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A "bid aesthetic" of an "ordinary heroin": the reorganizing of an artesian resistance practices

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Abstract

This article adopts a feminist perspective in the analysis of the infra-political resistance practices, a perspective that is needed in organization studies. The study aimed to understand the organization of everyday practices that involves "bid aesthetics" and resistance tactics and strategies, of an infra-political character, observing the art of an artisan and actions from a women's network which she is a member of. The research methodology used the qualitative approach, focusing on case study, supported by direct observation, documentary research, field diary, and in-depth interviews. The narrative analysis identified the organization of different practices both from the artisan and the women's network, which are based on the reuse of materials discarded by large companies. In the "bid aesthetics" context such materials emerge as a source of supply, income generation, and inspiration for the recreation of symbolic elements of the northeastern culture. In the context of the women's network, the analysis also points to the bonds of affection and resonance as links of an infra-political movement that mobilizes women around objectives of struggle and resistance in different spaces. The theoretical articulation promotes advances in the field of Organization Studies by constructing a proposition that combines the studies of everyday life and aesthetics of Certeau (2014) with the questions of resistance discussed by Spicer and Böhm (2007) and the feminist debate.

Keywords: Feminism. Practices. Aesthetics. Resistance. Art.

Uma "estética de lances" de uma "heroína ordinária": o reorganizar de práticas de resistências de uma artesãs

Resumo

Este artigo articula uma perspectiva feminista necessária aos Estudos Organizacionais à análise das práticas de resistência de caráter infrapolítico. O estudo teve por objetivo compreender o organizar da malha de práticas cotidianas que envolvem a estética de lances e as táticas e estratégias de resistência, inclusive de caráter infrapolítico, por meio da arte de uma artesã e das ações de uma rede de mulheres da qual ela faz parte. A metodologia de pesquisa se baseou na abordagem qualitativa, com enfoque em estudo de caso, respaldada por observação direta, pesquisa documental, diário de campo e entrevista em profundidade. A análise dos relatos identificou o organizar de diferentes práticas de resistência, da artesã e da rede de mulheres, que têm como base o reúso de materiais descartados por grandes empresas. No contexto da "estética de lances", tais materiais surgem como fonte de suprimento, geração de renda e inspiração para a recriação artística de elementos simbólicos da cultura nordestina. No âmbito da rede de mulheres, a análise aponta, ainda, os laços de afeto e ressonância como elos de um movimento infrapolítico que mobiliza as mulheres em torno de objetivos de luta e resistência em diferentes espaços. A articulação teórica promove avanços no campo dos Estudos Organizacionais ao construir uma proposição que alia os estudos do cotidiano e da estética de Certeau (2014) às questões de resistência discutidas por Spicer e Böhm (2007) e aos debates feministas.

Palavras-chave: Feminismo. Práticas. Estética. Resistência. Arte.

Una "estética de las pasadas" de una "heroína ordinaria": el reorganizar de prácticas de resistencias de una artesana

Resumen

Este estudio articula una perspectiva feminista, necesaria para los estudios organizacionales, con el análisis de las prácticas de resistencia, de carácter infrapolítico. El estudio tuvo como objetivo comprender el organizar de la red de prácticas cotidianas que envuelve la "estética de las pasadas" y las tácticas y estrategias de resistencia, incluso de carácter infrapolítico, por medio del arte de una artesana y de las acciones de una red de mujeres de la que forma parte. La metodología de la investigación se basó en el enfoque cualitativo, con el abordaje del estudio de caso, respaldado por observación directa, estudio documental, diario de campo y entrevista en profundidad. El análisis de los relatos identificó el organizar de diferentes prácticas de resistencia, de la artesana y de la red de mujeres, que se basan en la reutilización de materiales desechados por grandes empresas. En el contexto de la "estética de las pasadas" tales materiales surgen como fuente de suministro, generación de ingresos e inspiración para la recreación artística de elementos simbólicos de la cultura nordestina. En el marco de la red de mujeres, el análisis apunta todavía los lazos de afecto y resonancia como enlaces de un movimiento infrapolítico que moviliza a las mujeres en torno a objetivos de lucha y resistencia en diferentes espacios. La articulación teórica promueve avances en el campo de los estudios organizacionales al construir una proposición que combina los estudios de la vida cotidiana y de la estética de Certeau (2014) a las cuestiones de resistencia discutidas por Spicer y Böhm (2007) y a los debates feministas.

Palabras clave: Feminismo. Prácticas. Estética. Resistencia. Arte.

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INTRODUCTION

Everyday practices have been the subject of research in Organizational Studies and researchers have been showing an increasing interest in the day-to-day issues that go to make up the happenings of life and the meanings that social actors are constructing, transforming and organizing (e.g., BARROS and CARRIERI, 2015; LASATER-WILLE, 2018). This interest also extends to include the social and political meaning of practices that are subjectively expressed in an organized tangle that is full of contradictions. These practices are constituted by everyday movements, which are the result of the activities of social actors. Such activities unfold in events that provoke changes in the web of happenings.

This perception gives rise to the "arts of doing", as declared by Certeau (2014) in 'The Practice of Everyday Life', in which he suggests ways of comprehending practices that are understood as being both tactical and strategic. The author believes that common or "ordinary" man exercises their practices, resists and challenges strategic practices in a prevailing social order, by way of cunning, tactics and bricolage that may be the responses of an immemorial intelligence.

In his sociology of everyday life, Certeau (2014) highlights the sensitivity of the "ordinary" man when faced with materials that are discarded by the industrial system: scrap and waste. When the objects that go to make up scrap are randomly arranged, they provoke the practice of the "ordinary" art of the common artist, in what the author defines as an aesthetic of "tricks" or "coups" that enables us to visualize new uses for what is discarded. The aesthetic of "tricks", therefore, is of a transgressional nature when it stands up to a dominant power or an established order. According to Giard (2014, p. 19), "[...] a style of social exchanges, a style of technical inventions and a style of moral resistance" are insinuated into this aesthetic practice for valuing ordinary culture as practiced by the common man.

In this study, instead of the "common man", our emphasis was on the "common woman" who, in the midst of social oppression, resists and reconstructs meanings in her search for survival. Women's "art of doing" is more evident today, since, as Hall (2005) puts it, the subject in late modernity was decentralized, which was the result of the feminist movement of the final decades of the twentieth century (PERROT, 2007; SCOTT, 1992).

In the context of Organizational Studies, Calás and Smircich (2010, p. 300) point out that "[...] post-modern/post-structuralist feminism allows for more complex intersections of gender and other social categories that both deconstruct traditional analytical positions [...] and make room for different political engagements that recognize asymmetrical power relationships".

In harmony with today's social transformations, Spicer and Böhm (2007) examine the practices of organizations from the perspective of resistance movements and stress that collective emotions and a feeling of solidarity have a relevant role to play in structuring everyday movements through similar patterns of affection and resonance. For these authors, resistance practices come in many forms, either in the context of work or of civil society, and may be political or infra-political in nature, the latter being organized in a very informal way involving struggles for cultural recognition and justice.

Based on these initial propositions, we carried out a review of the publications in five of the main Brazilian journals in Organizational Studies for the last five years in order to identify how the theoretical articulations proposed in this research have been dealt with.

With regard to common women, who are like the "ordinary" hero in Certeau (2014), only the research of (i) Teixeira, Saraiva and Carrieri (2015), with their discussion of the identity of female domestic servants, and (ii) Corcetti and Loreto (2017), who examine political discourse with regard to the professional qualification of disadvantaged women, is carried out with women who have a social and economic profile that is close to that of our artisan, or the women who make up the network.

Then theme of "resistance" was examined in ten articles, of which eight use the perspective of traditional organizations and involve relationships with the workers (e.g. SOUZA and LEMOS, 2016), or theoretical approaches that relate power and resistance in organizations (e.g. SEGNINI and ALCADIPANI, 2014). We identified only two publications that were close to the resistance discussions that are proposed in this research: (i) Naves and Reis (2017), with their discussion on aesthetics and resistance in the context of the agroecological movement; and (ii) Barcellos, Dellagnelo and Salles (2017), who deal with resistance actions conducted by alternative organizations.

The gap represented by the theoretical-empirical articulation between feminist debates, whose protagonist is the "ordinary" woman in her everyday life, the aesthetics of "tricks" and "coups" and resistance movements, including those of an infra-politic

nature (CALÁS and SMIRCICH, 2010; CERTEAU, 2014; GIARD, 2014; SPICER and BÖHM, 2007) are the bases for this research. On the basis of this gap the following objective was defined:

To understand the organizing of the network of everyday practices that involve the aesthetic of tricks and the tactics
and strategies of resistance, including those of an infra-political nature, by way of an artisan and the actions of the
network of women of which she is a part.

In order to achieve the proposed objective, the research was carried out in the studio of a female artisan who lives in the Serrinha neighborhood in Fortaleza (Ceara State). It proved necessary, however, to go outside the studio space, since the daily artistic practices of resistance exercised by the artisan involve a network of women, suggesting that this is an infra-political space when they organize themselves in a very informal way around objectives that involve a struggle for justice through artistic and cultural recognition.

The methodology adopted a qualitative approach and focused on a case study, backed up by direct observation, documentary research, a field diary and an in-depth interview with subjects involved in the practices (GODOI, BANDEIRA-DE-MELLO and SILVA, 2010).

Making a peacock out of scrap and waste material was chosen to represent the artisan's work of artistic "reconstruction" by virtue of the symbolic and cultural aspects involved. As a result the process was the object of direct observation, which also led to an understanding of the practices of the network of women, since the artisan is one of the main articulators of the movement. During the period when the research was being carried out there was an exhibition of pictures, the artisan's own artistic production, the theme being *Elas [Them – referring to women]*; this was also the object of our observation.

The empirical *corpus* produced during the research was examined by analysing tales that, according to Certeau (2014, p. 193), have a culturally creative power, since "[...] there are tales that march ahead of social practices in order to prepare the way for them". The focus of the analysis subsequently shifted to the organizing of practices of infra-political resistance emanating from the informal movement of the women's network.

After this introduction, we present some of the approaches to feminism and the de-centering of the subject. The next section links the theoretical approaches that constitute the question of resistance practices through the aesthetics of tricks and how this is linked to aspects related to infra-political resistance movements, according to Certeau (2014) and Spicer and Böhm (2007), among other authors. We then explain the methodology used in this study and the contextualization of the field of study and present an analysis of the tales. At the end are our final considerations.

The everyday life of the "ordinary woman" and the leadership of the common heroine in Organizational Studies

The use of creativity in constructing opportunities, something that is used in various contexts, constitutes the "ways of doing", or the practices that Certeau (2014) introduces us to in his sociology of everyday life as the actions employed by the common man to coexist, take advantage of, break and resist the strategic practices of domination by which he finds himself circumscribed. These situations of domination can be represented by the action of the powerful, by mechanisms of oppression, illness, poverty, by the order imposed by *macho* and sexist practices, or by violence.

In this oppressive everyday life, Certeau's (2014) "ordinary" hero is engaged in a constant struggle against the structures of domination, which is why he/she resorts to using practices, such as tactics, bricolage, creativity and art, which are driven by the cunning of his/her intelligence. The origins of this cunning, or *metis*, are lost in time and go back to Greek mythology. In the definition of historians Datienne and Vernant (2008, p. 11) such cunning "[...] combines the vigilant perceptiveness, sagacity, foresight, subtlety of spirit, pretence, resourcefulness, attention and a sense of opportunity" and is used by the weak to construct small victories.

Everyday life, therefore, is seen as a sphere of creations and creativity, "[...] a realm in which the carnival of the subversive is continually under the surface" (BROWNLIE and HEWER, 2011, p. 248). Certeau (2014) proposes the existence of forces that are antagonistic to this repressive power, which are represented by the practices of resistance that are perpetrated in this control environment and allow common agents, the "ordinary" heroes, to subvert power (ANDERSON, 2008).

In the view of the world portrayed in literature, this "ordinary" man is represented as the non-hero, or the anti-hero. In Brazilian literature, *Macunaíma*: o herói sem nenhum caráter [Macunaíma: the characterless hero] by Mário de Andrade

(2000), represents the historical roots, the synthesis of Brazilian people, someone who is the descendant of an Indian, who is lazy, a liar and controversial, and who since his childhood has shown his lack of character and his eternal laziness, someone who sleeps with his sister-in-law, Jiguê, and disgusts his own mother. The character has the characteristics of ordinary heroes, who are neither gods nor an inspiration, but common men who, by way of their stories or the polysemic interpretation of the readers, mock the many faces of a culture that oppresses.

They represent the struggle of the weak against the strong, a strong man who needs to be fought using tactics, cunning, and bricolage. These are anonymous heroes, ancient and memorable voices who opened up the constituted scientific fields and made them their subjects (CERTEAU, 2014).

In line with the view of the movement of science, which is dealt with by Certeau (2014) when he points to the inclusion of the ordinary hero as the subject of studies in scientific fields, this study proposes that the emphasis should be directed to the everyday life of the heroine, the "ordinary" woman. This proposal articulates questions posed by sociologist Stuart Hall (2005) with regard to the de-centering of the characteristic subject of late-modernity. According to Hall (2005), when discussions about identity prompted by the feminist movement and other movements of minorities, such as gays and blacks, are articulated they set out a politics of identity, an identity for each movement, often non-exclusive or contradictory, that bring to the surface a science that is no longer universal.

In recent years, important discussions about gender in the context of cultural studies involve metaphors of "flesh and blood" for proposing the construction of theories that make it possible to establish a bridge between the contradictions that exist within the various movements of everyday identity. Such contradictions involve, among other things, aspects such as skin color, sexuality and possessions; as a result, Moraga and Anzaldúa (2015) propose that the way to achieve this construction is to make space available so that the stories of women can be told in their own words. Yarbro-Bejarano (1994, p. 6) points to the need for a new theoretical paradigm "[...] that enables the expansion of the categories of analysis in order to give expression to the lived experience and to understand in what way race, class and gender converge".

Indeed, it is important to understand the history of gender relations, as Stearns (2007) proposes when he explains that as societies developed the gender systems involving the coexistence of men and women, their attributes and roles were also beginning to take shape. By fixing he land possession as being a male domain, nascent society needed to define matters relating to inheritance rights, the interest of which was that these should be transferred to the male heirs. In this context women's sexuality needed to be controlled and as male-dominated governments grew, women's rights were increasingly curtailed.

In the continuing context of girls in the family being dominated, they were expected to assume a modest posture because, since they were ready for marriage, they should behave and maintain their honor above all else; from those who were lost, anything could be expected, any favor obtained. In *Bonitinha, Mas Ordinária* [Pretty but wicked, *or* Cute but common], 1962, playwright Nelson Rodrigues (2004) portrays the situation of control over women, when he compares the dramatic lives of Maria Cecília and Ritinha and, at the end of three acts, leaves the reader to decide which of them is common. Ritinha, however, can also be viewed as the ordinary heroine, a common woman, someone of the people. Oppressed by her lack of resources and by her responsibility to her family, she started "turning tricks" to support her sick mother and her sisters.

In looking at the history of women, feminist philosopher Simone Beauvoir (2016), in The Second Sex, which was originally published in 1949, highlights entry into the labor market as the major driver of the transformations of women's role and position in the public arena. It is when women enter the economic field that they gain the skills needed to be able to exist in the public sphere and demand recognition of their identity. Entering the labor market was the door to women's emancipation.

The search for this emancipation was brought to the fore by feminist movement activist, Betty Friedan (1971), in The Feminine Mystique, a book that was originally published in 1963. The movement that challenged the social position of women in the 1960s and 1970s sought equality between genders while respecting the biological conditions of men and women.

These discussions were extended and incorporated into other spheres, including Organizational Studies, which started incorporating issues of gender identity in the different media and dealing with the challenges faced when attempting to bring to the surface marginalized and unacknowledged discourse in an environment in which discourse is a source of support for power.

The search to construct spaces for marginalized discourse creates a more complex political engagement in postmodern feminist practice in its struggle for spaces and positions and the untiring fight against the various forms of *machismo* and sexism that have their origin in the patriarchal model, which organizes various aspects of social relations (AHL, 2006; CALÁS and SMIRCICH,

2010; VACHHANI and PULLEN, 2019). Such struggles involve, among many others, issues of black feminism, harassment, bodies, sexuality, subalternity and the place of speech (DAVIS, 2016; RIBEIRO, 2017; ROTTENBERG, 2017; SPIVAK, 2014).

An important gap, however, which is related to a greater understanding of the everyday organizing of feminism as practice is being examined by feminist researchers within the context of Organizational Studies. This is affective solidarity, identification that comes from a shared sense of injustice and a desire to rectify it; a feminism that is driven by the desire to narrate a better world (HEMMINGS, 2012; RIBEIRO, OLIVEIRA and IPIRANGA, 2018; VACHHANI and PULLEN, 2019).

For Vachhani and Pullen (2019) the Everyday Sexism Project constitutes a milestone for examining a new way of organizing feminism that is related to everyday practices and alert to both big and small acts of oppression, for which affective solidarity emerges as an element for overcoming individualism and for supportive organizing. The feminism that is practiced is based on solidarity and affection and shares an "obligation to give", the result of the oppression they experienced; no one has more than anyone else, and what they possess is shared, in the need for generosity as revenge (CERTEAU, 2014).

By emphasizing the issues of woman, the "ordinary" heroin, in the web of practices that form the everyday lives of the actors who survive in a world in which the "[...] unequal distribution of forces" predominates (GARD, 2014, p. 18), concepts are articulated that relate to domination strategies and to organizing resistance practices that are constructed by cunning, the supremacy of *metis* (CERTEAU, 2014) and affective solidarity as the basis for feminism as a practice (HEMMINGS, 2012; RIBEIRO, OLIVEIRA and IPIRANGA, 2018; VACHHANI and PULLEN, 2019).

The next section seeks to establish the relationship between the resistance practices of everyday life and the aesthetics of "tricks" carried out by the "ordinary" heroin, as well as the organizing of resistance movements of an infra-political nature in their interactions with the webs of happenings that shape "ordinary" culture.

The "aesthetics of tricks" and resistance practices

In the view of feminist historian, Michelle Perrot (2007), official history has dedicated little space to the life of women as far as concerns the work they do, even in relation to their artisanal activities. The work done by women was generally relegated to the background, or was considered a kind of support for the main work of men. Also from a historical perspective, Sennett (2009, p. 72) makes it clear that "[...] craftsmen did not accept women as members of their guilds, although they used to do the cooking and clean the workshops".

Even though official history has not portrayed woman's work, it has been narrated by the anonymous storytellers of the communities in which they lived. The oral nature of the narrative, therefore, allowed the artistic practices developed by women to pass down from generation to generation. It is from this perspective that history philosopher, Walter Benjamin (1994), points out that the artisanal work of societies prior to capitalism, or "modernity", provided the free time that is fundamental for listening and being listened to within the community and society.

Certeau (2014) believes it is not possible to tie the *modus operandi* of a popular culture to the past, to rural areas or to primitive peoples, since it still exists at the center of the domain of the contemporary economy. The author emphasizes the work done with scrap and waste material within the historical context, a phenomenon that is general everywhere, even though it is still not being valued by society. The reuse of what remains from capitalist production, however, is not in this case linked to any ideological discourse, but to an order represented by art.

Sensitivity to objects scattered here and there encourages the free and creative practice that represents an artist's know-how, in what Certeau (2014) would call the aesthetics of "tricks" or "coups". Such aesthetic practices constitute a "detour" that infiltrates the established order of things by way of popular tactics; they are going to establish an order as represented by art. The worker/artist is not reproducing the modus operandi of the current order, but impressing his/her identity on the objects they reconstruct; in other words, they construct a new artistic-aesthetic, ethical-moral narrative that has infra-political connotations. This is how aesthetic practice is obtained, in which "[...] a style of social exchanges, a style of technical inventions and a style of moral resistance" is insinuated for valuing ordinary culture (GARD, 2014, p. 19).

The worker/artist needs to act vigilantly and covertly; they must be in a place that nobody expects them to be and they must be cunning. The practices of a guileful worker/artist are in line with the Greek *metis* that Certeau (2014) and Datienne and Vernant (2008) describe as a *modus operandi* that explains how subjects resist being reduced to the terms of the strategic practices of the dominant order with its wide network of discipline.

What these resistance practices reveal when they reuse scrap and waste for art, therefore, are "passing places" that build bridges between different boundaries. According to Benjamin (2006), they constitute a reformulation of public spaces, in which elements of private and public lives gain new limits, given the worship, exposure to and appreciation of their visibility on shelves and counters.

The aesthetics of the discarded product brings to the fore perspectives related to its use-abandonment-disposal cycle in time and space, and the need to reuse it in other ways. This is a deconstruction of the status of materiality. This alters the usual and commonplace fate attributed to the remains of consumption, transforming them into new practices in a response to distinct requests for use that are often completely different from the original and unsuspected uses from when they were conceived. These materialities are imbued with other meanings, significations and values. They shift, expand and shape new spaces and organize different resistance practices, including those of an infra-political nature (CERTEAU, 2014, SPICER and BÖHM, 2007).

When Terdiman (2001) discusses the question of margins in Michel de Certeau, he emphasizes the importance of boundaries to historical and interpretative sensitivity. For the author, boundaries are in constant transformation, metamorphosing topologies and shaping temporalities. Boundaries are where possible meanings materialize, which are an effect of such boundaries. The so-called "ways of doing" are formed by the diverse practices that users employ to re-appropriate spaces that are organized and controlled by the socio-cultural production of technocratic structures, using a multiplicity of tactics and strategies.

Practices are understood to mean the common operations of individuals in their daily lives and included in them are the particular experiences and actions that permeate the space where these practices happen (CERTEAU, 2014). In his investigation into the construction of daily life, he is interested in discovering which popular practices militate against the strategic mechanisms of discipline and how the combination of cunning, bricolage, creativity and art are going to construct and deceive the order imposed on ordinary culture.

Resistance practices are understood to form a natural relationship with the forms of power that also exist in organizational life, which is the subject of studies like those that relate the meaning of the personal objects found in offices and other work environments (YU-KWAN NG and HÖPFL, 2011), or of working hours that are dedicated to non-work-related activities (PAULSEN, 2015).

Also in the scope of organizational studies, Spicer and Böhm (2007) point out that these resistance practices present themselves in multiple forms in the context of work or civil society, and may be of a political or infra-political nature. According to the authors, civil society movements of an infra-political nature are organized in a very informal way and involve struggles for cultural recognition and justice, also including economic, gender, racial and environmental justice. The authors stress the importance of recognizing such resistance discourses, which are opposed to the mainstream of administration (FLEMING and SPICER, 2007; SPICER and BÖHM, 2007).

For Spicer and Böhm (2007), among the types of resistance strategy found in civil society is the aspect of micropolitics, which involves affinity links. From this perspective, movements are linked by emotions and collective anxiety, which have an important role to play in the union of social groups, because they establish similar patterns of affection and resonance that create affinities. Collective emotions keep groups together, create a sense of collectiveness and establish feelings of solidarity between different members of such groups.

An example of an organization that uses strategies of resistance by affinity for opposing the dominant cultural model is addressed by Barcellos, Dellagnelo and Salles (2017) in their case study of a cluster of independent cultural production collectives. The authors point out that the analysis of organizations that are at the boundaries of social order, as opposed to traditional organization and management models, may constitute a fruitful field for the development of new approaches to organizational studies.

METHODOLOGY

The research was carried out by way of case study using a qualitative approach. In its operationalization, we sought to understand how daily practices are organized that involve the aesthetics of tricks and the tactics and strategies of resistance - including those of an infra-political nature - through the art of a female artisan and the actions of a women's network of which she is part. We did this by distancing her as little as possible from her natural environment in order to allow for an analysis of what underlies the happenings in the process (CERTEAU, 2014).

The case study covers the methodological path of this research, which was supported by direct non-participating observation, a field diary, documentary research and in-depth interviews (GODOI, BANDEIRA-DE-MELLO and SILVA, 2010).

According to Certeau (2014), analysis of tales was the technique used to examine the field findings that constituted the *corpus* of the research in the light of the theory. According to the author, tales have three main characteristics or formats: (i) dissemination, which occurs because of the heterogeneous elements of the social settings in which they are constituted; (ii) miniaturization: being reduced to an individual, or to a small group; and (iii) polyvalence, the mixture of various microtales, assigning different functions to the taste of the groups they reach. Fragments of tales, therefore, constantly demarcate operations and establish new boundaries or social practices.

Selection of the case study

To choose a case for the research, five women were mapped out who are the beneficiaries of *Crediamigo* that works in the area of handicrafts made from recycled materials. *Crediamigo* is a significant micro-lending program operating in the Northeast of Brazil, which in December 2017 had more than 2 million active clients and lent more than R\$ 8 billion to entrepreneurs in the region in the year (BANCO DO NORDESTE, 2018).

The female artisan we chose adopts artistic practices that involve the reuse of materials, such as automobile filters, brake linings, glass, discs and CDs, and other such elements. In order to establish which case would be studied, before starting the interviews and while still in the first contacts' phase, we identified the role of the artisan in the women's network, which made it possible to expand the network of practices being investigated.

This particular artisan was chosen for the study because she was considered to be a representative case of the phenomenon of infra-political resistance in the face of the current hegemonic order, due to the ay she organized the different practices she carried out, since she distanced herself from the recurring management models found in organizations (FLEMING and SPICER, 2007).

The choice is in line with premises presented by Godoy (2010, p. 127) when discussing qualitative case studies when he clarifies that these can arise from everyday situations when the intention is to "[...] explain a situation based on practice". The author also points out the relevance of the single case option when this represents a rare situation that is worth documenting.

This is also in line with what was proposed by Moraga and Anzaldúa (2015) when they argue the need to expand spaces so that women's stories can be told in their own words, thus broadening the discussion about gender to include issues involving identity, established by way of skin color, possessions, etc. At this level, the choice of artisan helps with the investigation into common man – or in our case a common woman, our ordinary heroine who, according to Certeau (2014), has only recently become the subject of academic studies.

The women's network started becoming organized in a very informal way around 2003, in practices that involved the community producing fashion shows on the streets in the local neighbourhood, for which they made the items of clothing from recycled materials. Our artisan and a friend, who are considered to be the founders of the network, subsequently took over the running of the neighbourhood residents' association for two periods of administration.

This made it possible for them to form partnerships and expand practices aimed at generating income for women in the community, but always with a bias towards sustainability. The network, therefore, acquires the nature of a movement, but without a defined coordinator. It brings together a group of some 75 women from the neighborhood, but also operates in other locations in Fortaleza and in municipalities in the interior of the state, which extends the reach of its web of practices.

Observation processes, the identification of practices and articulation of the tales

Our observation and understanding of the practices, based on an articulation of the artisan's tales, were described and incorporate the characteristics of complex research, which dispenses with pre-established logics (CERTEAU, 2014). One of the main characteristics of the approach that uses practices as a starting point is the process view. Any study of practices presupposes an analysis of the on-going happening. The structure of language prioritizes action and sees reality as being procedural, heterogeneous and emerging. The organization of practices, therefore, loses its static nature and views the interaction space between individuals and the artefacts that form it (CARRIERI, PERDIGÃO and AGUIAR, 2014; CHIA, 1995; COOPER, 1976; COOPER and BURREL, 2007).

With regard to the observation procedure of the web of practices related to the aesthetics of "tricks" and resistance, it was decided to focus on the artistic production process of a peacock, for which different types of automobile filters were used, all of which came from the partnership the artisan had established with a large automobile dealership.

This artistic production process was considered sufficiently representative for this study, first because it establishes interaction with a large organization in the automobile industry, which constitutes a form of cunning on the part of the artisan and a strategy on the part of the dealer. The dealer's objective in this relationship is to arrange a place for disposing of its filters, while that of the artisan is to reuse this waste as raw material for her artistic practice. Second, it is representative because the peacock is found in one of the main booklets that is popular in Northeast Brazil, *O pavão misterioso* [The mysterious peacock], which contains an interpretation of immemorial aspects that are inherent in the culture of this region of the country. Figure 1 shows a peacock made from filters, which are used in the base on which the bird sits and in its wings.



Figura 1
Peacock made from filters

Source: The authors' own collection.

The field studied goes beyond the physical space of the artisan's workshop, with the idea being to reach what Certeau (2014) called the logics of action, in which he explains the combinations of operations that organize the daily practices between different spatial boundaries when elucidating the action trajectories of the female artisan.

At first, the research observations took place in the artisan's studio, located in the Serrinha neighborhood of Fortaleza. The studio is located in the artisan's own house, where the artistic practices of resistance are carried out, such as art workshops for the community and meetings with female entrepreneurs who are involved with the network, but who work in different organizations.

Field research also included a visit to the "Elas" [They, referring to women] exhibition comprising twenty of the artisan's works of art depicting women, which was held in a higher education institution in Fortaleza. Figure 2 shows one of the pictures from the exhibition, which reuses automobile filters in a different way: to represent dancers' skirts.

The big section of the control of th

Figure 2

Picture from the "Elas" exhibition that uses automobile filters

Source: The authors' own collection.

To analyse the engagement there is with the everyday movements of resistance, which in this case are the result of affinity, we observed the participation of the artisan in the women's network, an infra-political movement that focuses on struggles that involve gender issues. The objective of this was to open up the field of possibilities for observing new strategic and tactical practices and their intersections with feminism in practice.

We also carried out documentary research via websites, newspapers, magazines and videos, in order to gather information about the artisan's journey in the context of her studio, in exhibitions and also in the women's network. The strategy the artisan and women's network uses is to be present in exhibitions, business events and fairs.

Field research was carried out between September and December 2016, during which the artisan's studio was visited five times, each visit lasting between two and three hours. These visits were carried out on Saturday mornings, a time when the artisan was more readily available, and on one Friday evening, when we observed the artistic practice behind producing the peacock. On Friday evenings the studio is open for free workshops with community residents, including women from the network. Our visit to the "Elas" exhibition lasted approximately one hour and took place in November 2016.

The *corpus* comprised the transcription, organization of information and articulation between the tales of the artisan and two other women, who were called Respondent 1 (R1) and Respondent 2 (R2), and who are members of the network, and two others involved with the work, one who is a workshop student, and one who is an artist. The *corpus* also comprised: documents, videos, photographs, a field diary and in-depth interviews (recorded on video).

The initial questions had to do with understanding the tales about the organizing of daily practices related to the aesthetics of "tricks" and "coups", which were triggered by the cunning of the artisan. The web of practices based on the corpus was mapped out in the following resistance processes: taking advantage of solid waste; incorporating elements of culture into artistic practices; involving people from the community in workshops and the women's network; building partnerships with the suppliers of this waste; and building spaces for divulging the art produced from waste.

The issues subsequently started considering specifically how the women's network was organized. This is a process that involves feminism as a practice, resistance and the struggle against the various forms of oppression and the practices involved in building bonds of affection and resonance between the participants, all of which are characteristic of infra-political resistance movements (HEMMINGS, 2012; SPICER and BÖHM, 2007; VACHHANI and PULLEN, 2019).

ANALYSIS OF THE TALES ABOUT ORGANIZING PRACTICES

Analysis of the tales about organizing practices was structured in three sections: i) The *Pavão Misterioso*, emphasizing its symbolic reconstruction as a micro-resistance process and discussing the fragments of linked tales that refer to the web of practices we observed, which are: ii) organizing artistic practices related to the aesthetics of tricks and the resistance of the artisan; and iii) organizing resistance, affection and resonance practices of an infra-political nature, which are mapped out in the processes of the women's network.

The *Pavão Misterioso*: micro-resistance as symbolic reconstruction

In Northeast Brazil the oral tradition in narrative is mainly identified in *cordel* [popular and inexpensive pocket books] literature, which represents an important means of protecting popular memory by transforming everyday themes into rhyming songs that are sung at fairs and divulged by way of *cordel* leaflets (BRASILEIRO and SILVEIRA, 2013).

The *Pavão Misterioso*, one of the best-known *cordels* in the Northeast, is a Brazilian narrative of a collective nature that has been told and retold by countless anonymous co-authors and reflects the communication and culture of the common man over time and in history (BENJAMIN, 1994). Although who first wrote it is still uncertain, the best-known adaptation was written by José Camelo de Melo Rezende (2000). Certeau (2014, p. 61) points out that "[...] *the approach to culture begins when the ordinary man becomes the narrator, when it is he who defines the (common) place of discourse and the (anonymous) space of its development."* Therefore the narrative does not belong to the narrator, since it extends beyond him/her and it only makes sense if that is the way it is.

The *cordel* presents the narrative of detours and resistance practiced by the cunning Creuza and by her intended fiancé, Evangelista, who are represented in the metamorphosis of the *Pavão Misterioso*. This is a hand-crafted product, conceived as the result of the practices of an artisan who "exhumes" scrap and dead materials and assigns new meaning to them, thus establishing new relationships and, like something unfolding, builds a peacock that flies.

José Camelo de Melo Rezende (2000, p. 53-54) writes: "The great artist, Edmundo / Designed a new invention / Making an airplane / Of small dimension / Manufactured from aluminum / With important ties / [...] It had a tail like a fan / Wings like a peacock / Neck, head and beak / 'Lever', wrench and knob / It also used to fly in the wind / In any direction".

In the wide-open and uncertain field of anonymous narratives, where stories of "ordinary women" are told, the wiles woven by them unfold in everyday inventions that are a reflection of their personality, their lifestyle and the place they inhabit. Through oral tales, the *Pavão Misterioso* becomes a symbol of Northeastern Brazilian culture, whose narrative involves the aspects of dissemination and polyvalence that are dealt with by Certeau (2014) and so it provides inspiration for a series of practices.

When these tales reach the artisan they are re-signified by way of the latter's creative artistic practices that, in making use of their *metis*, mobilize unsuspected resources for constructing detours and micro-resistances to the current social order. Thus they enable the artisan to assume the leading role and authorship of her "art of making".

Our artisan, therefore, also becomes a narrator when she places her art in the web of happenings; this is art that is made by way of "coups" and resistance to an order that is imposed when she assigns new uses to objects that are discarded by those who hold the power. These are metamorphoses and the reconfiguration of boundaries and margins that are going to end up superimposing themselves on the mechanisms of oppression (BENJAMIN, 1994; CERTEAU, 2014; TERDIMAN, 2001).

These are social exchanges (through constant symbolic resignification), technical inventions (that allow scrap and waste to be transformed into art) and moral resistance (against the order of things), which are characteristic of the aesthetics of tricks in action making ordinary culture more valuable (GIARD, 2014).

Organizing the artistic and resistance practices of the artisan

In this section, using the concepts of Certeau (2014), Datienne and Vernant (2008), Giard (2014) and Terdiman (2001) as a basis, we analyze the artistic practices of the aesthetics of "tricks" and the resistance processes of the artisan, which are engendered by the use of *metis*.

The fragments of tales that were selected for analysis from the empirical *corpus* of the research show that the artisan's resistance practices for survival in the economic field came up against obstacles that were a reflection of the economic macro-policies

in the everyday life of the ordinary woman. In order to overcome these barriers, the artisan started developing a series of practices related to the reuse of solid waste (scrap).

In the direct observation we carried out in the artisan's studio, we noticed that her artistic practices derive from the handicraft items she produced by reusing various types of materials that are discarded, such as CDs, ice-cream pots, satellite dishes, banner canvas, etc. This shows a sensitivity to the diffuse and creative possibilities that the "reconstruction" and transformation of materials provide in the midst of a "subversive carnival" (BROWNLIE and HEWER, 2011).

The reuse of materials is the result of a cunning practice that is alert to the emergence and seizing of opportunities using *metis* (DATIENNE and VERNANT, 2008). This is an aesthetic trick that is surrounded by a moral and ethical sagacity (GIARD, 2014), as can be seen in the following words:

I stopped for a year and a half and I was thinking and reflecting, but I was working. That's when I said: one day this is all going to come right. They're latching on to this thing of sustainability, of preserving material resources and that's where we're going to begin. It's going to have greater visibility. That's going to be our work, how we earn mone (extract from an interview with the artisan recorded on video).

Among the materials reused by the artisan are automobile filters, which she considers to be the "flagship" of her artisticartisanal practice. First, the practices focused on producing benches covered in fabric, purses and a wide variety of handmade products.

By making use of the elements of symbolic reconstruction the artisan, with a practice taken from the aesthetics of tricks (GIARD, 2014), subsequently captured the shape of a polymorphous, plebeian and noble animal opening and closing its tail using a fixed and clipped automobile filter. In doing so she had the opportunity to remove the waste from the world of discarded material and bring it into the world of art and to resist through it:

Whenever I picked up a filter I thought it would be great as a peacock; I couldn't get this idea out of my head. It [the filter] comes all assembled. When we open it p and look at it [opening up an automobile filter] we can only imagine a peacock. You can only see a peacock. So when I made it everybody liked it and so did I (extract from an interview with the artisan recorded on video).

During our direct observation procedures, we identified that the practices of creating the peacock involve two types of filter and other materials, such as: soap, bleach, fabric paint, etc. The artistic process takes place over two days since it involves various dyeing and gluing techniques.

Such aaesthetic-artistic practices represent, in Certeau's (2014, p. 46) definition "[...] *small successes, the arts of tricking others.... joyful discoveries that are both poetic and warlike.*" In organizing such artistic resistance practices, we observed a need to perceive the exact occasion that is going to allow us to grasp this always fluid, ambiguous and fleeting opportunity (CERTEAU, 2014; GIARD, 2014).

In order to maintain the tactical practices used for resistance against the forces of oppression, such as needs in the economic field, the artisan sought to establish partnerships with automobile dealerships in Fortaleza. Because of these partnerships the artisan receives materials that are discarded by the automobile industry and makes space for holding exhibitions and selling handmade artistic objects. This is how it becomes possible to "trick" both the industrial chain system and the economic macro-policy system.

This playing the other's game, this organizing of artistic practices of resistance provide our artisan with transformations by widening the boundaries, entering spaces that traditionally would not belong to her, as revealed in her interaction with dominant groups, represented by partnerships with the managerial elites of the automobile industry (CERTEAU, 2014; TERDIMAN, 2001).

Bricolage gives shape to the guile engendered by artistic and resistance practices of a tactical nature and represents a response to an environment of domination. This movement initiates in the field of the strong, the enemy, and seeks to occupy the place of the other, blow by blow, trick by trick (GIARD, 2014; CERTEAU, 2014).

Such tactics or resistances have been used by the weakest, from time immemorial, when faced with mythological gods, the strategies of those who hold the reins of power, or battles against forces such as violence, the powerful, disease, or poverty. In

the specific case of the ordinary woman, they represent feminism as a practice. They also involve struggles against the forces of oppression deriving from *machismo* and sexist practices, battles that are fought on the other's field and enable fleeting victories to be achieved (CALÁS and SMIRCICH, 2010; CERTEAU, 2014; DATIENNE and VERNANT, 2008; VACHHANI and PULLEN, 2019) and infra-political organizing via a network of women, as we shall analyse in the next section.

Feminism as practice: resistance and the infra-political organizing of the women's network

This section discusses feminism as practice, based on organizing resistance and struggle against the various forms of oppression and the practices involved in building the bonds of affection and resonance among network participants, which are the characteristics of organizing infra-political resistance movements (CERTEAU, 2014; FLEMING and SPICER, 2007; SPICER and BÖHM, 2007; VACHHANI and PULLEN, 2019).

Resistance practices are presented by Certeau (2014) and Spicer and Böhm (2007) as a constant action for overcoming barriers of domination, such as the exclusion of women from artisanal production, as pointed out by Perrot (2007).

The women's network as a movement aims to open up a myriad of new passage spaces, expand margins and establish bridges between different boundaries by promoting the organizing of feminist practices of resistance. In the case of the network, the movement involves struggles for recognition and economic and gender justice that are promoted, for example, by encouraging artistic and entrepreneurial practices with various objectives, among them helping generate employment and income for the women of the Serrinha neighborhood where the studio is located (SPICER and BÖHM, 2007; TERDIMAN, 2001). The following extract summarises these struggles:

The vision of the group drove a movement, not an association, of around 75 women in Serrinha. It involves the collective conscience, education, the generation of opportunities for income, retrieving self-esteem and an awareness of its power. Women are invited to find their art and produce what they like and what they know: food, painting, purses, soap, life, income, retrieval (Field diary).

This search for the *knowing how to do* (CERTEAU, 2014) of each of the women generates different practices within the network, as R1 points out:

[...] I belong to a recycling group; we are four women. Because recycling is very rich, people have to value it. First it's the environment [...], second it's a source of income that, if you know how to take advantage of it, you're able to live off.

The tactics of the struggle for survival are, therefore, mobilizing unsuspected resources, while the use of *metis* makes it possible to reconfigure uses and seize opportunities. The aesthetics of "tricks", therefore, takes on a different shape in which social exchanges come from belonging to a group, and moral resistance against the order of things is shared (CERTEAU, 2014; DATIENNE and VERNANT, 2008; GIARD, 2014; SPICER and BÖHM, 2007).

Because of this organizing of these webs of feminist practices, based on the movement of the women's network with its infrapolitical connotation, a cunning force is established that is antagonistic to control and power environments and strategies (CERTEAU, 2014; SPICER and BÖHM, 2007; VACHHANI and PULLEN, 2019). By mobilizing new frontiers for resistance practices and creating the opportunities for women, using their tactics and wiles, to take advantage of the strategies and spaces that have been opened up by those who are stronger, the network now has a strategic, albeit informal, power.

Formulating strategies based on the other's space gives ordinary heroines a myriad of tactics that are used in constructing resistance practices. This is how they can enter the space of the strong and build operation combinations that play with the established order (CERTEAU, 2014). We see the appropriation of the space of the other in the following words:

It was... [she mentions a significant company in the automobile industry]. Last year we [the women's network] held an event there; it was really good. It was half a day, but it was for awareness-building and selling. [...] we take it to forums, environmental forums, [...] we've been to a lot of places (extract from an interview with the artisan recorded on video).

Along with infra-political resistance practices, we emphasize the everyday movements that contain connections by affinity, the result of patterns of affection and resonance, assuming practices that are not common in the mainstream of management

(CERTEAU, 2014; FLEMING and SPICER, 2007; SPICER and BÖHM, 2007), but which can be found in the feminist practices of the women's network.

The workshops, for example, which focus on producing "art" from scrap and waste material, involve other women and other spaces in Fortaleza. More than 30 women from the Tancredo Neves neighborhood are beginning to build bonds of resonance with the network and, according to R2:

[...] the group is growing [...] the group is together, it's united.

The network's workshops involve the hope for economic justice through practices for producing "art" that is going to be consumed. But they are also constructing bonds, as R2 stresses:

[...] looking after one another, not being just the economic power that dominates.

For the artisan it is very important that the group's workshop practices are carried out in face-to-face contact so as to reach women in a way that virtual networks are unable to:

I mean, you can make soap on the internet, but people want contact, they want the person [...] particularly people who are not very enlightened/ not very educated. For example, you and I, we're going to have the ability to deal with the virtual [environment], but they won't. Housewives often have no way of doing it. They're afraid. Often they don't know how to read or write. So we're really there to give them encouragement and raise them up (extract from an interview with the artisan recorded on video).

These practices of resonance and affection are essential for creating a sense of collectiveness that will lead to the construction of an affective solidarity among members of the group (CERTEAU, 2014; HEMMINGS, 2012, SPICER and BÖHM 2007; VACHHANI and PULLEN, 2019). In addition to practices aimed at setting up in business, the network is also a space where women in particular share the oppression they face, which involves physical and psychological violence, the lowering of their self-esteem, sexism and domestic violence:

Sometimes there are women with depression problems and they arrive here lost. An unemployed husband, a husband who drinks, cases of domestic violence too and sometimes they arrive without hope. We talk to them, a bit like we're doing here. They let it all out, they cry and we end up getting them into painting and then it all ends well [laughs]. Sometimes they get here and say: "I even get emotional, because I don't know what I'm going to say when I get home, because no one's going to believe I did this." I think this is the transformation; people need this (extract from an interview with the artisan recorded on video).

These practices are not exclusive to the environment in which the artisan and the network find themselves. They are one more characteristic of the relationship between genders, in which the feminine side has been generally subordinated and marginalized vis-à-vis the masculine side in various contexts from time immemorial. Such subordination is reflected in practices like inferior rights, unequal treatment, the control of sexuality and deprivation of access to various spaces, including access to production and life (CALAS and SMIRCICH, 2010; STEARNS, 2007).

In the light of the tales analyzed and based on the webs of practices that were shown to exist in the context of the network of women, we see, albeit in a very informal way, that the tactics and strategies of the network culminate in the construction of spaces and strengthen bonds of support for women that involve affection, solidarity and recognition. This looking at the other reinforces social exchanges, which build and strengthen practices and connections, contribute to the construction of mutual help, a characteristic of infra-political organizations, and represent feminism as a practice in women's daily lives (CERTEAU, 2014; FLEMING and SPICER, 2007; GIARD, 2014; SPICER and BÖHM, 2007; VACHHANI and PULLEN, 2019).

The artisan and the other women in the network seize various opportunities to break with established power and order by decentralizing and exercising the multiple roles of "ordinary" heroines (HALL, 2005). They make use of a "politics of cunning", metis, through the establishment of "[...] microscopic, multiform and innumerable connections between manipulating and enjoying, the fleeting and massive reality of a social activity at play with the order that contains it" (CERTEAU, 2014, p. 51), which is simultaneously exercised and mocked by art.

Even though some judge them to belong to the category of the dominated, the artisan and the other women in the network struggle with domestic violence, depression, poverty, the absence of an income and troubled marriages in a large operational combination involving the most diverse and unsuspected nuances of actors and materials. They are reminiscent of the culture users mentioned by Certeau (2014), who have the status of the dominated, but this does not mean that they are passive and docile. They are cunning and find their wings of freedom in scrap and other discarded materials that help them resist domination and oppression.

Such spaces make it possible to strengthen practices related to emotion and longings, which are the characteristics of the organizing of daily infra-political movements, which end up establishing connections by resonance. This is organizing based on ties of solidarity and affection that resonates with the practices of resistance that have an infra-political connotation, culminating in the creation of micro-liberties in the daily lives of those involved and in the construction of new worlds of opportunity (CERTEAU, 2014; HEMMINGS, 2012; SPICER and BÖHM, 2007).

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

With its basis in feminist perspectives, the objective of this study was to understand the organization of a web of daily practices that involve the aesthetics of "tricks" and the tactics and strategies of resistance, including those of an infrapolitical nature, which construct feminism as practice by way of the art of an artisan and the actions of a network of women, of which she is part.

Allied to this objective, this article brings to Organizational Studies a decentralized look at ordinary heroines and network-organized actions, such discussions being linked to the practices of Certeau (2014) and to the concepts of infra-political resistance adopted by Spicer and Böhm (2007). We adopt multiple approaches for constructing this look that dialogue with each other in the context of organizational studies and involve studies in sociology, history, culture, organizations, feminism and resistance. This makes development of the research a more challenging task, but brings it closer to complex operational logics (CERTEAU, 2014) in a more effective way, since daily life also has this intricate and multifaceted character.

These discussions help advance organizational theories in the following aspects. First, the understanding of an aesthetic of "tricks" and "coups" that, by way of artistic practices and the action of cunning practices (*metis*) of the tactical type, of bricolage, set out the webs of resistance practices that organize the everyday lives of our ordinary heroines in their coexistence with strategic oppression mechanisms (CALÁS and SMIRCICH, 2010; CERTEAU, 2014; GIARD, 2014; HALL, 2005; SPICER and BÖHM, 2007).

Much of the research effort in organizational studies focuses on traditional organizations and/or subjects with profiles that are aligned with the mainstream. The understanding of everyday life and its movements, with its multiple ways of doing things, constitutes the outlining of a space of thought-provoking practices for the Organizational Studies' researcher that has been little explored in literature. Little space is allocated to examining everyday micro-stories and issues involving "ordinary" heroines, which may mean that Organizational Studies is yet another oppressive space, which studies into these women find it difficult to penetrate.

We also stress the discussions that exist about understanding the organizing of the practices of everyday movements on an affective and informal basis, with infra-political connotations that are on the margins of the mainstream, and how this type of organizing in network establishes connections and bonds of affection and resonance, performing practices of feminist resistance (HEMMINGS, 2012; SPICER and BÖHM, 2007; VACHHANI and PULLEN, 2019).

The extent of the practices covered by this type of movement, whose structures are fluid and multiform, represents an interesting opportunity for capturing and understanding everyday, non-traditional ways of acting that may be of great value to the models used in the organizational world. Solidarity and affection practices and the bonds built with this type of everyday feminist movement can inspire new ways of acting and relationship with the various publics reached by traditional organizations, whether they are public and/or private.

Finally, we emphasize the importance of understanding the organizing of everyday artistic practices that are associated with an aesthetic of "tricks" and "coups" when reusing materials that are discarded by the industrial system, thus helping organizations and the users of ordinary culture reconstruct new spaces, tales and narratives, practices and the everyday (CERTEAU, 2014; GIARD, 2014).

One of the limitations of the research is that there is an underlying theoretical gap that has not been explored in this article. It is related to the multifaceted connections between the topics dealt with and their associations with entrepreneurship studies of an artistic, cultural and emancipatory type.

It is no less important to continue with the search for an understanding of the "invention of the everyday" (CERTEAU, 2014), with its multiple practices, actors, aesthetics, ethics and political meanings, understanding that reality is not fixed, but is always underway and that this also happens with fields of knowledge.

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