with political capacity. This is due to the elevation of individuals' ways of life as modes of operation and contestation of reality (TARROW, 2009).

As classes, individuals strengthen themselves by uniting their origins and sharing the same schemes of oppression against which they will revolt. The debate bifurcated as anarchists did not exhaust the term “people” into an oppressed class, and the Marxist reading would be oriented from the notion of the proletariat (MARTÍN-BARBERO, 2001). What matters in the conceptual dispute is the common possibility between them: the capacity and potential of collective subject action.

Another concept is that of “masses.” Political inclination is also present in the terminology. However, the masses are understood as numerous groups without self-definition, without collective intelligence, easily co-opted, and that participate in actions without a profound understanding of the context and the meanings of their actions (GOHN, 2018).

The masses would be faceless entanglements lacking the capacity for cultural gestures and autonomous political acts, devoid of any spark from others, owners of agendas and equipment. However, the mass's shameful nature of swift co-optation and manipulation can be an unstable political player since it has volume, and its indefiniteness makes its interpretation and “real” control in the field difficult.

Masses are commonly associated with the media imaginary, denoting audiences and groups of communication recipients whose agency is artificial or whose naturalness is inflated by sophisticated discourses and strategies of the cultural industry (MARTÍN-BARBERO, 2001) or consumption as praxis (CANCLINI, 2006). However, it is through indignation and affective character that the passive notion of the masses is challenged.

“*Multidão*” (multitude) is a complementary pair to “*massa*” (mass). Both terms, based on the archetypal heritage of what is popular as cultural differentiation, implied that the barbarism inherent in this collectivity constituted a burden for the ideal society, incapable of embodying what was conceived as agency or political liturgy (MARTÍN-BARBERO, 2001). However, what the multitudes witnessed in the streets was the ability to erode power structures due to their massified character.

The multitudes provided didactic lessons in sociopolitics through noisy demonstrations in public spaces and wherever they made themselves heard. The result is not shock, the interruption of flows, or bothersome noise, but a clear understanding that a society in which political and cultural differentiation collapsed, as the freedom of the people, masses, or multitudes is an exercise and, as such, presupposes individual experiences and collective arrangements.

The apprehension of the collective is complex because it assumes times and spaces where movement occurs at different rhythms. Sometimes slow, sometimes fast, sometimes tepid, sometimes voracious, sometimes submerged, sometimes loudly visible. This characteristic of indefiniteness, once its defect, now participates in its

substance, as it deconstructs the ideals of factions, simplistic and segregating antagonisms (MARTÍN-BARBERO, 2001; GOHN, 2018).

Notions become more complex. The romantic ideal that portrayed a collective entity without agency but as the nucleus of all action (perpetrated by a few) is partially shattered. Cultural differentiation is abandoned, though theoretically, as a defining factor. The idea of a mass as essentially undefined, homogeneous, and inert is also abandoned. The unique quality of oppression as a bond of the collective weakens, considering new performative possibilities of the collective.

This leads to the territory of a body that is multiple, varied, diversified, and because of these characteristics, not subject to spatial or temporal imprisonments as defining factors. In other words, the origins and spatial movements do not exhaust this collectivity. Long, medium, or short durations blend into the effervescence, volatility, and the provisional nature of what is temporary as an agglutinating element of power.

The scenario of the multitude that rises and mobilizes is provocative:

The multitude is the multitude, a temporary and provisional identity that exhausts its meaning and function in the fraction of time in which it manifests itself on the streets and in the way it expresses itself. It is a subject that dissolves at the end of the party. Through the frequency and peculiarities of its demands, it becomes clear that the multitude is a new subject [...]. A new subject in the political process in conflict with the old subjects, those of politics as the action of stereotypes, those of the citizen imprisoned in the straitjacket of rigid concepts. [...] The multitude deconstructs [...] (MARTINS, 2015, p. 3).

Within the realm of categories, collective subjects demonstrate their foundational characteristic: belonging to a reality and being limited by it, they undertake alternatives for transformation, becoming, along with a myriad of others without plausible definitions, a mobilized force. The elementary substance of movements and mobilizations of any nature is the sharing of realities, destinies, and affections. When mobilizing, subjects encounter themselves, others, and the future that qualifies their efforts.

In the terminological repertoire that paves the way for movements and mobilizations, there are two other categories necessary for understanding the lexical

game and its appropriation: the polysemic renewal of society and the concept of political culture. The semantic use of these terms in the public agenda is essential to understand the aspect of the field's current relevance.

As Gohn (2018) points out, the term “society,” derived from Sociology, despite its conceptual controversy and extensive debate, has some value in common parlance. When society is evoked as the place where life happens, it is also postulated that movements emerge from it, seeking to modify it, and individuals who act in this way would confer a certain legitimacy of voice to any kind of action.

When one starts from the idea that “society reacts” or “society wants change,” one appropriates a powerful notion that what is produced, lived, and happens has something to do with this extra-linguistic collectivity of the people. In other words, a certain legitimacy derived from the very reality, from society as a term that provides linguistic support to the experience of individuals turned into subjects and part of a collective.

The term “political culture” is also important for approaching the foundations of social movements and mobilizations. Initially seen as attitudes oriented towards the system that determine citizens' practices and roles in the public sphere, the term has undergone mutations (GOHN, 2018). From denoting unique subjective orientations of a people towards politics, the concept has evolved to encompass diverse possibilities of meanings and coexisting political cultures.

Moving from purist and homogeneous ideas, it has come to conceive that the public sphere is composed of the construction of different political perspectives. During this process, different narratives, views, and ideas about what is public now form a certain cartography of the political. With heterogeneous and heterodox views, an understanding of the diversity of subjects and contexts in which they operate, considering their backgrounds and the power dynamics in which they are embedded, is opened up.

Within this framework of categories that articulate subjects and their collective attributions in social and political perspectives, the category of social movement can be established. And within it, social mobilization. It is understood, then, that a social movement is an effort by a collective actor to appropriate various social values,

processes, and attributes that are subjugated by adversaries and mediated by power relations (TOURAINÉ, 2009).

With Brandão (2004), one observes the social movement as a place in transit, and this place, endowed with cultural attributes, consists of interactions and relationships that reinvent times and scenarios through their untimely communication. Thinking about movements requires an initial effort to see them not only in terms of their organizational form but also in terms of their essence as spaces of ideas, contestation, tactics, and strategies⁴.

Touraine (2009) strengthens this perspective by characterizing a movement simultaneously as a social conflict and a cultural project. A movement aims to realize cultural values in the name of a realm of transformation of reality, representing a victory over an adversary that is also a representation. In this process, there is an appropriation of cultural signs and projects that grow within the social fabric. The targeted change is both internal and external.

Gohn (2010; 2011a) draws attention to the instructive character of movements. As life projects immersed in a conflictive and insurgent dynamic, the actions of collective subjects promote a network of learning among their participants: from dealing with public affairs to the exchange of political cultures and themes related to social inclusion. This learning is primarily experienced by its protagonists but, through its knowledge matrix, is disseminated to individuals outside the movement.

Movements as operations of collective actors are ancient, meaning they have a historical tradition and a meta-narrative as they define themselves as social forces that organize and bring together agents with a diffuse purpose, generating a transformative experience. While they are ancient, they are also always new. Discussing movements – social, cultural, and political – is discussing social experiments.

When they form, reproduce, and detonate the content of their action, movements produce experiences of redefinition and re-elaboration of time and space. The meanings of the struggle intersect social constraints that punctuate everyday life and generate creative impulses. This creative endeavor does not occur without material or symbolic

⁴Tactics and strategy are understood here in the perspective of Certeau (2014). Strategy is linked to dominant and hegemonic power and the actions taken to exercise and secure it. Tactics, on the other hand, are practical tricks for operating and contesting dominant power.

conflicts and traumas. Every movement is an expression of resistance before it is a proposition.

One can say of movements that:

They express energies of resistance to the old that oppresses or of construction of the new that liberates. Social energies, previously dispersed, are channeled and empowered through their practices in “propositional doings.” Movements diagnose social reality and build proposals. Acting in networks, they construct collective actions that serve as resistance to exclusion and fight for social inclusion (GOHN, 2011a, p. 336).

Collective action expresses emancipatory energies driven by the influence of the situational reality and guided by the positions of the subjects within these times and spaces (GOHN, 2010; 2011A; 2018; JASPER, 2016; TOURAINE, 2009). Returning to the repertoire of the journey, the experiences of collective subjects throughout history can be classified into different times and aspects.

Considering the times, it is necessary to revisit the metamorphoses of old or classic, new, and latest social movements. Regarding the classics, the factory floor and the social class configuration are the first key points of analysis. The residue of the experience of exploitation and the injunctions of the hegemonic class on women workers is what constitutes the substance for the production of action.

The means of production, the context of labor division, and the compositional scenario of the productive and consumer society provide the guidelines for traditional social movements. The struggle between classes and the intensification of this division constituted the inputs for transforming reality. The organized and noisy demonstrations of marches and protests form the basis of collective experience and language.

The conceptual underpinnings of social mobilization

Traditionally, classical social movements were organized through the formation of articulation fronts such as unions and other entities (GOHN, 2010). This organizational principle provided the necessary context for social innovations and practical measures to be established in the name of a less unequal reality (ALONSO,

2009). Their socio-political strength gained recognition, and their knowledge ensures a certain balance in the production of everyday life.

Some theoretical developments cast a shadow over the fervor of social movements that structured themselves from the factory floor and the challenges of industrial society and consumption. Adorno (2005) and Riesman (1995) argued that massification, consumer signs, and late capitalism produced individualistic behaviors, leading to the demobilization of individuals and collective actions.

However, ideas are challenged by a new social explosion. This time not restricted solely to the world of labor but encompassing post-material demands. The public making up the new crowds has also expanded: students, liberal professionals, young people, and women, allowing for “movements” instead of a single movement (GOHN, 2011b). This represented a more systemic dispute, focusing on culture and sociability (ALONSO, 2009).

From this perspective, theories of Resource Mobilization (RMT), political process (PPT), and finally, new social movements emerged. RMT, as formulated by Olson (1999), involved a rational and calculated interpretation of collective action. Among risks and benefits, individuals would engage in a planned social phenomenon with codes and hierarchies. Strategy took precedence over culture, and social action assumed a corporatist image.

The PPT, on the other hand, according to Tilly (1978), focuses on revolution as a category for macro-socio-historical processes. It is conceived that collective agents do not exist *a priori* unless they are the result of an opportunity process. Solidarity adds a cultural layer to the theory, indicating that individuals recognize themselves in a commonality of experiences and mutual action, but still depend on formal resources to gain political presence.

This pathway is necessary to position the new social movements, which do not signify a complete break with the classical ones or their negation, but rather an openness to new issues, agents, and processes (JASPER, 2016). The world of labor has become more complex, and a network dense with the symbolic empire of consumption and technology has caused dissensions in the perception of social rights, redistribution, and the recognition of identities (GOHN, 2011b).

The classic adversaries remain, but they are only part of a conflict map, where systems and structures must be attacked, and the persuasion of civil society becomes part of the toolkit of tactics and strategies (ALONSO, 2009). The scope of action of the new social movements is represented by a mosaic of subjects: women, Black people, indigenous people, LGBTQIA+ individuals, environmentalists, other heterogeneous groups, and subjects that intersect all of these.

The perspective of the new social movements is linked to claims based on projects. Life projects, societal projects, country projects, and cultural projects. The conflict map finds a new political map, shaking up the conceptions of society, the state, and subjects from their old formulations, without adhering to the social situation that was unfolding.

Habermas (1981), in discussing new social movements, proposes a dual classification: liberation movements and defensive movements. The former would be committed to emancipation and securing rights, resorting to confrontational demands. The latter would focus on safeguarding the community and the threats surrounding it, having a propositional character.

The new ways of conceiving and perceiving social movements are therefore at the intersection of social situations, political dynamics, and cultural projects. The constraints and precarities, the forms of political participation, and the cultural fronts create a mobilizing ideology. It is essential to affirm identities in the plural, the autonomy of cultures and communities, democratic opportunities, and the controversial and polysemic concept of development. In opposition, there are state operations, market forces, and other hegemonic poles.

Under the heritage and reference framework of classical and new movements, the very new social movements emerge – going beyond utilitarian classifications that hierarchize this diversity. In their constitution lies the strengthening of identity bases to the same extent as the expansion and diversification of repertoires, making their apprehension difficult and elusive (GOHN, 2018).

The latest movements reject crystallization, rigidity, and utilitarianism that envelop social action in the social and academic imaginary. New adjectives make their apprehension both complex and provocative. They are fluid in terms of agency,

fragmented in terms of material organization, and accommodate themselves to horizontality as a dynamic and value.

Hence, considering the classifications of the times of movements and their directions, it is observed that movements are complex structures marked by both objective and subjective horizons. Thus, as much as the situational reality that shouts matters, so do strategic actions, solidarity flexions, and the formation of collective identities around causes, life projects, and society (ALONSO, 2009).

Considering the aspects of movements, it is possible to address the formation of waves, networks, and the jargon of protests. The first aspect, waves, allows us to understand collective action as reciprocal action. That is, subjects and the objects of their mobilizations are anchored to commonalities defined in the very course of action. Causes, flags, voices, and solidarity flexions are produced and strengthened in the process of embodying the activity, like waves.

Thinking of actions as waves is to assume ascent – the voluminous and imposing climb of a wave – and natural decline – where the action falls and spreads (TARROW, 2009; BARKER, 2014). The subjects involved in this typology identify at some point in the wave some degree of familiarity, an instant commonality that activates joint action out of solidarity, not forgetting differences but focusing on the recognition of the value of the struggle as the primary and ultimate meaning of that effort (BARKER, 2014).

An important aspect of this aesthetic of collective action lies in the systematic capacity for repetition and innovation of undulation. Wave movements are repeatable but always new, more or less voluminous, and with distinct endings. In this typology where the instantaneous and the unpredictable form solidary commonalities and shares of political-cultural values, waves allow for the renewal of tactics, strategies, and repertoires of confrontation (TARROW, 2009; BARKER, 2014).

Wave movements suggest that collective action be changeable from its beginning to its decline. Practices, processes, identities, and obstacles come together to produce, innovate, and reproduce the movement itself. This aesthetic and dynamic characteristic of waves means that their development occurs through contradictory forces in alternation, where opposing trends compete to realize the undulation itself (BARKER, 2014).

The characteristic of progress between forces and operations through aggregations in a *continuum* reflects another aspect of collective actions: networks. Understood as socio-spatial systems of intercommunication of objects and flows with a program of purposes and actions (DIAS, 2001; SOUZA, 2013), networks create productive circuits and webs that allow the production of fabrics that order, organize, or disrupt reality.

As a web of nodes, arcs, and flows, networks are vectors for collective action in different fields and scales of integration: spatial, economic, political, logistical, and others. Networks give collective action the possibility that its ends become a reticulated program, shared among various points of interconnection – individuals and groups – reproducing themselves in flows capable of intercepting the production of reality and rooting their activity.

Network movements speak of collectivities based on the intercommunicating structure of networks, establishing themselves in programs rooted in the webs of nodes and arcs (CASTELLS, 2003). That is, in a network, content, practice, and performance are intertwined and part of a cohesive body. This body ensures the accuracy of objectives and produces subjects relatively autonomous from external systems, given the alternative and communicative nature of the network.

Castells (2003) explored the network from the communicative and technological perspective as a matrix for the production of reality, coining the classic concept of a network society, a relational, technical, and political apparatus of human activity. The ubiquity and pervasiveness of devices add a sociotechnical layer to networks, especially those mobilized.

This networked scenario allowed collective action to make use of tools, tactics, strategies, and transform its axis through the procession of devices (BRAGA, 2020; SANTOS, 2020b). In the network, agency and potency transmute into flows with multiple possibilities of interconnection. Mobilized practice takes on other forms, such as virtualization, cyberactivism, and mobilization between the on and off-line.

Another aspect that influences the contemporary conjuncture of collective and mobilized action is the result of the temporal interplay suffered by the constitution and transformation of movements (classical, new, newest, their waves, and networks). This concerns the possibility of a fleeting definition or, from another perspective, the

changing nature of some forms of agency: decentralized, without organization as expected, without hierarchies, or a need for self-proclaimed consolidation.

We can speak of activism, collectives, actions, protests, protest movements, and demonstrations. The term “demonstration” is warm because it offers a linguistic palate illustration of the forms of origin, reproduction, and transformation of mobilized acts, evading strictly organic constructions, since the new or latest character of movements has progressed in quite distinct forms and contents. Their organization itself is obliterated and renewed.

The journey through categories that provide a foundation for the concept of social movements, as well as an understanding of their times and aspects, calls for definition. Certainly, the possibility of collective agency granted by the organizational dimension of social movements offers individuals opportunities to explore, articulate, and experience their reality, incorporating and reworking the threads that weave reality (JASPER, 2016).

Thus, it is possible to delineate:

The **social movement** is something more structured, has opponents, more cohesive identities, specific projects for society or for solving social problems that it demands. Movements have leadership, a base, and advisory services. A social movement is the result of a social construction and not something given *a priori*, solely the result of contradictions. [...] They have ties of belonging and identity with a group, repertoires of demands, and practices of organization (GOHN, 2018, p. 246-247, author's emphasis).

A fundamental shift in the logic of operation, communication, and organization of sociopolitical collective actions has been observed over the last century (Ricci, 2018). From the organic and planned nature of traditional arrangements in which demands were carried out through the structural organization of movements, we have transitioned to structures marked by provisionality, whose axes and roots are unstable and make this their mode of operation (SCHERER-WARREN, 2006).

It can be observed that the constitutive core of social movements and their impact on history provides the basis for the derivation of another category, that of social mobilization, central to this thesis. Social mobilization, while conceptually and operationally separate from social movements, maintains relationships of connection

and emergence, drawing on their fervor and reshaping their tactics and strategies in the context of contemporary modes of operation (GOHN, 2011a).

Social mobilization emerges as a renewed category, encompassing the diversity of sociopolitical manifestations and practices of insurgency marked by this wealth of new forms, processes, aesthetics, and grammars (GOHN, 2014). In this grouping, it is possible to identify unifying characteristics that describe these activities but also bear witness to the epistemology that surrounds them.

For delimitation purposes, social mobilizations are conceived as acts and manifestos constituted from social agendas and demands with marked origins in terms of both content and spatialization (GOHN, 2011a). They depend on a certain cultural fermentation, meaning that when the object of desire or demand is reified through visible signs of dispute with opponents (specific, nameable, or represented in the market or the state), visible action occurs (GOHN, 2014).

Social mobilizations can do without conventional organic, institutional, and hierarchical schemes. However, this does not mean a rejection of cooperation and negotiation but implies a refusal to crystallize. This refusal is understood here as a constitutive principle of mobilization that engages from an episode whose plots are rough, porous, and imbued with situational contexts.

Actions then take place at different levels of spatialization, creating territorial circuits and multiscale dynamics. In mobilizations, the occupation of public space and the disruption of flows are specific strategies but are part of a symbol in which participants, aesthetics, and practiced grammar create a flowing movement.

Common tactics such as pressure, posters, claims, and noisy interventions are diluted in an action that seeks to traverse the space of everyday life, the space of operations, the space of governance, and the space of communications. The provisional and the discontinuity are part of this context, along with the intensity of their emergence and the voluminous dimension of their diffusion.

There are acts, manifestos, marches, and insurgent practices of different configurations and labels, bringing together diverse individuals. This agglomeration of unity in diversity is achieved through the intertwining of identities through the creation

of a provisional and fluctuating identity, which may dissolve after the election or allow for new creations at other times (SANTOS, 2019).

Inherited from the latest social movements is the historical interplay in characterizing collective action, but it captures the novelty of hybrid and sociotechnical scenarios (LATOURE, 2012; 2013), the strength of networks (CASTELLS, 2006; 2013), and communicative processes (MARTÍN-BARBERO, 2001) in contemporaneity. The definition rests on the current insurgent practices without engaging in ruptures but focusing on inclinations, flexions, and metabolizations of agency, potency, and performance.

There is a contemporary configuration, enriched by network communication (CASTELLS, 2003; 2006), ubiquitous environments (LÉVY, 2000; 2002), and a process of aesthetic anesthesia that imprisons the recognition of individuals as subjects and turns citizens into consumers (CANCLINI, 2006), creating a double vortex on social action. Various actions challenge reality and thought while simultaneously embodying a fluid condition that produces discontinuities and provisoriness.

This complex scenario particularizes the constitution of subjects and their mobilizations, whose origin and reproduction are impetuous, with no time for organic planning to mature. The individuals immersed in these actions seem to reject this perspective, contrary to traditional considerations of collective actions. If one can say that fixities and flows become instruments and mediate insurgent tactics, in this new threshold, the space of mobilization and its exercise becomes the substance of the same action that arises from the individuals.

When individuals mobilize, they occupy space and its layers contextually, coupling action to fixed elements, inaugurating demanding and querulous flows. However, the occupation of space is reified as a claim for a place where existence is realized, made into a project, and collectivized in the common instant of the mobilized act.

This gesture implies taking the ordinary into an extraordinary context, which, in turn, generates a transformative wave. Attention is demanded from the order of activities to break through a clear signal that something requires attention, that a certain transformation is being proposed, or if there are lacunar wounds, something is being placed in a state of indignation for transformation.

We return to practices (CERTEAU, 2014). When thinking about practices arranged in the substrate space, public space, arena, daily life, we think of social participation, citizenship (CARVALHO, 2000; HOLSTON, 2013), and citadinity (AGIER, 2011). This type of exercise, where individuals are aware of their roles and the order that surrounds them, cultivates procedures and regards for that same order. This exercise can be seen as an endeavor to maintain a certain institutional health, with the sense-dissensus relationship as a basic political element and coalition as a practice of political action.

Bringing together different views, devices, concepts, and putting diverse ideas into perspective is an activity aimed at safeguarding the health of institutions, the state (in any sense), a nation, or a people (HOLSON, 2013). Putting issues in conflict ensures the vital functions of the current political reality. Instruments of sense-dissensus and coalition contribute to this healthy maintenance.

The ambivalent pair of sense-dissensus is situated in the democratic making of politics, not ignoring the diversity of views and projects but using awareness of diversity to build common projects and efforts, transforming the clash of differences into a difference of project, that is, pluralism (CARVALHO, 2000). Coalition is the sediment of this process, as it metabolizes divergence into convergence. Or, ultimately, that's its intention.

We view space as a stage and canvas for mobilizations and for examining the quality of participation observed in them. We affirm space without restricting it solely to the concept of a city, thus allowing for practices carried out in or through virtual space, whose reflections add to the spatio-temporal, sociopolitical, and cultural variability given the peculiarities of each place and time.

Regarding mobilizations:

[...] they also need to build a public space, creating free communities in urban space. Since the institutional space – the space constitutionally designated for deliberation – is occupied by the interests of dominant elites and their networks, social movements need to open up a new public space that is not limited to the internet but becomes visible in the places of social life. That's why they occupy urban space and symbolic buildings. [...] They create a community, and the community is based on proximity. [...] The occupied spaces are not without meaning: they are generally charged with the symbolic power to invade areas of state power or financial institutions. [...]

By taking over and occupying urban space, citizens reclaim their own city, a city from which they have been expelled. [...] Control of space symbolizes control over people's lives. By building a free community in a symbolic space, social movements create a public space, a space for deliberation that ultimately becomes a political space [...] (CASTELLS, 2013, pp. 18-29).

Insurgency and mobilization are creative activities. The practices of individuals interlace to build an ideal place where tension rests in the creation of instances of public and political spatiality. Creation is an act of mobilization, participation, and thus citizenship. From this perspective, the relationship between subjects – city dwellers – among themselves and the relationship with space and the social situation (AGIER, 2011) is what constitutes the din of this mobilized and creative engagement.

Everyday life and its socio-spatial dimension clarify the city dynamics and within it the insurgency mobilized in ordinary, extraordinary, temporary and ritual routes (AGIER, 2011). The ordinary and its bonds of belonging shape existence, its symbols, and objects. The extraordinary makes experience incisive, alerting the situational context and eliciting reactions. The fleeting creates instances of the provisional, places to shape. And the ritual creates symbolic webs in which the experience of daily life allows for systematic re-elaboration.

Final Remarks

This framework allows for the assessment of the quality of the subjects highlighted here, their mobilizations, and the space in which their trajectory is established, a place of their existence and becoming simultaneously. Contemporary social mobilizations have established new perceptions of social participation and the epistemic context of collective actions.

The return to the streets, always new, triggers new relationships with space. The use of the city, its fixed elements, and flows are incorporated into mobilizations as clothing and have the strength of agency, whether through reification or the exercise of sociopolitical action carried out by mobilizations. The sociotechnical layer of networks and communicative processes creates layers and environments that transform the subject and requalify their emergence, as well as their practices.

The substance of the action emerges from the individual who becomes an actor and is consubstantial with the scope of the mobilization, revealing a subject-movement. This subject is challenging, as its practices are marked by hybridization between exercises of citizenship and citadinity, as well as with things – objects, devices, and tools that acquire agency with it. This same subject creates complex bonds, provisional identities without losing their origin, creating affective and effective bonds of questioning time, space, and reality.

Given the eloquence and spectacle of the newest reality of mobilizations, suspicion and distrust are common. However, it is not healthy for the careful study of social action to pass judgment hastily on the aesthetics, grammars, and forms of what is new, often dissident and less familiar in appearance than the analytical gaze has grown accustomed to.

Of course, the movements, their practices, tactics, and performances of individuals reveal depths that must be examined in their porosities, opportunities, risks, and meanings. To do so, the streets are significant canvases for these developments and impacts, and their conjunctures offer metabolites to the social fabric, revitalizing the *polis* and catalyzing political meanings in time, space, and aspirations for change.

We must safeguard the human orientation towards change and transformation in the polysemy of what is understood as social. To that end, mobilizations, as before, continue to be pedagogical in shedding light on facilitating this process in time, space, the city, and networks.

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