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AND SOUND
CULTURES
- ARTICLE -



HISTORY AND SOUND CULTURES

Grandville, Jean Ignace Isidore Gérard
(1803-1847), "La Caricature", Paris, 1831-09-01

**SOUNDSCAPES:
MEMORIES OF A
FACTORY CITY
(RIO GRANDE, RS – 1950-1970)¹**

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Abstract

The article discusses the constitution of the industrial soundscape of the city of Rio Grande, in Rio Grande do Sul state, in Brazil, based on two textile factories: Rheingantz and Ítalo-brasileira (1950-1970). The text analyzes how this landscape is evoked by former workers and residents from sound signals, such as the factory whistle and others that refer to the factory context. The article is based on the concept of soundscape by Raymond Murray Schafer, approaching what the author translates as “acoustic community”. Methodologically, the article is based on the history of sensibilities field and on the importance of the sensorial regime for social relations. The results of the article point to a sound inventory and to the diversity of emotions and perceptions involved and highlight the role that sounds play in memory and identity construction.

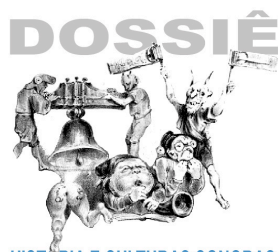
Keywords

Soundscape – Sound memory – Factory past – Rheingantz Factory – Ítalo-Brasileira Factory.

¹ Article not published in a preprint platform. All sources and bibliography used are referenced in the article. This article uses results from the study by Maria Leticia Mazzucchi Ferreira for the Doctorate in History at Pontifícia Universidade Católica do Rio Grande do Sul (PUCRS), presented in 2002, and in the Post-Doctorate study by Júnior de Olivia Silva Nery, under the supervision of Maria Leticia Mazzucchi Ferreira, funded by CNPq, process n° 151171/2020-3, at Universidade Federal de Pelotas, Post-Graduate Program in Social Memory and Cultural Heritage, conducted between 2020 and 2022.

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HISTORIA E CULTURAS SONORAS

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DOSSIÊ HISTÓRIA
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PAISAGENS SONORAS: MEMÓRIAS DE UMA CIDADE FABRIL (RIO GRANDE, RS – 1950-1970)

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Resumo

O artigo aborda a constituição da paisagem sonora industrial da cidade do Rio Grande, Rio Grande do Sul, a partir de duas fábricas têxteis: Rheingantz e Ítalo-brasileira (1950-1970). O texto analisa como essa paisagem é evocada por antigos trabalhadores e moradores partindo de sinais sonoros, como o apito da fábrica e outros que remetem ao universo fabril. O artigo se sustenta no conceito de paisagem sonora – *soundscape* –, de Raymond Murray Schafer, aproximando-se do que o autor traduz como “comunidade acústica”. Metodologicamente o artigo se baseia no campo da história das sensibilidades e na importância do regime sensorial para as relações sociais. Os resultados do artigo apontam para um inventário sonoro e para a diversidade de emoções e percepções envolvidas e destacam o papel que os sons desempenham na construção memorial e identitária.

Palavras-chave

Paisagem sonora – Memória sonora – Passado fabril – Fábrica Rheingantz – Fábrica Ítalo-Brasileira.

*When the whistle
Of the textile factory
Comes to harm my ears
I remember you
(Três Apitos, Noel Rosa)*

First whistle: initial reflections

The fragment of Noel Rosa's song that opens this article recalls a sound signal that is one of the most powerful symbols of a factory city: the factory whistle. There are numerous senses given to this sound sign that accompanied the ordinary rhythm of life, the daily and work rhythm. These senses are the ones that, recovered by the memory of the city of Rio Grande, Rio Grande do Sul (RS) state, in Brazil, in the period between 1950 and 1970, we intent to discuss in this article, considering two empirical processes and its historical processes.

Therefore, in the first part, we seek to place both textile factories studied in the context of a city that already stands out, in the 19th century, for an economy that has port activity as one of the main boosters to industrial development. That is the city of Rio Grande, located in the south coast of Rio Grande do Sul and which was one of the state's main industrial pole (MERTZ, 1991). Both companies – the Rheingantz Factory (Factory Union Company) and Ítalo-Brasileira Factory (New Factory) – were important industrial enterprises for the city's industrial scenario and were created by foreign groups, German in the Rheingantz case, and Italian in the New Factory. These origins were observed in the urban scenario through the architectural styles used in the construction of the factory buildings and the spaces associated with them, as well as in the introduction of social forms that have been consolidated inside and out of the labor universe.

In the analysis of these two cases, the sound registers recovered by memory were used, which has its main expression in the soundscape concept by Raymond Murray Schafer. According to this author, a soundscape is defined by the composition of sounds and noises that format our perception of a place, a macrocosmic composition (SCHAFER, 2001). Schafer (1994, p. 4) points out that “[the] home territory of soundscape studies will be the middle ground between science, society and the arts”, and, about this concept, Silva (2009, p. 80) says that soundscape can be understood as heard events, understanding listening as this apprehension we have of the surroundings and whose impressions, such as tracks from ephemeral stimuli, are located in zones of our sound system that are liked to emotions.

The data collected on the Rheingantz Factory were the result of a doctorate study conducted between 1998 and 2001, whose object was the recovery of the com-

pany's trajectory in the period between 1950 and 1970, through oral and document sources obtained mostly from the factory's archives. For this study, 46 interviews were conducted in an universe composed of former workers, masters and quartermasters, members of the company's technical staff, such as engineers and designers, and one member of the Rheingantz family that was part of the last board of directors before the bankruptcy decree. Regarding the Ítalo-Brasileira Factory, the data were obtained from the Post-Doctorate study⁴ conducted between 2021 and 2022 about the history and industrial heritage of the city of Rio Grande (RS). Throughout the study, over a hundred factories were identified, from diverse segments, sizes, and profiles, working in the city between 1873 and 2000. The Ítalo-Brasileira factory is one of the facilities that appeared in the period called dispersed industrialization (MARTINS, 2016), and it had a relevant role in the local factory scenario. Despite that, there is a great gap regarding it, and no studies were identified, up to now, dedicated to the history and operation of this company. The data presented here result from the investigation in a unprecedented documentation found during the post-doctorate stage and from the bibliography pertinent to the history of industrialization in the city of Rio Grande.

The memories shared as comments in Facebook media posts are also the results of the mentioned post-doctorate study. These comments were written by eyewitnesses of the local industrial past and posted on the group page *Fatos e Coisas de Antanho do Rio Grande* (Facts and Stuff from the Past of Rio Grande)⁵, created on Facebook to share and keep the local folklore, traditions and urban history alive and to recall practically mythical figures of the city⁶. That is, it is a group/community focused on local historical subjects, in which texts, images and memories regarding it are shared daily. We highlight that, besides this group, two other groups⁷ with similar objectives were identified (to publish photographs, data, and memories about

⁴ Post-doctorate study named "*Caminho fabril: patrimônio industrial da cidade do Rio Grande*" ("Factory path: industrial heritage of the city of Rio Grande") by Olivia Silva Nery, under the supervision of PhD Professor Maria Leticia Mazzucchi Ferreira, conducted in Universidade Federal de Pelotas, Post-Graduate Program in Social Memory and Cultural Heritage, with CNPq funding (PDJ) n° 151171/2020-3. Project's website: <https://caminhofabrilrg.wixsite.com/caminhofabrilrg> (accessed on: May 26, 2023).

⁵ Facebook group created on July 18, 2014, by Ronaldo Morgado and Rosana Joy, being moderated by João Paulo Afonso, residents of the city of Rio Grande; it counted, up to November 10, 2022, with 43,700 members.

⁶ Description of the group *Fatos e Coisas do Antanho do Rio Grande* (available at: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/fatosecoisasdeantanho>). Accessed on: July 20, 2022).

⁷ The group *Gostinho de Infância* (Taste of Childhood) had 16,300 members up to November 10, 2022; it is a private group created on November 28, 2015. The group *Coisas e Fatos do Rio Grande Memórias Esquecidas da História Riograndina* (Things and Facts of Rio Grande Forgotten Memories of Rio Grande History) was created on November 3, 2022, has 1,200 members and is a public group.

the city's past), with *Fatos e Coisas do Antanho do Rio Grande* being the oldest and the one with the most members, identified as public group⁸. These documents analyzed here are being used as source and object of study by other researchers in the area of Human Sciences, such as Nery (2020) – whose study examines the comments of users of a group related to the Leal Santos & C. Factory – and Costa (2021) – who analyzed the photographs and memories shared in the group about the Rheingantz Factory.

The dynamics of Facebook groups allows millions of people to interact and virtually talk through posts and comments. These last ones are understood as short memorial narratives, examples of a memory shared in social network or, as defended by Thiago Oliveira (2016, p. 118), tracks and remnants of a quick and fragmented writing, in which subjects daily expose the fears of memory erasure as a technique for the ordering of life.

For this article, all posts and comments referring to the sounds of the city's factory past were initially studied⁹. In a first moment, a total of 54¹⁰ comments in five¹¹ posts, between 2017 and 2022¹², were identified referring to the sounds emitted by the city's factories, with 51.8% (28) about the textile factories analyzed here, Rheingantz and Ítalo-Brasileira. From this total number, 60.7% are about the Rheingantz Factory and 39.3% are about the Ítalo-Brasileira Factory.

These comments are understood here as memory fragments, short writings and reports shared in social network. In a similar work, the researchers Paula Santos and João Albuquerque (2017) have analyzed the interaction and sharing of mem-

⁸ The public groups on Facebook allow any person to see who is in the group and what is published in it, even people who are not on this social network. In this case, due to ethical reasons, we chose to use a public group. All members are aware of the privacy and category of the group when they ask to join it. However, according to Cezarinho (2022), we chose to preserve the identity of deponents and indicate only the initial of their names. This decision is based on continuous and necessary discussions on the use of digital sources and their authorship in scientific studies.

⁹ For that, we have used the keyword search tool in the group and searched for the following words: sound/sounds, noise, whistle, and siren. Later on, all results were analyzed and only those directly related to the study's aim were considered.

¹⁰ The analysis disregarded comments that did not refer to the factory past, such as tagging other users, comments with emojis etc. To avoid analyzing comments and posts made by fake profiles, we have verified all authors of the comments used here according to Facebook's own recommendations: verifying the profile picture, friends and public posts. All these verifications were made considering the pattern of fake profiles that tend to have little information, posts only about the same subject, few friends and pictures that are not in line with the profile.

¹¹ We highlight that one of these posts was created especially for this study and it sought, by questioning "which sound or noise from the factory marked your memory the most?", in order to collect reports and memories about the industrial past and sound memories. Other posts were made by different people in distinct moments.

¹² A 2017 post with three comments; two 2021 posts with six comments; and two 2022 posts with 45 comments.

ories in the page *Recife de Antigamente* (Old Recife), also on Facebook. For the authors, in an online social network interaction space, a text, photo or video form the mosaic of a collective memory (SANTOS; ALBUQUERQUE, 2017, p. 118). In another study, Gabriela Zago and Ana Lúcia Silva (2013) have analyzed the sharing of memories and testimonials on Twitter through the use of the hashtag #memorial1109. For the authors, these tweets are understood as part of a collective memory regarding the 09/11 and contribute to a community perception that goes beyond the physical frontiers of territory (ZAGO; SILVA, 2013).

The use of social networks as historical source has been increasingly frequent in the historiographical field. The so-called Digital History has raised the debate on these uses and its respective methodological and theoretical challenges. Regarding this, we must highlight that the comments analyzed here are understood as digital documents (ALMEIDA, 2011, p. 17), originally digital ones, that is, they are created within this format and support, unlike those that have gone through a digitalization process.

It can be said that social networks are a phenomenon of the contemporary world and part of the way in which we communicate. In the perspective of Priscila Oliveira (2017), Facebook groups are one of the ways of interacting and creating connections in this digital interface, and they work as a kind of digital tribalization (OLIVEIRA, 2017, p. 70), in which users are attracted by shared themes and subjects.

Regarding the limitations and difficulties related to digital sources, especially on Facebook, Filipe Cezarinho (2022) highlights, for example, the difficulty in identifying the authorship of texts, the frequent broken links and problems in tracking pages and posts. Seeking a more methodologically rigorous treatment of these documents, the author suggests that all internet sources must be understood as the product or consequence of external relations (CEZARINHO, 2022, p. 98), which implies understanding that the comments used here are somewhat part of the nonvirtual relationships and experiences. Moreover, the internet must not be seen as a no man's land, but from a strategical point of view that seeks to control the attitudes, actions and movements of the people that aim to use it (Cezarinho, 2022, p. 97). Both Cezarinho (2022) and Almeida (2011) agree that, despite the existence of digital texts that lack information on authorship or whose original authorship is difficult to be proved, a quantitative and qualitative analysis allows the investigation of a discursive coherence (ALMEIDA, 2011, p. 24).

In this sense, Cezarinho (2022) proposes that digital sources should be analyzed through a data triangulation, considering their temporal, spatial and authorial contextualization. Therefore, the comments quantitatively and qualitatively, individually and collectively analyzed here are examined within a broader context and they dialogue with the oral and documental collected sources.

Both the comments written and shared on social networks and the oral testimonies are here perceived as expressions and exercises of memory, being analyzed qualitatively. They express the desire and will to share, either with the interviewer or with the Facebook group, the experiences lived and the memories about the industrial past of the city of Rio Grande. Despite being produced in different contexts, they demonstrate some continuities regarding the impact of sounds over the evocation of memories of the industrial past. Moreover, the diversity and characteristics of these sources allow a wider sample of a possible soundscape of the local industrial period.

Both in the academic research on the Rheingantz Factory and on the informal testimonies obtained from social networks, the sound element appears as a powerful vehicle for change. The sounds of the factories arise as sound stimuli that, as Schafer (2001) points out, are perceived as a totality, a “sound environment” of the past that contrasts with the present one of a city economically in crisis.

Rheingantz and Ítalo-Brasileira: whistles and accents of the two textile factories in the city of Rio Grande

In a strategical peninsular position, surrounded by the waters of the Patos Lake and the Atlantic Ocean, the city of Rio Grande, after the 19th century, has transformed into one of the main industrial poles of Rio Grande do Sul state, along with its neighboring city of Pelotas (MERTZ, 1991). In a context in which the agricultural and livestock economy were the main economies of the country and in which the country’s difficulties regarding industrialization were numerous, Rio Grande was the scene of an important industrialization process. The existence of a seaport and a rail network – in operation since 1864 and which allowed product exportation and importation – has attracted foreign and Brazilian investors, who sought through industries a new source of profit in the city of Rio Grande, showing that agriculture was no longer the only viable enterprise (COSTA, 2010 [1998], p. 466).

In its early days, the Brazilian industrialization was characterized by the constitution of factory companies of nondurable goods, especially the textile one. This segment represented in Brazil the first great national industrial companies (MARTINS, 2016, p. 105). As a city that began its industrialization process within this context, Rio Grande had two textile factories, among hundreds of other factory enterprises it received between 1873 and 2000, which will be the focus of our analyses. The Rheingantz Factory – or Factory Union Company, as it was known – was at the base of the urbanization and modernization process of the city of Rio Grande. Founded in 1873 by Carlos Guilherme Rheingantz in a limited partnership, it was

initially called Rheingantz & Vater¹³ and it benefited primarily wool, which came from rural properties in the regions of Bagé, Livramento, Uruguaiana, and Santa Vitória do Palmar. Imposing itself as a pioneer in the textile industry, Rheingantz occupied the place of a great company at the end of the 19th century, reaching a productive level that covered a large consumer market, surpassing regional frontiers (HARDMAN; LEONARDI, 1982).

In 1891, the company was transformed into Factory Union Incorporated, with controlling interest of Carlos Guilherme Rheingantz, of Rhenish origins and who had experience in the industrial segment, obtained during many visits to European countries. The company was already consolidated as a wool textile factory at the end of the 19th century and, in 1901, it began manufacturing the combed yarn, base for the production of the Rheingantz Cashmere, a fabric that has become one of the products with large demand in the market. In the first decades of the 20th century, the company expanded the processing and production of wool fabrics, which implied heavy investments with machinery and the hiring of technicians from Germany. Similar to the great 19th-century industry, the Factory Union or Rheingantz Factory worked for a long time with the prevalence of German, Polish and Italian immigrant workforces.

German workers were mainly observed in the most technical departments, while Italian, Polish and Portuguese were concentrated in the production. The presence of Italian immigrants, for example, was noticed through an official letter issued by the Company's board of directors in 1909, addressed to Italy's consular agent, which registers the donation of one *conto de réis* destined to the survivors of the great misfortune that has just affected the Italian people, which is made considering the large number of Italians and Brazilians of Italian origin employed in the factory. While the Germans were notably present in the first three decades of the 20th century and after World War II, which is observed in the employee's files of the company's Personnel Department (FERREIRA, 2002). During Carlos Guilherme Rheingantz's administration, the factory implemented innovative social measures, such as the construction of houses for workers and masters and the Mutuality Society, kept with the contribution of employees for the maintenance of a health service and a storehouse, where basic products could be bought at low prices. Besides that, the Relief Fund Carlos G. Rheingantz was created, which instituted the concession of benefits for widows, workers disabled due to labor accidents and newly-weds. It also established other measures, such as providing a daycare with nursery, the cre-

¹³ Report of the Commercial Association published on April 19, 1887, on the newspaper *Diário de Rio Grande*.

ation of the School Group Commander Rheingantz and the installation of a night library and school,¹⁴ which worked in the dependences of the factory. All these measures were essential to build the company's image as the best place to work in the city, an information that recurrently appears in the reports of former workers.

From the end of the 1940s until the mid-1950s, the company kept a stable production level, mainly due to the increment it received as the supplier of wool blankets for the Brazilian army during World War II. At the end of the 1950s, undermined by internal conflicts, the factory sought to modernize its building and the production system, so to make front to the competition of the national and Platine market. For that, it implemented in 1955 the Industry Training Service, whose theoretical matrix of North American origin was called TWI (Training Within Industry).¹⁵ Operated by SENAI (National Service for Industrial Training, created in 1947), TWI aimed to conduct trainings with diverse segments of production, leadership and administration, with the goal to organize and rationalize work. The intervention led to structural changes that allowed to widen spaces and the control in all production segments. The next phase was to hire a North American industrial consultancy and planning company that, from 1956 to 1958, implemented measures that changed deeply the organicity of an institution that still had a predominantly family controlling interest.

Hiring the North American company intensified the internal disputes, worsening even further the financial health of the company. In the memory of the interviewees, this period was characterized by delays and the subsequent suspension of production, followed by a grave social crisis and the closing of the company in 1968.

The history of the Ítalo-Brasileira Spinning and Weaving Company begins in 1893. Its founder, Giovanni Henseberger, came from the Italian city of Genoa. According to the information registered in the company's memory book¹⁶, in 1893, Giovanni Henseberger started in Rio Grande the negotiations involving the choice and purchase of the best lands to settle the factory. Just as it happened with the other factory facilities in the city, such as Rheingantz, the decision for the industrial in-

¹⁴ Bulletin of the Factory Union Company (CUF), 1956.

¹⁵ Report of the National Service of Industrial Apprenticeship, year 1955.

¹⁶ Manuscript memory book about the Spinning and Weaving Company Rio Grande, dating from 1950, written by Alfredo Mariani, the company's bookkeeper at the time. The book includes transcriptions of correspondences and other company documents, original documents attached to it and information on the factory's history. Alfredo Mariani, responsible for the book, writes, in its closure: "With the forementioned news, I finish this manuscript that, to give it a name, I will call 'Memories of the Spinning and Weaving Company Rio Grande'. It was inspired in me at the time I dedicated my activity to the organization of the Company's Archives, so that, from this work of mine, some useful and tangible memory could remain (...)" (MARIANI, 1950, free translation). Archive of the Museum of the City of Rio Grande.

vestment in Rio Grande was directly related to the existence of the seaport and the rail network. In a letter written to Genoa partners, Hensemberger told them that:

Attached here I refer to you a drawing of the lands acquired that, along with the road granted to us by the Municipality, sum to 42,000 square meters, in a beautiful placing. From one part, we can have the rail at the Factory, and from the other, the trolley that makes the product service. I also send you the plant of Rio Grande, a city that, as Savana, has the seaport and rail network for the countryside. A perfect place and with a 20,000-inhabitant population. As you know, the city already has the Rheingantz factory, with around 700 workers, mostly Italian, and mainly Venetian ones. (...) In 30 hours one goes from here to Montevideo by regular weekly packet boats; in 50 hours, one goes to Rio de Janeiro, also weekly. With steamboats that cover the coasts of Brazil, from here to Pernambuco, we can ship our production with ease and low cost to all Brazilian cities (November 18, 1893)¹⁷.

The local advantages highlighted by the industrialist for his Italian partners praise the easy transportation, importation and exportation of products through the “seaport and rail network”. According to the registry in the factory’s memory book, the official date of the opening of the National Fabric Factory Giovanni Hensemberger and Co., as it was named in the beginning, was November 10, 1893, a day when the first land purchase operations and other preliminary commercial transaction were made and registered (MARIANI, 1950, p. 6). The factory’s facilities occupied large lands in the urban space, totaling 10,000 square meters of constructed area (MARTINS, 2016).

In 1896, the Hensemberger society was diluted, and Santo Becchi became the proprietor and solidary partner of the company. After this, the corporate name was changed to Ítalo-Brasileira Weaving Company, with headquarters in Genoa and branch in Rio Grande. The factory, which produced many types of fabric with cotton raw materials, received a significant number of Italian immigrants who arrived, since 1893, to work in the company in the most varied functions. In 1921, it went through changes in administration and direction once again, when it became an Incorporated Company, with Paulo Angelo Pernigotti as the new factory director. In 1942, probably due to the nationalist policy implemented by Varga’s New State and to the attacks to companies associated with countries belonging to the Axis¹⁸, the

¹⁷ Letter written by Giovanni Hensemberger for partners in Genoa, on November 18, 1893, and transcribed into the 1950 book *Memórias sobre a Companhia Fiação e Tecelagem Rio Grande* (Memories of the Spinning and Weaving Company Rio Grande, in free translation).

¹⁸ The New State saw potential obstacles in German and Italian immigrant communities for the consolidation of the nationalist policy, which is aggravated with the entry of Brazil in World War II and the association, especially in German colonization nucleuses, with branches of Nazism in the national

name of the factory was changed to Spinning and Weaving Company Rio Grande. In the 1960s, with the installation of the crisis¹⁹ that affected the city's industrial park, the factory fell into decline, closing its activities temporarily and being later on acquired by the fabric company Hering (RIO GRANDE INDUSTRIAL, 1966).

During the over five decades of operation, the Company has energized the factory life of the city. As this article will discuss, Rheingantz and Ítalo-Brasileira, popularly known as “New Factory” in comparison and reference to Rheingantz, were the main textile industries of the city of Rio Grande. They were located close to each other and, together, were responsible for a significant number of workers, including men, women and children. According to the collection of the city's industrial scenario conducted by the Rio Grande Industry Center in 1966, a period of decline and industrial crisis, both factories had around 1,380 permanent workers, and the social capital of both companies corresponded to Cr\$ 610,000,000 (RIO GRANDE INDUSTRIAL, 1966).

Separated by around four blocks, the two textile factories were important to the region's industrial development. The chimneys were seen from afar and took turns in their whistles during the day. Beyond the geographical proximity and the similarities regarding the textile segment, both factories, competitor in some aspects, became sound references for workers and inhabitants of the city. Between weaving machines and whistles, both companies are constantly remembered due to the typical “buzz” of the entrance and exit of work shifts. Hundreds, and even thousands, of workers quickly moved toward their new work shift or their homes, composing a striking visual and sound landscape in the city.

The industrial sound elements evoked by memory, present in the testimonies that base this article, indicate how people remembered the factory sounds, which, due to its frequency, make it possible to approach them as a strong memory prone to become a cohesion element within a certain group (CANDAUI, 2011) and as a key to recover this industrial urban context on the brink of disappearing.

territory, the so-called “German danger” to which Gertz (1991) refers. From the interdiction of teaching in German and the fear of the communication in a language other than Portuguese, it evolved to attacks by local populations with the support of security forces against factory and commercial establishments, religious temples and cultural associations, whose peak happened in July and August of 1942 (FACHEL, 2002).

¹⁹ The Rheingantz Factory and the New Factory benefited from the exportation of wool and cotton fabrics during World War II. This economic scenario, however, was not followed by changes in their production processes, which, along with the precariousness of internal sea or rail transportation, constituted positions of low competitiveness with textile industries in the center of the country (MARTINS, 2016).

The three whistles or the sound *madeleine*

“I can hear the whistle of the factories to this day”. This comment, posted in the Facebook social network as an answer to the question “Which sound or noise from the factory marked your memory the most?”²⁰, summarizes three great analytical categories that are the base of this article: soundscape, memory and factory work. The factories’ whistle is element of a urban sonority that characterized the industrial peak of the city. Thus, evoking it attests to a double meaning: the persistence of the stimulus and the observation of the loss of what it meant. This shows the *aporia* of the presence of the absence, as Paul Ricoeur (2000) defines the recollection that comes to the spirit in the form of an image, sign of something that is absent, but whose existence in the past is recognized. The “image-recollection” evoked by Ricoeur would, thus, attest to the three dimensions of memory – the presence, the absence and the anteriority –, bearing the mark of what is sensitive, which distinguishes it from imagination. Hence, the “image-recollection” is constituted of stimuli, affections and remnants of anteriority impregnated in the body and which are updated by evocation. The sound registries of an industrial landscape are not perceived as isolated acoustic elements, but by the complexity of processes that associate sounds, images and scents to a certain space that is constituted as a memorial territory. In this sense, the body is par excellence the “performative support” that bears the multiple traces of what we live, guiding our way of thinking and acting, being itself converted, through its sensory perception, into a form of intersubjective information and communication, as indicated by Joël Candau (2010). Within this perspective, the author questions how these sensorial messages connect us to the physical and social world, reporting to studies in the field of neurosciences that point out to intersensoriality, that is, not only sensations related to a specific sense can be affected by interactions with other senses, but the judgements themselves (perceptions) are altered by them (CANDAU, 2010, p. 20).

The apprehension of reality through sensorial stimuli, especially sound ones, and its updating through evocation recalls another aspect discussed by Jonathan Sterne (2003; 2020), which concerns the cultural modelling of both the language we use to describe sounds and the way we perceive them. In this same perspective, Vincent Battesti (2013) affirms that the hearing device is not neutral once we “learn”

²⁰ Post made to collect testimonies for this study, titled “Which sound or noise from the factory marked your memory the most?” and published in the group *Fatos e Coisas do Antanho do Rio Grande* on April 28, 2022 (available at: <https://www.facebook.com/photo?fbid=5552073631493003&set=gm.3243311265899946>. Accessed on: May 26, 2023).

to listen during the process of social interaction, which equally points to the idea that we perceive a space based on the sound that composes it.

It is thus through the sonority of a factory city such as Rio Grande – recovered by the evocations present in the testimonies that support this text – that we report to the notion of landscape as a form of schematization that allows for aesthetic appreciation (AMPHOUX, 1996), culturally shaped, constituted of symbolic reference points that allow us to listen, feel, smell and see our environment (PISTRICK; ISNART, 2013).

The Canadian musician and researcher Raymond Murray Schafer is responsible for the broadest and most systematic diffusion of the soundscape notion, who applied in the sound field what the landscapers of the 17th century proposed to the visual field. Schafer approaches the perception of sound as within an aesthetic unit (AUGOYARD, 1989), as an environment that involves the physical properties sounds and the way the human brain interprets and signifies these stimuli (SCHAFER, 2001).

In his work *The soundscape: our sonic environment and the tuning of the world*, Schafer (1994, p. 3) starts off from a structural idea that the “soundscape of the world is changing. Modern man is beginning to inhabit a world with an acoustic environment radically different from any he has hitherto known”. Schafer presents three main elements of the soundscape, namely: the keynote sound, such as the keynote that identifies the one of a sound environment and that is not necessarily consciously perceived, being similar to what he defines as the “ground” that exists to give shape to a “figure”; the signals, which “are figure rather than ground”, are consciously heard; and soundmarks, which are singular, distinguishing a certain community, and over which there must be protection mechanisms to avoid its disappearance (SCHAFER, 1994, p. 26-27). These characteristics indicated by Schafer allow us to think on the many sonorities present in the urban environment, with some of them singularized into what the author calls a “sound event”, which, due to its intensity, gives rise to “emotions or thoughts beyond its mechanical sensations or signaling function” (SCHAFER, 1994, p. 169). These “sound events” are the ones that enable the apprehension of sound, a fleeting stimulus by default, converting it into a memorial marker of the experience translated by the memorial narrative.

The city that can be glimpsed through the reports is circumscribed as a “sensory landscape” (SIMMONOT; SIRET, 2014) that presents, in its origin, an intangible and short-termed stimulus – the sound –, but that persists strongly once spatial, time and emotional references are associated to it. The audio memory, just as the visual, olfactory, tactile and taste ones, is identified as a sensorial memory constituted as ephemeral traces, starting points of two very elaborate processes: its recognition and its definitive conservation (CROISILE, 2009). According to Croisile (2009), sensorial traces, which come from the exterior world, have short temporal range of 2 to 3 seconds for the audio memory. However, these traces can be codified and

stabilized into what is called a short-term memory or, since memory is associative, it can evolve into long-term memory (IZQUIERDO, 2002; CANDAU, 2011; MILNER; SQUIRE; KANDEL, 1998).

The ephemeral traces that characterize audio memory can thus be converted into elements of a declarative memory, narrated, woven in the set of interposed relationships between individuals and the context they are inserted in, constituting representations of the past; so that which is updated by memory is probably different from what it was when it happened. Therefore, sound stimuli such as the ceaseless noises of the factory's weaving machines, which were originally perceived as hostile (they made it impossible to hear the person in the next machine, thus inhibiting conversations) and distressing (disorders such as constant headaches were common in the personnel files of the spinners and weavers of Rheingantz) are converted, in the recollecting present, into nostalgic and affective elements associated with a period represented as happy.

"The silence in the enormous mansion is desolating. Silent weaving machines, quiet spindles, the extinguished boiler, the silent majestic whistle, the whistle that used to sing through early hours calling its worker people for a new working day" (JORNAL RIO GRANDE, November 23, 1968, p. 2, free translation). This is how the local newspaper presents the closing of the Rheingantz factory, in 1968, almost a hundred years after it was founded. The lack of the sounds that characterized the factory facility broke out in the scenario of Rio Grande proclaiming a time of shortage and despair for workers, an introductory chapter of the economic crisis that affected the city in the two following decades, with the closing of factory enterprises in segments such as the food industry. According to Martins (2016), it is estimated that 7,000 workers have lost their jobs with the total or partial closure of the factories, in a city that had 82,000 inhabitants. The beginning of 1960 was permeated by insecurity and fears regarding the future of the city, a fact that can be observe in the local press, which revealed these feelings in its articles. That is the case of the newspaper *O Tempo* when it reported that the crisis haunted with "the spectrum of unemployment, the increase of the misery of families of limited resources, the frightening danger of the upscaling of thefts and break-ins, filling thousands of people with terror" (O TEMPO, January 1, 1960, p. 1). While *Diário de Notícias*, a few weeks later, presented the crisis of the industry segment:

To get an idea of the evolution of Rio Grande industrial problem, one can cite, according to information collected from memory, the closure (partial or total) of factory enterprises and the appearance of others, in a large lapse of time. Companies that closed activities in Rio Grande: (1) filament, mat and sack factory, which today produces only sacks and burlap; (2) the Leal Santos stamp and nail factory; (3) cigar factory, now reduced to only a third of its normal production; (4) espadrilles factory, destroyed by fire and not rebuilt; (5) Gallo conserve factory

(fruits and seafood); (6) Ruthier ink factory; (7) Pavão oil factory (lack of raw material); (8) municipal milk warehouse; (9) Spinning and Weaving Company Rio Grande; and (10) Swift Company (DIÁRIO DE NOTÍCIAS, February 14, 1960, p. 12, free translation).

The crisis scenario placed in the city and portrayed by the many news in local press indicates the end of the city's first industrial phase and its reflections on the lives of the population. This moment of great losses led to a grieving feeling, perceptible both in the individual and collective level, a grief that became a time and memorial marker in the narratives of this period. In this way, sounds, along with other sensorial elements, start to compose a time that is only accessible through memories of the shared objects and narratives.

The Park Line: the path between Rheingantz and the New Factory²¹

The doors of the Rheingantz Factory closed in October of 1968 due to an internal crisis and the economic context of the end of the 1960s²². This moment is represented in some narratives as a turning point between two times, the one of work bringing meaning to life, and the one of its suspension, indicating precariousness, abandon, and death. The perception of the sounds that used to involve the daily work is being changed in the speeches of the interviewees, which go from the description of the noises belonging to the factory and their labor and social universe to the silence that was instituted with the interruption of production and the shutdown of the machinery. In the memory of the former weaver Diva Soares, the change in daily noises is evoked as one of the signals of that time of activity shutdown. In this sense, space and sounds merge in a dark testimony in which the voice itself is distinguished by the grave tone when recalling the daily path made by the workers during commuting to the factory:

²¹ The so-called Park Line is the urban path that begins in the entrance of the city, crossing the portal that represents a sewing machine, entering into the current Presidente Vargas Avenue, going through the factories Rheingantz, Ítalo-Brasileira, and following toward the center of Rio Grande.

²² The reasons that led to the bankruptcy process of the company belong to different orders. In a broader scope, the difficulties it faced to modernize its productive processes and the factory plant itself, so to introduce the synthetic thread, for example, put it in disadvantage in the competition with other textile companies in the South and center of the country. In the internal scope, the breakdown of a family company order, whose presence was already felt after 1955, was sped up by the measures considered as mistaken and polemic taken by the last director of the Rheingantz lineage.

It was that bunch of girls, and the ones that lived farther as me would go picking the others up on the way... I recall we used to shout “look, the time” for the girls and, when we arrived at the factory, it was everybody at the same time, they used to make a line, everyone wanted to arrive early because at the time of the metal plates they stayed in a board and they put a glass door, that is, you had to get the plate, but if the whistle blew and you were still holding the plate, they would fire you on spot (...) there was a day I was late and the girls called me at the door, but I did not hear, so I left running alone, I went down the Buarque de Macedo and when I turned to the 2 de Novembro²³ I saw the black-cloaked man²⁴, so I ran a lot and when I got to the factory, everybody was already at the door saying that they had announced that it was going to shutdown... then the saddest time began... (SOARES, 1999).

In Diva’s report, the “black-cloaked man”, an urban phantasmagoria character, appears as one of the signs of the tragical path that leads to the closure of the company’s activities. For many months, the workers, instructed by the local union, did their shifts without being able to work as the company was not able to sell its stocks nor obtain raw material for the production. With the paycheck delays, which piled up, the shortage of resource started being a constant in the life of the workers, leading to conditions of extreme precariousness and despair. This period strongly contrasts with the previous one, represented in the testimonies as the time of the operating factory and of the life that circulated through it, with the sound environment as one of the essential axes of memory.

The factories’ whistles were modulators of the work time, but equally of the daily life of a city as Rio Grande. The references to the work shift beginning and end sound signals appear as registry of local inhabitants, being recurrent in the testimonies and posts referring to the Rheingantz Factory and the New Factory, such as:

I remember the Rheingantz siren. It was very small when it stopped working. I used to stay at my grandma’s house because my mom worked. When the siren blew, grandma used to say that my grandpa was coming. And if the house clock did not ring, she would get it right because of the factory whistle (L. S., 2022).

The factory whistle, thus, goes beyond its original function, to mark out the work shifts, and it informs urban daily rhythms, as present in the testimonies: “I remember the whistle of the New Factory, where Big is nowadays. At 11:30, it would

²³ The Buarque de Macedo street is one of the main throughfare of the Cidade Nova neighborhood, originally a place of concentration of immigrants and workers of the textile and food factories. While the 2 de Novembro street is a connection lane between the Buarque de Macedo street and the Rheingantz Avenue, where the factory building is, and in it there are two municipal cemeteries, hence the origin of its name.

²⁴ In the urban imagery, the “black-cloaked man” is a phantasmagoria, the spirit of a young man who travelled through the worlds of the living and the dead.

blow and my grandmother would say: ‘it’s already eleven thirty, I’m late for lunch’” (K. M., 2022); “I remember the New Factory whistle would blow a quarter to seven, the time I had to get up to go to São Francisco School” (R. L., 2022); “we would set the clock according to the New Factory’s whistle” (L. B., 2022); “at noon, it blew for lunch, we could listen wherever we were... good times” (V. R., 2021).

Other signals were equally integrated in the soundscape that involved the factories, such as the sirens activated in case of accident in the factory facilities. In this sense, not only workers but also the community around the factory could identify these whistles, as informed by the wife of a member of the Rheingantz technical board:

I remember a funny fact, because they [the workers] had to rehearse for firefighters and, on a Saturday morning, I was in front of the house and an elderly man comes, a very discreet person, running and with the boots on his shoulder... What happened is that he was trying shoes at a store on the 24 de maio when the factory whistle blew, so he left running and had no time to put on the boots (BULLA, Lalá, 1998).

Among the sonorities created by the factories, there are the ones produced by the daily commuting, on foot, by groups essentially composed by women that would gather due to the closeness of their households, and that would make sounds created by the type of shoes they wore to work. Within a domestic economy based on restrictions, the clothes and shoes had to answer to what was necessary to perform labor activities. In this sense, the reports of workers inform of the functionality of clogs, which were rustic and with wooden soles, sold at low prices at the popular stores of the city’s Public Market, as mentioned by one of the interviewees when referring to the local weather: “the cold would freeze us because we only had one coat and wool socks that I would wear with the clogs” (BRITTO, 1998).

The group of young workers walking through the Rio Grande mornings is printed in audio memory as one of the elements that characterize the daily dynamics of a worker city, as it can be seen in the report by Heldwig Ellen Bersch, whose father was master of the weaving department and, thus, had the right of living in the so-called “Rheingantz houses” reserved for German technicians:

When I was little, I remember that the women would all go wearing clogs. Early in the morning we would listen to the noise of the clogs’ heels. When it rained, they would put a burlap sack on their heads. After the war, they started wearing galoshes, rain boots, gabardines, umbrellas, that is, we precisely saw the economy growth in purchase power of these people. They started to purchase things and were no longer wearing clogs, they had sandals, shoes. Also, the clogs, the ones that had more purchase power would buy a sandal-like clog, with tied to the feet. But

it had wooden soles, and we could hear very clearly that noise: *tac, tac, tac* and we knew the people were already coming to the factory (BERSCH, 1998).

Walking “tapping the clogs” became a common expression and it refers to this item of both feminine and masculine attire, used in the work routine and that composes this mosaic of sounds that can be recognized as a sound identity of the factory city that was Rio Grande.

Within the factory facilities, the machinery noise conferred an almost monodic to the environment, making the workers voices almost inaudible, forcing them to look for alternatives for the rare moments of relaxation and talking. In Delphina Guarte’s testimony, it is possible to see the communication strategies established in a space filled by the continuous noise of the machinery:

Since I liked to talk a lot and I stayed alone in a corridor with a machine, I liked when the thread tore, because then a lot of people would come and, as it was being mended, we would chat... It was a group of girls, you know how it is... I liked because one would get past behind the other and talk about a ball, a party, one thing or the other, but this was all hidden (GULARTE, 1998).

The machinery sound constitutes, along with the other factories’ sound elements, one of the signs of its aliveness also recognized by passersby and residents for the areas surrounding the factory enterprises, as shown by comments such as these: “I remember the sound of the weaving machines of the Rheingantz when I passed by it on the street” (I. A., 2022) and

the sound that I do not forget and that would make me shiver was a machine, I don’t know which one, that made this terrible noise, we would go by in the sidewalk and, while we did approached there, I would already be feeling scared, and when this part was over, it was a relief (A. G., 2022).

Over the machinery sounds, which worked as a kind of soundproofing to other noises, making it harder for workers to communicate, the grave voices of the masters were superimposed, who would make themselves listened usually as an expression of admonition to the workers. The testimonies obtained in the study on the Rheingantz Factory frequently allude to the masters that shouted orders or harsh reprehension words, contrasting with the few masters that clashed with this behavior. By the side of the “tormentor” masters, using here the expression of some interviewees, it was common for the treatment of the workers to be mainly characterized by loudly spoken verbal violence, so that the sound would echo through the whole department, challenging the sound environment characterized by the monotonous repetitive sounds of the machinery. Opposed to that, some reports in-

dicating dissonant behaviors from other bosses, as the one that was known as master Carlos²⁵, as it appears in Diva Soares's testimony, by saying that:

(...) most of them were like that, if you wanted to say something, they would make you rush, you come in blasting orders in the department, while this master Carlos, when he could or when he saw that we were having problems, he would come to talk to you, low, and would say good morning, good morning... Only that it was almost impossible to hear because the noise was terrible, but he would greet us (SOARES, 1999).

Another element that composed the soundscape of facilities such as Rheingantz and the New Factory was the diversity of languages and accents found in factories characterized by a great contingent of foreign workforce.

In this sense, Rheingantz was, since its foundation, marked by the sound environment and translated the different idiomatic origins of its technical body, especially the masters and quartermasters, but also in the work body, since it was common – as indicated by data from interviews and functional documents obtained in personnel registries – for the factory to hire foreign people and even ones coming from other federation states, as the workers from Pernambuco who arrived at the Rio Grande port in the 1950s to be incorporated to the work in the weaving department. The factory's social universe was composed by different ethnic groups, which can be verified in a larger scale by the city's own constitution. Once it was the only seaport in the South, the city attracted, at the end of the 19th century and beginning of the 20th century, a wave of immigrants from different national origins, connected to urban activities, especially trade and services (MARTINS, 2016).

As an interviewee affirms, “there were a lot of foreign people, the factory had it all, my parents themselves came from Italy, but there were Portuguese, German, Hungarian, Polish people, you could hear all languages being spoken in there” (ALKIM, 1998). The sound chart inscribes the many languages and origins under a seemingly homogenization. However, the ethnic origin was associated with distinguishing elements measured by the individual's knowledge or social position at the place of origin. The idiomatic characteristic is thus key to understand the hierarchical processes that characterized the factory environment, both internal and externally. Within the company's organizational structure, until the 1950s, the director and department master positions were given to German workers, who used their mother tongue for their daily communication, hence making it impossible for the worker body, who did not master the language, to understand it. This was seen by

²⁵ Karl Hulverscheidt, who worked at Rheingantz from 1928 to 1969 as master in the carpet department.

the workers as an insuperable barrier that separated them from the ones that had power and authority in the factory.

Even though German employees were the ones that had the highest positions in the company, the obtained data show that other elements, such as technical knowledge domain and social origin, played an essential role for individual recognition. One example is the case of Zoltan Solimossi, who had, along with this wife, migrated from Hungary to Brazil during World War II. Solimossi presented himself at Rheingantz as an engineer and equipped with a noble title of baron in his homeland. As one of the interviewees pointed out, “they apparently came running from Nazism and, back in their country, they were high-society people, but the couple’s reasons for coming here were never dully clarified” (BULLA, Américo, 1998). Solimossi’s social origins allowed for his entrance in the exclusive universe of the company’s board of directors, having received some advantages, such as the right to use one of the houses destined to the masters and being admitted into the social circle attended by the German directors and technicians.

The distinction, and consequent segregation, was equally observed in the space in which coexisted Germans and their descendants, foreign people from high social classes and the rest of the population of quartermasters and workers that inhabited the so-called “Factory Houses”, referring to the set of houses for masters and high rank employees of the company, usually individual units in lands with landscaping and second floor, while the quartermaster and common workers’ homes were called “row houses”, semidetached and with no setback from the sidewalk. This coexistence was characterized by limitations imposed by a social and ethnic order, as in the testimony of Heldwig Bersch (1998):

we got along with Hulverscheit’s children, who were our age (...), but there was a distinction, so much that, after we started studying at the Joana D’Arc school, the path was the same, so we started to get along with the daughter of the master carpenter, he was Polish, and that was not taken well by the directors, who sent for my father.

Still within a context of power attributions essentially related to ethnical origin, it is possible to say that the crisis at the Rheingantz company was equally a crisis within the administrative structures that affected the hierarchical position of Germans within the factory. This was unleashed by the management’s hiring of a North American company charged with establishing a modernization process in the company. The entrance of the North Americans is seen as a drastic intervention in the company’s organizational system and specially on the relationship with German masters, who, by not mastering English, found themselves deprived of the decisions and reacted in different ways, besides reporting for the local plan the historical context that marked the downfall of Germany and the end of World War II.

The presence of the North American is thus an element activated by the audio memory, recovered by the interviewees as an unknown language that enters the factory's multi-lingual universe for a short period, leading to estrangement and, according to reports, being the prelude to the end of the Rheingantz Era.

In the soundscape that involves the factory universe, one of the spaces that frequently appears in testimonies is the one composed by the crowd seen at the end time of the morning and afternoon shifts. Considering that the number of women that worked in the textile factories was considerably higher than the number of men, the exit time is characterized by the hurried movement in the morning shift, given that they had little time for lunch, especially those who had to provide meals for their families. At the end of the afternoon shift, the scenario uncovered by the narratives referring to Rheingantz carried fathers, husbands and boyfriends who waited the female workers leaning on the wall of the municipal cemetery that was in front of the main factory building. This space was converted into a noisy meeting among people who updated information on different subjects and into a discussion forum about the factory's situation once the crisis set in, in the end of the 1950s. The shift end time is thus a component of a soundscape that was also perceived by the inhabitants of the factory's surroundings, which appears in the report that "the Rheingantz factory whistling the end of the shift... I would stay at the window waiting for them to pass... I miss that" (R. S., 2022).

This crowd reproduced by the sound and image memory gradually disappears in front of the emptying of the workplaces, the lack of sounds that were the record of life. The factories whistles are imposed with silence as the witness of what had existed, allegorically represented in Heldwig Bersch's narrative. She associated the date of her father's death, in 1972, master Fischer, with the symbolical death of the factory, saying that "when the hearse with my father's coffin passed in front of the factory, it was the last time the whistle blew" (BERSCH, 1998). The cease of the whistle is here understood as a metaphor of death, the transformation of the soundscape and environmental scape that was observed at the end of the 1960s and was stressed in the following decades due to the crisis caused by the closure of industries that employed a considerable number of workers.

Soundscape: a history of what is sensible

Recovering the trajectory of the two textile factories approached in this text was a methodological choice that considers the memorial narrative as one of the prisms through which one can recover the historical, social and cultural contexts in which it is inserted. This option comes closer to the notion of memory as an al-

ways problematic interpretation and reconstruction of the past, as pointed out by Halbwachs (1990), established in the set of relationships between individuals and society, seeking to become an element of cohesion and identity.

The testimonies obtained in the studies conducted in different moments of the industries, in the city of Rio Grande, revealed a deeper and more emotional dimension that could not be accessed through the sources such as the official company's. This dimension would be like an image captured from an angle of a base that comprises the individuals and their sensorial system, an individual data that, however, is not restricted to the absolute particularity: the formation of looking, listening, feeling, tasting and smelling is based on a system of information that comes to us through the social. In its turn, this image in an individual prism is added to others, again and again, constituting a coherent set of data. Therefore, by seeking to reproduce sounds, gestures, scents, tastes and feelings that are the body's connections with the external world, the memory takes us back to a factory scenario that is expanded in multiple direction, from the inside of the 19th-century factories to their outside, the urban and social space in which they are inserted, with the soundscape as an acoustic shell that informs us of these connections.

However, if the concept of soundscape allows us to capture the complexity of the factory space through sensory perceptions from the testimonies, one must ask how does this concept dialogues with the historical research and the researchers' perspective of "reconstructing" a past time whose vestiges disappear at every moment. In this sense, it is fundamental to think that these registries are inserted in the field of sensitiveness, of the "affective life" mentioned by Lucien Febvre (1941) in an article that is a theoretical reference for this field. Febvre tells us about emotions that are undoubtedly born in their own organic background but are the result of common life experiences, an inter-individual dimension, as pointed out by the author, thus able to become clues for understanding the real. The system of emotions mentioned by Febvre takes on more precise contouring in the work by Alain Corbin (2016), especially in his study on silence, almost a counterpoint to the one that guides us in this text, which is the soundscape. However, seen as complementary, silence and sound can, in Corbin's perspective, act as the "wide angles", lenses that can lead us to plans not immediately revealed, once they are part of the unspeakable: silence can, in certain conditions, reveal fear and terror (CORBIN, 2016, p. 9), also recollection, a condition for asceticism and for the immersion in spirituality, the passage from life to death.

The great challenge, which was already announced by Lucien Febvre in his approach to sensitiveness, is to convert an ephemeral data such as the stimulus – sound ones, in this case – into historical data, or an "eternal stone", employing the expression that Simonnot and Siret (2014, p. 2) use to define heritage. The authors

refer to the exhibition that happened in Nantes, in 2011, called “Nantes’ perfumes — smelling, seeing, and listening the city from yesterday and today”²⁶, whose aim was to propose the valorization of the most paradoxical and evanescent heritage: the sounds and scents of the city’s past. The scents and sound associated with the industrial scenario of the city in the beginning of the 20th century were converted into exhibition objects, thus proposing a valorization of the sensitive. The recovery of a city from the past as a living environment crossed by multiple flows and sensations connected to its industrial activities and that partly determine its qualities and identity (SIMMONOT; SIRET, 2014, p. 3-4) presides here over the notion of “sensitive heritage”. This expression is used by the authors to question the pertinence of the use of a concept that refers to what is apprehensible (being material or immaterial) against the ephemeral, unique and irreproducible character (SIMMONOT; SIRET, 2014, p. 4) of stimuli and sensations. Using these reflections, we sought to broaden our own analyses of the potential of memory to reproduce the soundscape, and use this last one as a resource to recover a certain social and environmental context. In other words, using sensitiveness as another social intelligence, a new form of understanding the past (MAZUREL, 2014) is what justifies the methodological path.

The history of the sensitive would cover, according to Bodiou and Mehl (2015), three great axes: the one of senses as the engine of perception; the one of the sensorial environment described as a sound, olfactory, gustatory and visual scape; and the one of perception centered on emotions and how they act over the individuals and the social group. At the crossway of these three axes one can turn the past sound stimuli, associated with the world of the factory work, into indexes through which it is possible to measure the permanence of these factories in the collective memory. These indexes also allow us to recover the nexuses that used to be constructed between the public (the factory, the urban layout, the social, political and economic life of a city) and the private (the intimacy of the house, the perceptions and representations, the city seen through the window). And, going further, to perceive both ways of knowing the world that Pesavento and Langue (2007) recovers based on Roland Barthes’s category, the *studium*, referring to the set of knowledge of the world, which is deductive and explains reality, and the *punctum*, referring to the sensitive relationship of the self with the world (PESAVENTO; LANGUE, p. 13). There are not exactly frontiers between one dimension and another, between explicative and deductive, on one hand, and evocative and emotional, on the other. Both of them cover the individual in its experience that is unique, yet possible to be shared, once

²⁶ Free translation of the original: *Parfums de Nantes — Sentir, voir et entendre la ville d’hier et d’aujourd’hui*.

it is social and historical (PESAVENTO; LANGUE, p. 14). By applying this affirmation over the factory soundscape, we indicate what Meneguello (2017, p. 27) emphasizes as the need to discover the historical dimension of the urban sounds and of a listening activity that allows it to be registered. We understand that the sounds coming from the Western industrialization process are characteristic of the cultural, social, economic and landscape changes that the cities and regions experienced, changes that Schafer (2001) identifies as shading over the nature sounds. Within this contest, the factory whistle, originally designed for factory use, is converted into a marker of rhythms and temporalities produced in social.

It is important to reflect about the challenges that these objects pose to the researcher, among which is disregarding the dynamic and selective characteristic of memory. In this sense, Simonnot and Siret (2014) present the persistence of an olfactory memory associated with biscuits and perfumes produced in the city of Nantes in face of what they point out as sub-representation of other scents associated with these productions (metals, oils, gases, smokes), to which workers were daily subjected.

Even though the loss of the context and temporality that involves the production of the narrative, always a posteriori, is no exclusiveness of the history of sensitivity, it is fundamental to be clear that what we have are traces that may or may not be converted into data.

The last whistle

Sounds and silences inhabit the testimonies that are fed on emotions. The same sound signal – the factory whistle – appears as the representation of a city defined by its industries, economic strength, work posts, factory dynamics and its opposition, when their absence is evoked as the prelude of a time of shortage and sadness, as the last expression of life that ends with the symbolic passage of the funeral procession of a high-ranking employee. The sounds evoke life and draw landscapes perceptible only by the sensitive forms in which they are scrutinized by memory: the *tac tac* of the clogs, the noise of the machinery, the voices that compete with the sounds of the weaving machines, the noise of the end of the shift, the sounds of the various factories around, of the manifestations organized by the unions erupting in the apparent calm of the work, the sound of power, hierarchy, exclusion. That is how Dona Elza, a black woman, recovers through memory the time of work, in which the leisure she had after a week of double shift as a mother and tapestry-maker at Rheingantz was different to what was experienced by other workers. Elza was under a non-formal but implied rule that black people could not go to the dances of the Factory Union Club, one of the social spaces kept by the Rheingantz factory for its employees. Through Elza's experience, approached here in its singularity, it is possible

to glimpse a social group characterized by the ethnical distinction. For her, leisure was suspension, for a few hours on Sundays, of the factory and domestic environment; the moments when she, along with her husband and small children, took a tram to one of the city's central squares, where her children could play with the children of other workers. This intensity of a relaxation moment is mainly reproduced by an olfactory (the smells of the animals in the little zoo that existed in the area) and sound (the noise of children, of the “candi” vendors, a kind of caramel, and of the trams that arrived and departed) memories. *Studium* and *punctum* are intertwined and take us from the square to the factory, from the intimate and personal to the collective and social, having as its scenario a city with its “old walls” and chimneys.

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