

# A communitarian epistemology of communication

## *Uma epistemologia comunitarista da comunicação*

RAQUEL PAIVA<sup>a</sup>

*Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro, Escola de Comunicação, Programa de Pós-Graduação em Comunicação e Cultura. Rio de Janeiro- RJ, Brazil*

### ABSTRACT

This paper discusses the reinterpretation of the concept of community as proposed by the author, from her initial studies to concepts that qualify her to understanding today's social structure, such as generative community and floating minorities. Her research activity intersects with her individual, social and professional existence, context in which emerge colleagues from University of São Paulo, with whom she established relationships over the years and considers as references, such as dean José Marques de Melo. This revisionist and autobiographic reflection is written in the first person, since intellectual production and personal life are intensely intertwined.

**Keywords:** Community communication, generative community, comprehensive epistemology

<sup>a</sup> Journalist. PhD and Master in Communication from the *Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro* (UFRJ), with Post-Doctorate from the *Università di Torino*. Founder of the *Laboratório de Estudos em Comunicação Comunitária* (Laboratory for Community Communication Studies) at UFRJ. Professor Emeritus of the *Escola de Comunicação* (School of Communication) at UFRJ. Orcid: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8786-751X>. Email: [raquelpaiv@gmail.com](mailto:raquelpaiv@gmail.com)

### RESUMO

O texto discorre sobre a perspectiva de reinterpretação do conceito de comunidade proposto pela autora, desde os seus estudos iniciais com o desdobramento de conceitos que a qualificam para o entendimento da estrutura na atualidade, como comunidade gerativa e minorias flutuantes. A autora realiza um entrecruzamento da atividade de pesquisa com sua existência individual, social e profissional, contexto em que emergem os colegas da Universidade de São Paulo, com os quais, ao longo dos anos, estabeleceu relações e considera referências, como o decano José Marques de Melo. Trata-se de uma reflexão revisionista e autobiográfica, por isso realizada na primeira pessoa, uma vez que se entrecruzam de maneira intensa produção intelectual e vida pessoal.

**Palavras-chave:** Comunicação comunitária, comunidade gerativa, epistemologia compreensiva

“ARE FLOATING, ON the surface / of my soul, remains / of things that I don’t know if, together, they would be enough / to build life... Or if they were only pretexts”. This poem (free translation) by the Portuguese poet Cabral do Nascimento, who died in 1978, has always intrigued me and remained an enigma to me. I begin the incursion into my life of theoretical production this way - with an autobiographical revisionist effort, believing that behind an author’s biography lies the cartography of their time and of their work - and because it is clear to me that, due to a special taste for poetry, I could have followed another path. In fact, I even had a poem published in a collection that the Juiz de Fora City Hall produced, by the end of the 1970s, early 1980s, under the title “*Novos Poetas*” (New Poets). Later on, I found that I had been very audacious in enrolling in the contest and, what is more, to have been selected to publish a poem together with some of those who today are renowned writers and poets of the country.

I never published anything literary again. After my short career as a poet, I immersed in the craft of journalistic narration of daily life and then in reflecting, challenging it and trying to produce alternative and inclusive formats for the brilliant activity of describing life. In 1984, when I passed a public contest at the Universidade Federal de Juiz de Fora (UFJF), I definitely entered the activity that has always guided my life and that has given me the most pleasure: being close to books, even more than to people. This is the truth I have to admit, before undertaking an objective narrative about myself considering that my love, family and friendship relationships have always brought me more questions than appeasement. This could possibly be one of the reasons why I have always bet on trying to show the viability of a proposition, often considered as utopian. Community has always been for me the horizon of a bond and a practice of the common good.

Empathy has always been a hallmark of my life, and I have exercised it even in the managerial activities I have taken on. I have occupied all the places I wanted to, I have accomplished everything I wanted to do, and I don’t have a million friends, because I wouldn’t know how to take care of so many people; however, the very few that I do have the certainty that they can count on me. This certainty is what moves me, impelled by the French theorist Maurice Blanchot (1984), for whom community serves to recognize individuality.

This singular aspect of my personality, however, should be refined in order to avoid hasty conclusions. My biggest struggle has always been with myself, my shyness and the difficulty of socialization, which I attribute in part to the long years in religious schools and to the fact that I spent the most fertile period of my life under the dictates of a military dictatorship, which

imposed on an entire generation an education for which I was (and am) particularly inept: the notorious scientific one in which humanities were completely banned in favor of algebra, organic and inorganic chemistry, physics, biology, and the like.

I should clarify that I lived very closely with the military and their families, because I lived my childhood and adolescence in places that a friend once called “fantasy island”, i.e., the military villages. My father, who died during the Covid-19 pandemic, at the age of 84, was the most remarkable person in my life. He was who insisted that I enter public university when I was 17, and then supported me in going to live in Ecuador for six months when I was 25, when I was selected as one of 12 professors from Latin America to be a lecturer at the *Centro Internacional de Estudios Superiores de Comunicación para América Latina* (International Center of Higher Studies in Communication for Latin America) (Ciespal), set up in that country little known in 1985. I always admired him in his not easy life, for being the person with whom I could experience affection and partnership for the longest time, besides being the only one to delight in my stories whether they were good ones, which made him laugh, or bad ones, which visibly cut his heart.

I started this text and consumed two long pages of it, because I cannot recognize myself disincarnated from these aspects, even though personal, that make up my theoretical production and professional relationships, to which I will now dedicate myself with more emphasis. A colleague once diagnosed me as a nomad. She was right in her definition when she heard about someone who had already lived in Juazeiro, Petrolina, Catolé do Rocha, Pindamonhangaba, Pires do Rio, Recife, Natal, Boa Vista, Juiz de Fora, Quito, Turin and Rio de Janeiro. This nomadism, which I make a point of admitting, was very important to me as it allowed me to recognize the possibility of weaving this patchwork quilt that is human existence.

I intend to conclude this initial part by bringing the opinion of some professors with whom I worked, and who were very important for my education. The first of them I met while still in college where, I am proud to say, I met authors who are my soul bibliography to this day: Josué de Castro, Aristotle’s “The Rhetoric” and Paulo Freire. José Luiz Ribeiro, my professor and advisor during my undergraduate studies at UFJF, whom I monitored for a long time, and later on became a colleague, encourager and godfather in my first marriage, in a recent statement said that I was “crafted in the tempering that forges intangible values. A temperament of strong personality and haughtiness in achieving her goals. I would say a true warrior” (Ribeiro, 2013 apud Fernandes & Gabbay, 2014, p. 237, free translation).

**COLLEAGUES, FRIENDS, AND THEORETICAL REFERENCES FROM THE *ESCOLA DE COMUNICAÇÕES E ARTES* (SCHOOL OF COMMUNICATIONS AND ARTS) OF THE UNIVERSIDADE DE SÃO PAULO**

I also remember with immense affection the times when I worked at the *Sociedade Brasileira de Estudos Interdisciplinares da Comunicação* (Brazilian Society of Interdisciplinary Communication Studies) (Intercom), first as coordinator of a research group devoted to the study of minorities, then as Cultural Director and even as Scientific Director, mandates always accompanied by the firm and enterprising presence of José Marques de Melo. I have no doubt that the respect and admiration have always been mutual. If there was any doubt, there was always Dona Silvia, his wife, reminding me of the affection shared whenever we met. And working together meant having in the e-mail, at 7 in the morning, his assignments and tasks to accomplish.

José Marques in São Paulo, at the Universidade de São Paulo (USP), José Luiz Ribeiro in Juiz de Fora, at UFJE, and also Muniz Sodré - with whom I share my life - at the Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro (UFRJ), all of them transmitted to me that spirit of boldness and firmness that led them, each one in their respective places, to found a school devoted to studying and teaching communication. Time may pass, new mandates impose new guidelines, but origin is destiny, and it is undeniable that José Marques marked with his entrepreneurial spirit the places he passed through. His concern in agglutinating, producing agendas in the area, and recording the accomplishments in order to consolidate the institution, always caught my attention, possibly because these are practices that are close to the “community spirit” and binding spirit. In one of these creative missions, we organized a book when he introduced the awards by categories of researchers, and named as founders the important authors for the field of communication.

Once, to my pride, I could hear him say at one of many meetings: “Raquel is a Republican.” This compliment struck me so deeply that I used it to start a text I wrote about him. With this phrase we sealed our partnership, because it filled me with pride to know that he recognized my goals for equality and respect. The last time we met was at a meeting at Intercom’s headquarters, when he gave me a batch of books from his personal library. I had other opportunities in which I could have met him again, but I confess I escaped in order not to see him already consumed by Parkinson’s disease, which hindered his movements and made his speech difficult to understand. This last time, I even escaped from the meeting before it was over, and I know that he, smart, sensitive, and sagacious as he was, understood my motives. Even today, I still come across many, many e-mails

that we have exchanged over the years. With José Marques de Melo I was able to get to know more closely colleagues from São Paulo, both from the *Escola de Comunicações e Artes* (ECA) and from other faculties, to strengthen partnerships and friendships with some that were part of my student bibliography, such as Ciro Marcondes, Arlindo Machado, Lucia Santaella, Cremilda Medina, Ana Maria Fadul and Lucrecia Ferrara.

I am afraid of leaving someone out, but I cannot fail to mention my friend and partner Maria Immacolata Vassallo, who even wrote the preface to one of my books, *Política: Palavra Feminina* (Politics: A Feminine Word), a research on women and politics, in particular, on the 2006 elections. It is also impossible not to remember Ismar Soares, a reference in the area of Alternative Communication, with whom I had the pleasure of working a few times, mainly due to the thematic proximity. But I cannot fail to mention, also from ECA-USP, colleagues with whom I worked closely, such as Ismail Xavier, when we were area representatives at the *Conselho Nacional de Desenvolvimento Científico e Tecnológico* (National Council for Scientific and Technological Development) (CNPq), and the researchers Adilson Citelli, Margarida Kunsch, Irene Machado and also Cláudia Lago, my companion in several meetings of the International Association for Media and Communication Research (IAMCR), among others with whom I have had interfaces over the years.

### MY DESIGNS AND RESEARCH LINES

I believe that when I mention colleagues, friends, and even theoretical references, I am already drawing the composition of the materials that form my thought life. However, even if such affective path materials signal the plastic conformation of my research area, it is necessary to specify that my thematic engagement, which took off since the course of Community Communication in 1985, was really consolidated in the year 1997, when I defended my doctoral thesis and created with a dear undergraduate and Master's advisor, André Esteves, the *Laboratório de Estudos em Comunicação Comunitária* (Laboratory of Studies in Community Communication) (Lecc).

In 2019, starting the preparations for Paulo Freire's centennial, I started thinking over the research methodology we had been developing for 12 years, both with activities and practical interventions in Rio de Janeiro's slums, and with undergraduate and graduate courses at the *Escola de Comunicação* of UFRJ, texts published in Brazil and abroad, participation in congresses and seminars, and a considerable number of monographs, dissertations, theses, and post-doctoral reports. Therefore, I considered that what had moved me

until then and what had made my students and students connect with the theme was the desire to understand: the exercise of comprehension. Since the Lecc we thought that our proposal was that of a comprehensive epistemology, for being inclusive in the sense of giving the same importance to all forms of knowledge that emerge in the territory. This would explain the variety of themes, territories, languages, and possibilities of community that came to me through students and researchers from all over Brazil. In the end, Lecc has broadened the concept of *community* to a comprehensive idea as full of possibilities as human communication can be. Projects in the fields of slums, ruralities, art, Brazilian culture, radio and the press, and gender all had in common the search for the common.

This perspective has enabled the active expansion of the Lab's scope of work and research, including more and more themes that complement each other and that are based on Freire's foundations. What Paulo Freire (1996) preferred to call the *epistemology of curiosity*, the Portuguese sociologist Boaventura de Sousa Santos (2010) prefers to call *epistemologies of the South*. For Paulo Freire, his epistemology is a kind of antidote to the certainties that, in the spectrum of knowledge, make up a limiting environment. In Bonaventura's perspective, new possibilities of intervention in the narrow knowledge may emerge in the South, with new cognitive forms. Based on the thought of the Indian economist Vandana Shiva (2003), the author proposes an ecology of knowledges.

The proposition of an ecology of knowledges, i.e., the coexistence of different ways of reading the world in the same degree of scientific importance, is what we have called comprehensive epistemology. The comprehensive perspective allows us to circumvent the "monoculture of knowledge and rigor", i.e., the idea guided by the rigor of hegemonic knowledge, in which other possibilities of knowledge and plural knowledges have no scientific status and validity. The assumption of inclusion of knowledge from the Southern Hemisphere carries with it the idea that the colonialism to which the nations from this part of the planet were subjected must be overcome, and that the ways and knowledge produced by these populations constitute scientific knowledge.

Comprehension represents the pragmatic proposal of this dwelling on the multiplicity of knowledges that make up our culture. And to have realized that my whole life has been guided by this theoretical perspective was, without a doubt, the recognition of a proposal not only theoretical, but also of social action, both of which have been underway for more than 30 years.

It is important to point out that the proposition centered on understanding necessarily mobilizes an effort of knowledge that is not restricted to thinking anchored in the individual as the subject of the process. The construction is necessarily based on social action, on the composition of a collective ground,

of groupality or, more appropriately, of community. It is also important remembering that “knowing is the task of subjects, not of objects” (Freire, 1977, p. 27, free translation). The comprehensive epistemology then implies the subject in its collective, plural, contradictory, and open construction. The recent experience of the Covid-19 pandemic has left, among so many undigested lessons, the awareness about the importance of a collective construction of science, so that it can act generatively on societies.

The grounds for my proposition and action come from Paulo Freire, but also from Milton Santos, Darcy Ribeiro, and Muniz Sodré, with their perspectives of valuing territory and everything related to it. After all, the central issue is that of culture and its fabrics. On the other hand, it is impossible not to mention the foundations that consolidate all my studies around the community issue.

I have to admit that over the years I have very often handled authors that I believe provide a more direct understanding by students and peers, and among them is the German Ferdinand Tönnies with his very pedagogical distinction between community and society. I have trained countless researchers based on his book and the interpretations and readings we have done. I never quite knew whether they preferred the original or the interpretation I always made of his reflexive effort. In this endeavor, I never left aside classic texts, such as Max Weber on social action and the question of solidarity in Émile Durkheim. Friedrich Engels’ *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State* was, since college, one of the books that fell into my life like a bolt of lightning, and made me understand the presence of the human being on earth. Any text that I have written on the issue of gender and patriarchy has always been based on this work, even though it is never profiled in my bibliographical references.

There are others that, I must admit, never appear as my references, but they are solid grounds for my reflections and ways of thinking. For example, Freud is part of a period in my life that I still took to my Master’s degree, in which Psychology was the field I would like to study. In the Masters, I broadened this spectrum with readings from Jacques Lacan’s seminars, which in turn led me to Julia Kristeva, an author I admire a lot. But Carl Gustav Jung was a more recent reading, never fully completed and never expressly cited by me, despite the undeniable theoretical force his propositions have on me and my current research.

Resuming the line around the purposes that ground the basis of my production around the communitarian proposition, I believe I can delimit, after discussing the scope of the classical authors, two periods as marking the contact with authors that consolidated my research. One is the period of the discovery of Latin American exponents, featuring Antonio Cabezas, Daniel Prieto, Juan Diaz Bordenave and Mário Kaplún, and the period of the narrowing of

readings that broadened the theoretical range around the community question, starting with the Italian philosopher Gianni Vattimo, with whom I studied at the Università Degli Studi di Torino in 1995. That was when I had contact with the work of Karl-Otto Apel and his unlimited community of communication that Vattimo referred to so much at that time. I also had contact with the work of an author who has remained one of my favorite authors; having read almost everything written by the American pragmatist philosopher Richard Rorty. Consequently, I dwelt more on John Dewey, whom I always turn to when I need to discuss the democracy-citizenship-education-community axis.

Until then, the foundation around the theme of community had been basically through anthropology and sociology.

There was a period, in the mid-1990s, when Michel Maffesoli, as well as Benedict Anderson, started the studies on the issue of virtuality, with countless publications always guided by the principle of *filia*, that is, the untying of proximity via territorial and even kinship ties towards groupality and tribes.

Among the texts that marked me during this phase, I cannot fail to mention the theoretical discussions between Maurice Blanchot and Jean-Luc Nancy on the subject. In the 1980s, both French authors were at the center of discussions about the communitarian: Jean-Luc Nancy with his celebrated *The Inoperable Community* and Maurice Blanchot with *The Inconfessable Community*. Finally, I should mention an author from whom I also translated and published a text, the Italian Roberto Esposito, with his *Communitas* and *Immunitas* that, in my opinion, close the discussion around the differences between aggregation and fragmentation.

However, to close the approach around the comprehensive epistemology and its materials, I should refer to the approach of a basic author for the materials of this theory. My first contact with his writings was back in the late 1980s, when I attended some of his lectures. It is very present in one of my books, *Histeria na Mídia*, but it certainly forms the grounds of my reflections. I could have some contact with Jean Baudrillard, because he was a good friend of my life partner. And I have in my resume one of my birthdays when we spent the four of us eating food from Bahia in a restaurant here in Rio de Janeiro: me, Muniz, Baudrillard and Vattimo.

I was recently invited to participate in an event in his honor at the University of Quebec, and perhaps because we were in the middle of the pandemic period, and I imagined his face not at all surprised by the unusual situation, I wrote a text in which I united the thought of the indigenous leader Ailton Krenak with that of Jean Baudrillard. Baudrillard had that precise look at catastrophes, the announced, imminent, and real ones, and he could be immensely creative in the face of them. Perhaps for this very reason he became a photographer in the last years of his life.



To conclude this theoretical sketch I should approach the city. It became a necessity, as the theoretical investigations and actions in popular spaces went on to understand the social fabric and the venue that generates agglutinating and dispersive forces. Thinking about the city on this horizon became a challenge, since the prerogative would be to think about the real city, but not through the eyes of Architecture, nor through those of Anthropology, but rather from the *sensorium*, from the marks printed on the bodies and minds of those who experience this work in permanent process. For this reason, my basic author was the journalist and sociologist Ezra Park and the exponents of the Chicago School, followed by Richard Sennett and Sassia Sasken, as well as the journalist and activist Jane Jacobs, among many others, among whom I also include Jesús Martín-Barbero and Néstor García Canclini. And the writers that started it all: James Hillman, Marc Augé, David Byrne, Pierre Sansot, Francesco Careri, among others, as my initial interest came from the experience of resuming cycling in 2013.

The understanding of the city as a comprehensive space made me revisit the urban ecology of the Chicago School in its heyday in the 1920s and 1930s, with Robert Ezra Park engaged in reflecting on the social and cultural changes that were drastically happening in the American cities, and especially in Chicago in that early twentieth century. Focused on direct observation, these early works on the city can be of great use for current studies. In fact, when reviewing the writings and propositions that guided the Chicago School, especially in its most flourishing period, one can find texts of a disconcerting contemporaneity and even similarities not always declared with many of the concepts that appeared there.

Besides the sociological observation of the Chicago Americans, the post-Jungian psychologist James Hillman, with his *City and Soul* (1993), brought a proposal very close to what interested me, especially in his approach about the irreplaceable need of man of walking as a way to achieve a deep reflection on the city that we transform, where every day this simple act becomes increasingly difficult. As I said, my relationship with the bicycle from the year 2013 onward brought with it a greater interest in the spaces in which we transit, and the way the territory opens or closes to the dynamics of the social.

Still among the theorists who came to help me in my relationship with the city, I cannot forget the German sociologist Georg Simmel, with his classic *The Metropolis and Mental Life* (1979), and the American anthropologist already mentioned, Richard Sennett, who has dedicated himself to decipher urban life, notably in the book *The Conscience of the Eye: The Design and Social Life of Cities* (1992), in which he made quite evident this relationship between the senses, architecture, the work of art, and the city.

Lately, besides the authors that allow me to think about the sensitive, such as Jacques Rancière, Maurice Merleau-Ponty, and Muniz Sodré, due to the lurking of new and unthinkable times, I have focused on the writings of the Italian Emanuele Coccia, the first one that led me to think about the theme of metamorphosis as a way to understand current times. Certainly, the pandemic seems to constitute a civilizing milestone for the new times. However, we should add to it the reversal of political systems in various regions of the planet, with the establishment of specific projects whose primary theme is the return to cruelty, characteristic of barbarism. Some authors, following the path of diagnosis by metamorphosis, even argue that this is a deep transformation, something unprecedented, and different from the social changes when the premise of development and progress was still on the horizon. And perhaps exactly because of this scenario of great transformations and uncertainties to compose prognostics, two categories-concepts that I developed some years ago have returned with full force. I will now discuss them, precisely because they are theoretical concepts of practical application that derive from the comprehensive epistemology.

### **GENERATIVE COMMUNITY AND FLOATING MINORITIES**

The proposal of the generative community was consolidated as a project before the new millennium. The idea of floating minorities was built starting in 2002, in the context of the coordination of the Intercom working group “Minority Culture”. I was then able to access numerous proposals from groups that were consolidated according to their themes. Both concepts have been published in book chapters that colleagues in the area in Brazil and Portugal have organized, and that I myself have organized. They are also present in the work of numerous students and researchers since their first publications. Surprisingly, they have returned now, during the pandemic, when we saw the emergence especially in big cities of groups calling themselves collectives, with the objective of acting in areas neglected by the constituted governments.

Before going into more detail on these two topics, it is important to highlight that, for about 10 years, I was in charge of the BRICS-Journalism project, coordinated by me in Brazil and funded by the Finnish Research Academy, under the coordination of the important Finnish journalist and researcher Kaarle Nordenstreng. The results of the project are available on the website<sup>1</sup>, but I would like to point out that, even though the project started with the research on the work of journalists in the BRICS countries, their daily lives and productions in Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa over the years we have been able to insert themes that we have been working with, such as the issue of

<sup>1</sup><https://research.tuni.fi/brics/>

counter-hegemonic communication, community radio productions, and alternatives to the current communication pattern. This research, which has been consolidated into books published by the important English publishing house Routledge, led us to assemble research groups and get to know the reality of the BRICS countries. Maintaining my aggregating profile, which I have already made a point of emphasizing, I included in the project, besides professor and friend since my journalism days, Márcio Guerra and his team at UFJF, who were with me from the very first moment in the fieldwork. I should also include colleagues from UFRJ, the University of Brasília (UnB), the Universidade Estadual do Rio de Janeiro (UERJ), and USP, with professor and friend Cláudia Lago.

Currently I can recognize that the pandemic period brought me the benefit of consolidating views into research that certainly were not so visible before: research is closely linked to the life of the individual and their groups. There is definitely no such thing as separate and isolated research: either it is integrated or it is a desert field, where nothing thrives. And so, armed with this definitive understanding, two phenomenal doors opened before so many losses in the pandemic period: first, the invitation to be a visiting researcher at the *Programa de Pós-Graduação em Ciências da Comunicação* (Graduate Program in Communication Sciences) (PPGCOM) at UERJ, where I could live more closely with colleagues with whom I already had excellent relations, deepen my friendship and produce with a friend, Ricardo Freitas and the researchers in his laboratory. And, finally, the Laboratory that I created and coordinate until 2019, competed for a call for proposals by the *Fundação Carlos Chagas Filho de Amparo à Pesquisa do Estado do Rio de Janeiro* (Carlos Chagas Filho Foundation for Research Support of the State of Rio de Janeiro) (Faperj) and was the only one to win in the Humanities area. Our project, with a budget forecast for four years, started to be executed this year with a course on Community Communication, involving dozens of researchers from all levels that make up the Lab, for 53 members of the collectives from Rio de Janeiro, Niterói, Duque de Caxias, and Belford Roxo that have been working since the beginning of the pandemic.

This is the passage I needed to justify the two approaches described above. The *floating minorities* were an proposal of approach that emerged after the publication of *O Espírito Comum* (The Common Spirit), a book resulting from my doctoral thesis, in 1997. Despite all the effort to construct the theme of the book, and its good reception by the university community, the search for a more and more comprehensive approach about counter-hegemonic social movements led me to observe the different strategies of floating manifestation of social movements in the field of media discourse. The first text with this term appears in the Intercom Congress of 2001, named “*Minorias Flutuantes*:

*Novos Aspectos da Contra-Hegemonia*” (Floating Minorities: New Aspects of Counter-Hegemony), and coincides with my interest in the forms of action of groups such as Greenpeace and the *Movimento dos Trabalhadores Rurais Sem Terra* (Landless Rural Workers Movement) (MST). If on the one hand the language of the media established a discursive arena of interest for social movements, on the other hand the dynamics of internal linkages followed a parallel course. This moment, marked by the book I organized with Alexandre Barbalho, *Comunicação e Cultura das Minorias* (Communication and Culture of Minorities), in 2005, is also the beginning of my plunge into the question of affect and its generative function.

By *generative community* we understand the performance of our Lab at this moment, as it qualifies to act together with the collectives in the sense of consolidating their actions, with activities that strengthen their citizen presence in the context of an unequal megalopolis such as Rio de Janeiro. In the first action in the month of October, a course was held with classes in person and online on themes requested by the collectives: community communication, data extraction and processing, racial issues, approaches to the city and the slum, migratory mobility, journalistic coverage, as well as research fundamentals and themes such as politics and culture. The Lab, over the next four years, will act as a generator for these communities in that it will maintain a permanent forum for discussion and development of actions.

So, in order to consolidate the issue of the generative community one should understand which bodies, institutions, and even specific groups can assume the role of generative. The proposition of a generative community appeared for the first time in a chapter written for the book *Vozes Cidadãs* (Citizen Voices), organized by Cicília Peruzzo (2004) for the thematic group “Community Media and Citizenship” of the *Associação Latino-Americana de Livre-Comércio* (Latin American Free Trade Association) (Alaic), in 2004. At that time, Community Communication faced challenges when faced with the implementation of the Community Broadcasting Law nº 9.612, of 1998, which authorized the Federal Police to close down unapproved popular radios in an almost impossible bureaucratic system. Thus, the idea of generative emerges in the gap left by the transformation of a more social model of communication into a model largely driven by the market and class interests. It is the beginning of a metamorphosis in my gaze toward the more affective realms of communication and community. In the generative community one seeks to produce or generate the common good; any universality or determinism is not welcome; rather, one pursues affective transmutations and belonging.

And it was precisely in the magazine *MATRIZES*, in 2012, that I presented for the first time the proposition of a *community of affection*, in the text “*Novas Formas de Comunitarismo no Cenário da Visibilidade Total: A Comunidade do Afeto*” (New Forms of Communitarianism in the Total Visibility Scenario: The Community of Affection) in which I wonder whether community is still a destiny in a world increasingly motivated by the law of survival - a thought at the time sparked by the image of the stunning 19th century canvas *Le Radeau de la Méduse* by Théodore Géricault. Having already taken up the influence of Boaventura de Sousa Santos (2007) in his sociology of emergences, I thought of community as a deeper binding phenomenon, whose cement would be the affections expressed in feelings of generosity and gratitude.

Finally, in March 2020, I received the title of Professor Emeritus from UFRJ, to which I have dedicated more than 20 years of my career. The title came a week before the pandemic of Covid-19, when we still could not imagine the gravity of the path we were to face. It was the last solemnity of the *Escola de Comunicação* (School of Communication) at UFRJ and of the University itself. When we returned to classes, two years later, the posters of the event were still on the walls. At the time, I received the proposal with a mixture of joy and surprise, since this is normally a title bestowed on long-time professors. But on second thought, this has always been a challenge I have faced throughout my career, because among foreign colleagues, for example, I was often considered too young to be a university professor, even though I already had a 30-year career.

I believe that my career has served to open paths for young female researchers of today because, in fact, people today start much younger. Finally, it was a feminist event, held on the week of the International Women’s Day and on the centenary of UFRJ. The feminine aura was present from the musical track - which started with the young Alicia Keys and ended with Milton Nascimento’s “*Maria, Maria*” - to the composition of the official board, all composed by women, including the first dean of the centenary institution.

After this autobiographical journey, and before the reliefs found in it, I see that my trajectory is intertwined with the constructing of studies in Community Communication in our country. And this was a path of affections, however tortuous it may have been. That is why I close with an excerpt from Hemingway’s *Old Man and the Sea*: “It is stupid not to hope”. ■

## REFERENCES

Blanchot, M. (1984). *La communauté inavouable*. Édition de Minuit.

- Fernandes, G., & Gabbay, M. (2014). Raquel Paiva: A comunidade em questão. In A. Strelow, I. P. Aragão, O. J. Morais, S. Jaconi & T. C. Vaz, *Fortuna crítica da Intercom: Timoneiros* (pp. 241-262). Intercom.
- Freire, P. (1977). *Extensão ou comunicação?* Paz e Terra.
- Freire, P. (1996). *Pedagogia da autonomia: Saberes necessários à prática educativa*. Paz e Terra.
- Hillman, J. (1993). *Cidade e alma*. Studio Nobel.
- Paiva, R. (2012). Novas formas de comunitarismo no cenário da visibilidade total: A comunidade do afeto. *MATRIZES*, 6(1-2), 63-76. <https://doi.org/10.11606/issn.1982-8160.v6i1-2p63-76>
- Peruzzo, C. K. (Org.). (2004). *Vozes cidadãs: Aspectos teóricos e análises de experiência de comunicação popular e sindical na América Latina*. Angellara.
- Sennett, R. (1992). *The conscience of the eye: The design and social life of cities*. W. W. Norton & Company.
- Shiva, V. (2003). *A monocultura da mente: Perspectivas da biodiversidade e da biotecnologia*. Gaia.
- Simmel, G. (1979). A metrópole e a vida mental. In O. G. Velho, *O fenômeno urbano* (pp. 10-25). Jorge Zahar.
- Santos, B. S. (2007). *Renovar a teoria crítica e reinventar a emancipação social*. Boitempo.
- Santos, B. S. (2010). *Epistemologias do Sul*. Almedina.

---

Article received on November 10, 2022 and approved on November 16, 2022.