

Madureira and Pelourinho: consumption and representation of typical foods at popular festivities¹

Madureira e Pelourinho: consumo e representação de comidas típicas em festas populares

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Abstract *Mediated by food, music, cultural and religious rites, this article puts forward a reflection on representations based on the use and consumption of manifestations of the Brazilian popular culture. Feira das Yabás, held in Madureira, a suburban area in Rio de Janeiro and Festa de Santa Barbara, which takes place annually in Pelourinho, a traditional neighborhood of the historical downtown area of Salvador, are the objects of this analysis. In order to highlight the concepts that guide the communication and the consumption through the spaces of celebration, participant observation is used as a methodological approach through reports of experience.*

Key-words: *Communication; Consumption; Memory; Food; Popular festivities*

Resumo *Mediados pela comida, música, ritos culturais e religiosos, este artigo propõe uma reflexão acerca das representações, a partir dos usos e do consumo das manifestações da cultura popular brasileira. A Feira das Yabás, realizada em Madureira, subúrbio do Rio de Janeiro, e a Festa de Santa Bárbara, que ocorre todos os anos no Pelourinho, tradicional bairro do centro histórico de Salvador, são*

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os objetos desta análise. Para evidenciar os conceitos que norteiam a comunicação e o consumo através de espaços de celebração, utilizamos como metodologia a observação participante através de relatos de experiência.

Palavras-chave: *Comunicação; Consumo; Memória; Comida; Festas populares*

Introduction

Celebrating. Dancing, eating, talking, exalting religiousness, letting yourself be known, and sharing. These are some of the purposes of popular festivals, which are so common in Brazilian cities.

Between the months of November and December of 2013, we entered the public space of the street in the occasion of two popular festivities: *Feira das Yabás*, in the suburban area of Rio de Janeiro, and *Festa de Santa Bárbara*, in the historical district of Salvador. The cultural history of these neighborhoods shares similarities in terms of their formation process, transformations due to urban development policies, and the way they have been reframed as spaces of effervescence, highlighting new uses of habits, memory and tradition. The street, even though it is a public space, becomes an area of celebration, restricted to those who feel comfortable in sharing the festival's socialities. It is not necessary to establish a comparison between the two festivals for the purposes of this study, given that our goal is to understand the "celebration spaces" (Maffesoli, 1998) of the streets of the city.

Through bibliographical research, we review the cultural history, considering the sociological and communicational aspects of the festivals alongside their typical food, several means of consumption and we emphasize the strong memory of past times that is shared in the streets.

Participant observation, the methodology used for field research, has allowed us to experience the vitality of the festivals, tasting typical foods and walking through the streets to understand the celebration spaces. We reveal fragments of the "cases" told by the participants (social actors), the day to day of the place, the memory and experience reports using the technique of narrative interviews in order to provide more detailed reports.

Without the intention of comparing the events, we note that the article highlights the use and consumption of typical food at street festivals as a binding and mediation element of the Brazilian culture.

Madureira: a space of memory and celebration

In Rio de Janeiro, the implementation of the train and the expansion of the urban rail network has given rise to the so-called suburban neighborhoods in Rio de Janeiro, such as Madureira. *Sub-urban* because they were created away from the economic and cultural center of the urban area, in order to remove the poor working class who lived there and did not match the modernist reforms by Mayor Pereira Passos, during the presidency of Rodrigues Alves (1902-1906). The area was filled by people with little education and economic power, in addition to slums and old buildings. They had been moved from central neighborhoods of the city and could not share the spaces of new public buildings and large European-style avenues that were to come (ABREU, 2003). Those people started the cultural history of the formation of Madureira neighborhood. Black people, former slaves, workers, migrants (mostly from the Northeast) brought the cultural references that remain in the neighborhood through music, art, festivals, trade, popular expressions and religious cults.

The suburban sense in Rio de Janeiro has peculiar characteristics. The modern and the traditional are not opposite, but complementary. A steady urban development process, given that “the suburb is the space of well-being, social development and cultural revolution” (SOTO, 2008, p.116).

The notion of *sheltering* is one of the social characteristics of the suburb, and Madureira is not indifferent nor impersonal regarding these socialities⁴. The analysis provided by Oliveira (2013, p.20) says that:

In fact, it has been a while since the suburb has passed Madureira, for example. Today, Madureira, as well as other rail neighborhoods to which we refer, is far from being a suburb, as defined in the academic literature; that is, the farthest place from the central area of the city; a dispersed habitat, on the edge of the urban or near-urban system; a spatial transition between the rural and the urban, with a landscape in permanent

⁴ “Socialities” is a term used by Michel Maffesoli (1988, p.198) to “express a communalized and collective empathy”.

transformation and movement, following the expansion of the city and its urbanization.

The concept of suburb, if applied to Madureira neighborhood, is far beyond the relationship with the train, the pejorative meaning of the term “suburban” related to low or poor quality, lack of culture or sophistication. (SOARES, in FERNANDES, 2011)

In the beginning of the 21st century, however, the suburb reinvents itself. Madureira shows its representations as a territory of consumption, culture, arts, sports, music, and gastronomy permeating the imaginary and everyday practices.

Celebrating 400 years in 2014, the festivities spread in symbolic spaces to highlight the neighborhood’s history and socio-cultural contributions. The samba schools *Império Serrano* and *Portela* hold the traditional *feijoada* events, with rehearsals of their drum sections; Madureira Park offers a variety of concerts and cultural presentations, in addition to sports activities in their skateboard rinks, considered the largest and the best in the city, according to the sportsperson in the category, Bob Burnquist⁵. Madureira maintains the tradition of African dance through *jongo* and *capoeira* presentations, conducted by *Jongo da Serinha*, an artistic group created in the neighborhood. Under Negrão de Lima Overpass, a route of daily traffic, every Saturday, for over twenty years, a *Baile de Charme*⁶ is held, considered, by the population, the most traditional one in the suburbs of Rio de Janeiro.

Feira das Yabás⁷

The symbolism and reverence to feminism are highly evident in Madureira. The traditions, the customs and the cultural history of the neighborhood have attributed to women in the community respect

⁵ Article from *O Dia* Newspaper, available at <<http://odia.ig.com.br/noticia/rio/2013-05-24/madureira-festeja-400-anos-no-ritmo-da-modernidade.html>>, access on Jul 12, 2014.

⁶ Article from *O Globo* Newspaper, available at <<http://rioshow.oglobo.globo.com/noite/festas/baile-de-charme-do-viaduto-de-madureira-7618.aspx>>, access on Aug 05, 2014.

⁷ The event’s organization has chosen to spell the term *Yabá* with a y, commercially. In this paper, we use this spelling as we refer to *Feira das Yabás*, held in Rio de Janeiro.

and massive participation in the major social, economic and cultural activities.

The terms *Aiabá*, *Yabás*, *Iabá* and *Oiá*, from Yoruba, an African language, mean “queen”, “mother”, “elderly woman”, “sheltering”, and “the one who feeds the children”. Yoruba is a sub-Saharan language, spoken in the African region to the South from the Sahara. It is the native language of Yoruba people, and it is spoken, among other languages, in Nigeria, Benin, Togo and Sierra Leone, as well as in African-Brazilian religious rites (where it is called *Nagô*) and in Cuba (where it is called *Lucumi*)⁸. In the African-origin religions, the *iabás* are the female *orixás*, represented by *Iansã*, *Oxum*, *Obá*, *Nanã*, *Yemanjá*, among others.⁹ *Feira das Yabás* is an event that shares this feminine reverence, either through the exaltation of the afro-carioca gastronomy, as through the tributes to Madureira matriarchs – traditional women of the community who have a close relationship with composers, samba personalities and artists from Madureira. The stalls are decorated in blue and white; the *Yabás* wear an orange apron and headscarf where the logo of the event is applied. In an attempt to symbolize the memory, the tradition, the religion and the black resistance in Brazil, we see some of them wearing an African-Brazilian outfit – white coats, headscarves, beaded necklaces under their party “uniforms”.

Paulo da Portela Square, the site where *Feira das Yabás* is held, is a symbolic space of the region called “Grande Madureira” where composers and samba personalities meet and where Portela’s *Velha Guarda* is based. It is possible to notice that the people there are willing to be together, to share a moment of festivity and gathering. It is “the feeling of belonging” approached on the works of Maffesoli (1988, 1998), which demonstrates the emotion towards the use of the place, as if they were in their homes, places of intimacy and casualness.

⁸ Available in Yoruba dictionary, sources: <http://www.alaketu.com.br/ritos/dicionario_ioruba.htm>, and <<http://ileobaotito.no.comunidades.net/index.php?pagina=1731476904>>. Access on Jan 14, 2014.

⁹ Cadernos do IPAC – Festa de Santa Bárbara n.5, (p.19, 42, 43).

ARTICLE

Since March 2012, on the second Sunday of each month, illustrious residents of Madureira have gathered at Paulo da Portela Square to hold an afro-carioca gastronomy fair. There are 16 stalls with food and delicacies organized by the matriarchs of the most important families in the region, in an effort to preserve the black culture and cuisine from Rio de Janeiro, characteristic of the suburb. Most *iabás* are part of Portela's *Velha Guarda*, as well as Império Serrano's. One of the most well known *iabás* is Tia Surica, a Portela personality who offers *mocotó* stew and cassava with dried beef at her stall. Neide Santana serves *feijoada* as the main dish, in addition to shrimp, *angu à baiana* and black beans broth. Fish is offered at the stalls served by Tia Nira and Jane Carla, who also make *pirão* (fish chowder), fish cakes, fry sardines, and shrimp. The oldest of the *iabás*, Tia Neném, who is 88 years-old, prepares along with her relatives, *rabada* (oxtail stew) with potatoes, *angu* (corn flour porridge) and pumpkin cake filled with dried beef. *Jabás* with pea chowder, beans stew, and *mocotó* chowder are served at *iabá* Romana's stall. There is also pasta with dried beef (offered by Tia Edith), the famous *trípa lombeira* (beef tripe and beans soup) with codfish cakes at Rosangela Maria's stall and *feijoada* made by *iabá* Marlene. Pastries are offered at the stalls belonging to Vera de Jesus, Tia Natércia and Sueli, who makes *vaca atolada* (beef short ribs and cassava stew), cassava cake, and beef with cassava¹⁰.

Feira das Yabás is an event that is (re)signified as a territory of diversity and plurality of symbols, customs, and traditions. It offers much more than typical dishes of carioca cuisine – it revisits the memory of samba names and other personalities of cultural history, reveres the *jongo* culture in the usual presentations and favors the musical space for new and known artists. All of that is presented at the “cozinha a céu aberto”¹¹ (open-air cuisine) at the big yard of Madureira.

The Sunday lunch is a meal that, even through a current representation, brings the family together around the table, either inside or outside

¹⁰ Available at <<http://www.feiradasyabas.com.br>> access on Jul 10, 2013.

¹¹ Available at <<http://www.feiradasyabas.com.br>> access on Jul 29, 2014.

the house (Barbosa, 2009). Often times, it is the “bait”, according to the author, to invite people outside the family group with purposes of social aggregation – this is the highest external sociability meal.¹²

The family lunches are part of the Brazilian cultural history and are always remembered as emotional and gustatory experiences. The sociabilities of Sunday lunches are marked by the informality of the topics discussed at the talks, by the plans for the future, the routine of the week that is about to start, the recent events (Barbosa, 2009). Such sociabilities do not imply any associative process – the contact, the exchange and the conversation do not have any specific goals, according to Simmel (2006). The act of being there, talking, listening, sharing the time together and the moment is what matters.

(...) food consumption is a practice close related to affection and even to the wonders inherent to the functioning of social life. Consuming means “taking something to ourselves,” absorbing a part of the world to which we belong or want to belong, a practice that socializes and re-socializes us, making us intimate with or present in it somehow. (CARVALHO, 2013 p. 16)

The social purpose of *Feira das Yabás* is to portray those “Sunday lunches” in the suburbs, characterized by the abundance of food and music. Gathering family members, relatives, friends, friends of acquaintances, and even strangers to share the pleasure of being together.

The symbolism of the *Yabás* represents the cultural history of Rio de Janeiro, the culinary tradition of African origin hybridized *à la* Brazilian and carioca mode; it also represents the black resistance from the rise of the suburbs. The meaning of the word *iabá*, as “queen”, “maternal”, grants these matriarchs, an “authority” that Certeau (1998) attributes to the new use of those spaces in daily practices.

(...) urban spaces practices, use of daily ritualization, reutilization and workings of memory through the “authorities” that enable (or allow) everyday practices, etc. (CERTEAU, 1998, p.42)

¹² Term used by the author to highlight the sociability between people without family bonds.

In this scenario, *Feira das Yabás* is a popular territory with various forms of communication and consumption (food, religious beliefs, music, dance, clothing and leisure). Typical dishes of the afro-carioca cuisine, in addition to clothing and crafts, are sold in stalls sponsored by the private sector and with the support of government agencies. However, the ones who cannot pay for the food and the drinks also have the chance to experience the same environment and the purpose of the event. Many families take their own containers with food and coolers with beverages to the square. This way they can experience this “Sunday lunch”, as noted in the expression “familiarization” used by Maffesoli (1998) to demonstrate the need groups have to share the experience, being together with relatives and friends.

Experience at the festivities

We reached¹³ the end of *Estrada do Portela* (Portela Road) by noon, around house number 391, towards Paulo da Portela Square. The *iabás*' stalls with delicacies, drinks and meals were already prepared. The appearance was predominantly blue and white. People started to arrive, especially in groups. The rich menu is always prepared by the *iabás* themselves and their helpers, but we noticed that many people, whole families, take their “homemade lunch” to the street. Many had Styro-foam coolers or plastic buckets with drinks and plenty of ice for their own consumption. They arrange tables, chairs, and start to make their plates. There are plastic boxes with barbecue, roasted chicken and even pudding for dessert. All set. Then, early on, a man who seems to be the oldest stands up and says a prayer in gratitude for the family reunion there on the street.

Everyone is welcome to eat. Some people try the food offered at the *Yabás*' tents and some people bring their own lunch to the Fair. In this same space – a public space with private representations – they share the sociabilities of the “Sunday lunch”, typical at backyard parties

¹³ Participant observation carried out by Adelaide Rocha de la Torre Chao (author) and Angelina Nunes on November 10, 2013.

to experience emotions, emphasizing the tradition of the afro-carioca cuisine brought by the previous generations since the beginning of the suburb (FERNANDES, 2011).

On the stage, installed in the center of the square, musicians start to “warm up” the instruments and soon a samba group starts the party. Around 1 pm, Marquinhos de Oswaldo Cruz, a well-known samba composer in Madureira goes up to the stage and leads a *roda de samba* (samba circle) for almost three hours. People’s participation is intense, singing several types of samba (songs, *samba de roda*, samba theme, *pagode* etc). Traditional songs by the samba schools of Madureira, Portela and Imperio Serrano, are sung there, in their place of origin. Gentlemen dressed in suits and white shoes, in addition to the traditional panama hat with a blue ribbon mark the presence of Portela’s *Velha Guarda*.

At 2 pm the streets and the square were crowded. At the fried fish stall that belongs to *iabá* Jane, while she fried dumplings, we talked with Dona Neuza, 67 years-old, a retired cook who has taken part in the Portela community events for over 20 years.

“Feira das Yabás is an art, and to be an iabá is a gift. You must enjoy cooking and you must like people”, says Dona Neuza, who has worked at the Fair since she resigned from a restaurant in Tijuca neighborhood because the owner had ordered her to reuse the food. She says: *“an iabá makes food for the children. If I do not serve leftover food to my children, why would I do this to other people? I am happy here because I add love to what I make; the food is good, well prepared, and that’s what I like to see: people dancing samba together”*. Since then, she has dedicated herself to gastronomy, to events at the samba school patio and to *Feira das Yabás*.

Dona Neuza has tattooed Portela’s eagle on her right arm, as a symbol of loyalty and love for the school. She says she has no relationship with Candomblé, she does not wear the *orixás’* beads around her neck, but she calls herself an *iabá*.

At Selma Candeia’s stall, whose main dish is pumpkin with dried meat, there is a photo exhibition and a poetry reading going on. The Candeia family gathers at the fair with the intention to preserve the

memory of the father, the samba singer and composer Antônio Candeia (1935-1978)¹⁴, and his contribution to Brazilian popular music. At various points of *Feira das Yabás*, we observe the people's relationship with food, music, rhythm, tradition and memory.

Pelourinho: a place of memory, religiousness, and celebration

Personal memories, as places of such mutism in memory, return. As an introduction to a seminar on popular culture in Northeast Brazil, a walk during the previously noisy night from Salvador to Igreja do Passo. In contrast to the subtle theater of mercy, the dark facade raises the city's dust and sweat on its dignity. Above the old neighborhoods full of noise and voices, there is its monumental and silent secret. Ladeira do Passo is in charge. It does not surrender to the researchers who have it before their eyes; they cannot grasp the popular language either, which comes from far away and from very high up when they approach it. Quite different from Igreja do Rosário, all blue and wide-open, this black stone raises up the nocturnal side of the humor from Bahia. Impregnable rock, though (or because) well known, stripped of ceremony, similar to the songs of the Brazilian *saudade*. Returning from this pilgrimage, the faces through the streets, despite their merry mobility, seem to multiply, passing on the indecipherable and family secret of the monument. (CERTEAU, 1998, p.75-76)

The report of Michel de Certeau describes Pelourinho, a historical district of the historic downtown area of Salvador, which was listed, in 1985, World Heritage Site¹⁵ by UNESCO, and represents a space of artistic, historical, cultural, gastronomic and religious mediation. Pelourinho was the name given to a stone or wood column with iron rings, also known as *picota* (pillory), exposed in the public square and used to

¹⁴ About Antônio Candeia Filho, available at <<http://www.dicionariompb.com.br/candeia/dados-artisticos>>, access on Jan 14, 2014.

¹⁵ In 1985 UNESCO listed Pelourinho as a World Heritage Site (source: <http://patrimonio.ipac.ba.gov.br/bem/conjunto-arquitetonico-paisagistico-e-urbanistico-centro-historico-da-cidade-de-salvador/#>) access on Jan 13, 2014.

whip and punish criminals, slaves, black people, besides representing the local government between the 16th and the 19th centuries¹⁶.

Driven by progressive changes in the capital of the Republic and the “Frenchification” of Brazil, the governor of Bahia at the time, José Joaquim Seabra (1912-1916; 1920-1924), political ally of President Rodrigues Alves, began the process of modernization of Salvador. Its critical moment also happened due to transformations and displacement of the population for the expansion and creation of new districts, which favored the upper classes, leading to the onset of the devaluation and degradation of neighborhoods near the central area of Salvador, such as the Pelourinho, which since colonial times had sheltered people with possessions, for its weather and good location in the high area of the city (TAVARES, 2010). Those people migrated to revitalized neighborhoods, and with their evasion, Pelourinho became a space of prostitution, drug dealing, and violence – being the site of the marginalized population of the city until the end of the 1980s.

With the revival, from 1990 onwards, Pelourinho became a place of cultural effervescence, with bars, restaurants, galleries, museums, music and arts schools, in addition of being one of the main tourist sites in Salvador.

Santa Barbara Festival

“The clothes are red. Faith has no color”. (MELO, 2014)¹⁷.

December 4th is the date that has honored Santa Bárbara and *Iansã* for over 300 years, representations of religious syncretism in Bahia. Considered Intangible Heritage of Bahia by the State Government since 2008, the celebration brings together thousands of people who dress in red and crowd the streets of Pelourinho to celebrate the representations

¹⁶ On Pelourinho’s origin, available at <<http://www.bahia-turismo.com/salvador/centro-historico/pelourinho.htm>> access on Jan 13, 2014.

¹⁷ MELO, Ruan. Baianos lotam ruas do Pelourinho em homenagem à Santa Bárbara. Available at <<http://g1.globo.com/bahia/noticia/2013/12/fieis-chegam-cedo-para-participar-de-homenagem-santa-barbara.html>>, created on Dec 04, 2013, access on Dec 14, 2013.

that permeate the social imaginary of the festival – religion, traditions, as well as artistic, cultural and gastronomic manifestations. Santa Bárbara is considered the protective Godmother of the Fire Brigade because its image is related to the struggle, the courage, the justice, and for being the Patron Saint of the markets, due to the relationship with food, food distribution etc.

At 5 am, fireworks start the day of celebration. The central point is the church Nossa Senhora do Rosário dos Pretos, on Ladeira do Pelourinho, built between 1704 and 1870. After the stairs of the church are washed, an open-air mass is held as a means of religious celebration. To preserve the history and the culture of black people, the Catholic liturgy makes use of music and rites inspired by the Candomblé worship sites. After the Mass, a procession walks through the streets of the historic downtown area of Salvador, the *iabás* gather at the Santa Barbara market¹⁸ for the distribution of hundreds of *caruru* (traditional dish of Bahian cuisine) takeout boxes, closing the religious celebrations. Samba circles, *jongo* and concerts take place at stages around the Pelourinho squares in the so-called “profane party” until the end of the evening.

On this day¹⁹, new uses and ways of talking and eating can be seen. For Certeau (1998), a (‘popular’) use of the religion that modifies the functioning of daily life.

A way of speaking this language received transforms it into a chant of resistance, and this inner metamorphosis does not compromise the sincerity with which it can be believed, nor the lucidity with which, by the way, the struggles and inequalities that are hidden under the established order can be seen. (CERTEAU, 1998, p. 78-79)

In the clothing symbolism, the color red exerts a “significant activity” enabling the body to the meanings of celebration (Hegel, in Barthes, 2005, p.361-362) – the color red represents the struggle, the courage, the resilience and the achievements and permeates the collective imagination of the party.

¹⁸ Due to local constraints, *caruru* was not distributed on the Market premises in 2013.

¹⁹ Participant observation carried out by Adelaide Rocha de la Torre Chao (author) on Dec 4, 2013.

In the religious part of the celebration, the food presents new uses through a “ritual activity” The hybridization of Catholicism and *Candomblé* rites, symbolized during the solemn Mass, serves to contain the fluctuation of meanings and to preserve the live and active memory (Douglas, 2009).

The food at the party, as goods, are ways to discriminate values, and they are ritual accessories. In Mary Douglas analysis (2009), this is the visible part of the culture. The *acarajé* cakes and the *abarás* are mixed with bread and grapes and are offered as a symbol of religious syncretism; on the profane side, they are consumed at the stalls of the traditional *baianas*. “Consumption uses the goods to make firm and visible a particular set of judgements in the fluid processes fluids and to rank people and events”. (DOUGLAS, 2009, p.115). The distribution of *caruru* in takeout boxes and breads at the Santa Barbara Market represents a creative reconquering of public spaces, of the interest by the public in the various forms of sharing symbols. It means linking the consumption to the civil awareness in a place of cognitive value that is “useful to think and act in a meaningful and renewing way in social life”. (CANCLINI, 2008, p.72)

What is impressive about *Festa de Santa Bárbara* is the bonding, always in a collective and social exchange. Even as strangers, people are acquainted at the party through dance, food, gestures, and beliefs. As Pérez reminds us on the rites and relationships of the parties, people recognize one another, they get together with others, and they rebuild themselves from what is shared, even if they do not know one another. (PÉREZ, 2002).

Street festival, street food

Food gets to the streets, in the search for other areas of the city, different from lunches at home. In contemporary times, the urgency for a more practical and fast life has led many people to dispense with the time spent in preparing lunches, without leaving aside the commensal practices and the pleasure of being together, sharing the meal time. The

practice of designating urban areas as a means to reformulate the ghettos has become a strategy to reform the cities. (Jayne, 2000, in BELL, 2005, p. 59).

The terms “eat on the street” or “eat on suburban streets” or “eat at the festival”, commonly heard by attendees of *Feira das Yabás* and the participants of *Festa de Santa Bárbara* are close to “geographical eating”, an expression by the French geographer Jean-Robert Pitte, noting that “knowing or expressing a territory culture through its culinary, products, recipes seems to us quite natural” (MONTANARI, 2008. p. 135)

Such traditional Brazilian culture parties in Madureira and Pelourinho are events in public territory – the street and the square. Habermas (1984) classifies as “public” certain events when they, in contrast to closed societies, are accessible to anyone. It is interesting to observe that, even though it is an open event with free admission, the street is given a “private status” in the sense of belonging and ownership of that space. It is the feeling of “entering one’s backyard,” the “party place”, the “banquet set on the table” and the “ground to dance samba”.

People demonstrate to feel involved, invited to “go have lunch at the party,” recognizing the street as a legitimate place for such an event. For this reason, they take the space as private, as if they had been formally invited to a party. As explained by Habermas (Idem, 1984), the representativeness of events and parties in the street, since the 15th century, is always dependent on a surrounding region that develops and gets involved.

For Montanari (2008), the “geography’s taste” does not belong to the past. Today the territory is an absolute reference value in food choices. That is, the “suburb food” is identified (or combined) with the space of the street. The author emphasizes that the choice of location is based on elements that belong to the tradition. Yet it is innovative, it is developed along with various phenomena, both of economic and cultural character (Idem, p. 141-142).

“Eating on the street” involves the very sociality energy that, to Maffesoli (2014, p.5), “is invested in those real or symbolic places, where

post-modern tribes share (musical, cultural, sexual, sports , religious ...) tastes that are the cement (*ethos*) to the fact of being together. For the author, the place creates the connection. This sociality is related to commensal practices, which are intrinsic to the street. At *Feira das Yabás* and *Festa de Santa Bárbara*, it is possible to see people eating their meals sitting (or not) in tables arranged in the middle of the street, on the sidewalks, at the balconies of the buildings. It is not a problem if no table is available. The beverage, usually beer and soft drinks, is in buckets filled with ice and people put them on the floor. They gather to talk around the bucket and they share snacks, standing up with their plates in their hands. We also noticed people who do not necessarily consume the products sold on the street. Some groups take their own food in containers, coolers and stools. Across the sidewalk, they organize the space in which the cooler is turned into a table and the stools are arranged around the box. Then, everyone comes together to “eat together”, to “celebrate”, bonded to what Maffesoli calls “a community ideal” an effect of a close link that unites real/unreal, reason/sensitivity, visible/invisible, and that is able to avoid the stigmatization of “acting in community”. (Idem, p.5; 84)

The author emphasizes that the purpose of food culture is above all to unite, to bring together different experiences.

In all traditional societies, the ways of eating is the first signal of difference between individuals and classes. However, when the food becomes a widespread good, this food code is made dull, whereas the value of the territory as a receptacle of a new difference is asserted – the geographical food. For this reason, the concept of “territory cuisine” remains a current concept. (Idem, p. 142)

The table, for Montanari (2008, p. 137), is a place of inter-territorial, inter-regional, international exchange – a central place, designed to gather all kinds of products, especially food, in typical festivals. As well as the products, the dishes are also seen (perhaps they have always been) as something linked to the territory, to the resources, the traditions, as a sign identifying diverse cultures.

Popular celebrations in Madureira and Pelourinho reframe representations and sociabilities through practices and ways of doing in the urban space. Practices that question the popular and community cultures based on “arts of doing”, on the combinatorial consumption of goods, rites, gestures, food, clothing and beliefs.

An art of rebuilding the space practices, ways to go somewhere, complex processes of the cookery art and ways of providing reliability to rites. Certeau (1998) calls those “reutilizations” “bricolage”. These are new ways of doing, from the possibility of using spaces in blank. For Certeau (1998), consumption is beyond commercial techniques and methods; it is related to an inventive and different ways of making and using. Under this analysis, Madureira and Pelourinho create new ways for uses of their cultural manifestations over time, involving the people who go there and who want to consume and share their experiences.

The representations of the popular celebrations both in Madureira as in Pelourinho are based fundamentally on communion, the common experienced by many, keeping those places as epicenters of sociality, memory and tradition.

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