

**Walking and expressing the city collectively, a teaching-learning  
experience in the Postgraduate Program in Architecture and Urbanism**

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#### ABSTRACT

The article experiments with methodologies for apprehending and cognizing city spaces. It shares the development of a discipline in the Postgraduate Program in Architecture and Urbanism at Universidade Estadual Paulista (Unesp) with the theoretical-methodological discussion complemented by the practice of Wandering and Cartography in a common space in the neighborhood of Vila Colonial in the city of Bauru, SP. It distances itself from the traditional representational methods of reading the city and approaches to those that express the subjective city, the traversal through the affections of bodies and environments in order to make existential territories visible and thus think about and build a city for and with the people who inhabit the place. In this methodological procedure of wandering, it recognizes the resistance to the functionalist and productivist city and expresses, through affective cartographies, which are still in the process of construction, a visual language, as a research tool that makes it possible to report on the real city.

**KEYWORDS:** Wandering. Affective Cartography. Subjective City.

#### 1 INTRODUCTION

The article accompanies and expresses the discipline “Recognition of the inhabited spaces of the city: wandering and cartography” developed in the Postgraduate Program in Architecture and Urbanism of the Faculty of Architecture, Arts, Communication and Design at Universidade Estadual Paulista - FAAC/UNESP, on-site in 2023, in the city of Bauru, SP.

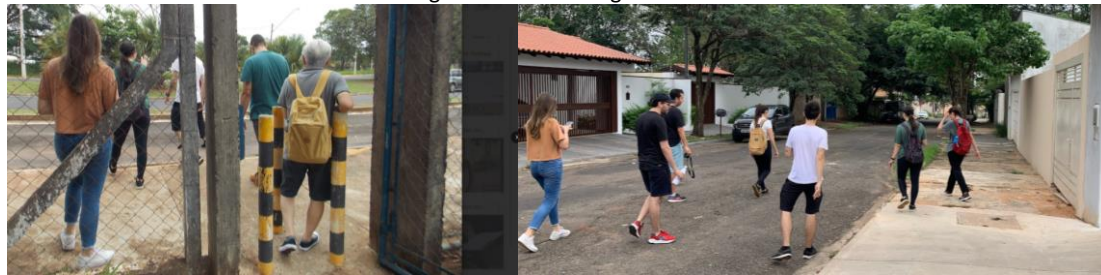
The academic experimentation stimulates the construction of methodological alternatives for apprehending and cognizing the spaces inhabited in the city, distancing ourselves from what is hegemonically determined as an intention for the actions of bodies with the environment. It points out to students the possibility of identifying and recognizing the city in its multiplicities, diversities and singularities of its spaces and bodies, approaching methods and theoretical conceptions that consider interdisciplinary relationships, crossed by the weaves of the intensities of forces and affections<sup>1</sup> between bodies, ambience, composing with history (time) and geography (territory), aiming to resignify the inhabited spaces qualified for the production of life and reality.

From textual discussions to spatial experimentation through the practice of wandering (Figure 1) and cartography, it makes the apprehension and cognition of the city subjective, in the recognition between bodies and ambiances crossed by affections.

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<sup>1</sup> Spinoza delineates affect as “[...] the affections of the body, by which its power to act is increased or diminished, stimulated or restrained, and, at the same time, the ideas of these affections” (Spinoza, 2009, p. 93). Passage translated by the authors. See more in: DELEUZE, G. *Espinoza: Filosofia prática*. São Paulo: Escuta, 2002, pp. 55-60.

Figure 1 – Wandering Practice



Source: Research Group “Project, Architecture and the City” (2023).

The student’s group was made up of students from various medium-sized cities in the interior of the states of São Paulo and Minas Gerais, who in the Postgraduate Program are guided by different theoretical and methodological actions, making up a multiplicity and heterogeneity of scientific knowledge in the construction of a unique experiment. Thus, the experiment is now presented in an innovative way compared to the activities previously conducted by the “Project, Architecture and the City” research group. The group explores similar methodological practices in undergraduate disciplines, but the current approach stands out by involving a diversity of researchers from different methodological approaches and postgraduate studies at master’s level. This gives the process a more critical and participatory character, exploring new discussions.

The theoretical-methodological module seeks a rapprochement with the philosophy of difference of Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, the concerns of Guy Debord, the cognitive and behavioral psychology of Virgínia Kastrup and Eduardo Passos, crossed by the reflections of architects and walking artists such as Francesco Careri, Paola Berenstein Jacques, Eduardo Rocha, Iazana Guizzo, among others.

In this way, immersed in the rhizomatic movement of the weaving of the thoughts studied, with many loosened, open and confusing lines, the practice is made. Walking, crossing spaces, meeting the other, immersing oneself in the atmosphere of the environment, connecting with the multiple times activated by memory, deterritorializing<sup>2</sup> to express the production of reality were the challenges posed to everyone.

## 2 THEORETICAL-METHODOLOGICAL PROCEDURES

The academic experimentation carried out developed discussion meetings on texts by authors with alternative theoretical-methodological approaches in an attempt to express the rhizome of the weaving of relationships between the body and the city environment, approaching affective apprehensions, collective cognitive processes and moving away from representational means that are supposedly objective and neutral.

The article is concerned with the construction of a collective narrative composed with the effects of contagion and intervention (Kastrup, 2023), beyond the identification of objective, productive and functional relations, with the apprehension of relations of resistance, deviation,

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<sup>2</sup> Briefly, deterritorialization refers to the movement through which one moves away from the territory, “it is the operation of the escaping line” where agencies are deterritorialized (DELEUZE; GUATTARI, 1995). Passage translated by the authors.

loosened lines and aberrant movements that escape this objective and hegemonic representation, seeking to express transversal forces that inhabit space.

The evolution of the concept of wandering runs through the theoretical and methodological discussions. The layers of content range from the flannances of Charles Baudelaire and João do Rio, to the modern ramblings of the surrealists and lyricists, from Debord's situationist drifts (2003 [1958]) to Careri's walk and stop (2017) and the experiments of the "Project, Architecture and City" Research Group at Universidade Estadual Paulista - UNESP, which leads the process developed in the discipline.

This experimental and procedural method seeks to learn by immersing oneself in the city's environment, opening oneself up to the movements of forces and affections between body and environment, creating constructive playful situations, letting oneself be accompanied by events, being able to meet the other at random, in this practice of indeterminate walking, getting lost in order to get to know (Careri; Chaparim; Caon, 2022).

In this way, walking as a methodological practice recognizes the city in its multiplicity and heterogeneity of its spaces and diversity of its bodies (Deleuze; Guattari, 2011), attentive to the traces, footprints and vestiges crossed by affections and the thick layer of heterogeneous material and immaterial times, which express, in this way, the coexistences, the simultaneities of these singular conflicting or pacified territories, in constant movements of transformation.

This spatial experience recognizes dissent and urban conflicts as legitimate and necessary for the composition of the public sphere and public spaces. These relationships between bodies and environments, neither planned nor pacified, enhance the construction of a less spectacular, more playful and experimental city, which intensifies and stimulates the feeling of belonging to the place and values the non-functional and unproductive system.

In this sense, the rhizomatic approach opens up to understanding the production of life in its complexity and processuality. It deals with the connections between bodies and environments, which are multiple, heterogeneous and singular, where all the points connect, without hierarchical or central restrictions, enhancing lines of escape and resistance, opening up the space for reconfigurations and recreations, beyond hierarchical determinations, already given and stabilized or pacified. This thinking is close to the open map, "[...] aimed at experimentation anchored in reality", open, dismantlable, reversible, subject to permanent modifications, always with multiple entries, unlike the decal, which "[...] always returns 'to the same'"<sup>3</sup> (Deleuze; Guattari, 2011, pp. 17-22). In this way, expressive cartography is used to compose the rhizome and make affections visible.

Cartography emerges as a process, from the readings and discussions in the classroom, moving into the everyday space of the city, to the reterritorialization of the body affected by the space which, in the end, explores its experiences in a collective atmosphere, trying to express the space traveled in multiple visual languages. Cartography is the methodological procedure that makes visible the crossings of relationships and affections between bodies and environments, moving away from established apprehensions and traditional representations in an attempt to express this recognized affection in another way (Deleuze, 2007). The collections,

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<sup>3</sup> Passages translated by the authors.

the smells, the encounters are transferred into expressive potential and make up an open map (Figure 2), playful and existential.

Figure 2 – Cartography Practice



Source: Research Group “Project, Architecture and the City” (2023).

In this sense, a collective artistic language is developed, taking advantage of the individual potential of each student with their artistic mastery, building visual compositions by juxtaposing collected objects, captured and printed images, shapes, colors, words, strokes and gestures that carry the challenge of expressing sensations, meanings, dynamics and invisibilities. Beyond simplicity, the process becomes arduous and liberating, as it deterritorializes already created and petrified bodies, which once again understand the power of free and intense communication.

The practice is based on the idea of Collage (Fuão; Santos, 2023), which goes against standardized rules, built on the emergence of chaos, engendering parts cut out of photos and drawings, now removed from their established order, in their multiple possibilities of arrangements that make it possible to make the recognized forces and affections visible in the open, expressed in their movement with modulations, intensities, connections and agencies, potentially expressing the processual. In this way, it is

(...) a movement of creation, where idealizations and representations of wholeness fall apart, need to be forgotten, so that we can build a new possible world. It exists to disturb, to criticize, to give an opinion. It's a language of disaccommodation, and it doesn't seek to accommodate anything, it's an antilanguage, which shouts against any syntax. (Fuão; Santos, 2023, p. 11)<sup>4</sup>

Thus, the cartographies express, through visual language, this intensity of the weaving of relationships between bodies and environments. It is an open-ended process for apprehending and cognizing the real city, an approach that makes visible in the rhizome the agencies of bodies that resist the functional and productive logic that activates the existential values of the city.

The work points to the potential of this methodological tool to stimulate the diverse bodies that make up the city, to make visible and activate these multiple, heterogeneous and diverse existential territories as possibilities for the shared construction of a less spectacular but more humanized city.

<sup>4</sup> Passage translated by the authors.



### 3 SPACE EXPERIMENTATION

With the theoretical-methodological content still open from the discussions held, still with many noises and gaps in a process of building scientific knowledge, the work is complemented by a practical application in a common space in the city of Bauru. Within the economic and time constraints of a postgraduate program subject, the wandering took place near the FAAC/UNESP campus, in the Jardim Colonial neighborhood.

The group of eight Architecture and Urbanism graduates, aged between 24 and 30, from various cities in the interior of São Paulo and Minas Gerais, only one of whom had been familiar with the methodology since graduation, carried out the practical experiment of wandering.

At the start of the practice, the GPS on the participants' individual cell phones was connected to record the route taken. The logbook accompanied the entire journey, recording the impressions, sensations, dialogues, in short, the crossings of the affections apprehended (Figure 3). The photos captured by the cell phone also helped in this process to compose the cartographies using *collage*.

Figure 3 – Wandering/GPS Route and the Logbook



Source: Research Group “Project, Architecture and the City” (2023).

So, on a sunny Tuesday morning, the group walked through a residential neighborhood and began the process of getting lost in order to get to know it. Trying to free themselves from the determinations of urban planning, the body interacts in the environment according to the affections that run through them (Figure 4).

Figure 4 – Immersion in the Ambience



Source: Research Group “Project, Architecture and the City” (2023).

In this process of deterritorialization (Deleuze; Guattari, 2011), entering the environment, intervening and opening up to the lines of deviation, of resistance, but moving away from the functionalist and productive perspective of the city, with floating and attentive attention (Kastrup, 2007), the group meets the Other at random (Figure 5), interacts, connects, inserts itself into the daily life of the neighbourhood. These are body-to-body, non-hierarchical encounters that enable a close contact that is capable of creating bonds, in which the act of presenting the fruit planted in the flowerbed makes it possible to apprehend care, affection, desire, will and change.

Figure 5 – Casual Encounters with the Bodies of the Place



Source: Research Group “Project, Architecture and the City” (2023).

This casual encounter also happens with the objects that affect the walking bodies (Figure 6). The color, texture, smell, touch, sound that touches the sensitive are collected and then, in cartographic expression, narrate the ambience experienced.

Figure 6 – Process of Collecting Bodies of Affections



Source: Research Group “Project, Architecture and the City” (2023).

The wandering as an experiment lasted two hours, and due to the weather conditions, it was tiring and exhausting. As they removed the ticks from their clothes in the corridors of the classroom, the students commented, with a satisfied look, on the city in which the bodies that inhabit it transform it creatively, reterritorializing and resignifying the production of life in the functionalist and productive city.

#### 4 CARTOGRAPHIC EXPRESSION

The construction of a collective, non-representational narrative of the spatial experimentation carried out, through a visual language, was the proposal made in the afternoon of the same day, in the classroom. The tool available to make the cartographic expression was made up of kraft paper about three meters long by one meter wide, the basis for composing a visual language with the collected objects, spatialized along the route taken (Figure 7). The students began the process of reporting on the experience, collectively, with the participation of everyone involved.

Figure 7 – Cartography with Collected Objects



Source: Research Group “Project, Architecture and the City” (2023).

The cassette tape collected was dismantled and the plastic line made it possible to demarcate the wandering path taken. The objects collected by the affections felt were superimposed and spatialized on this map. Next, the students selected and printed the color photos taken during the wandering, which could be cut out and organized following the *collage* process to build the cartographic expression (Figure 8).



Figure 8 - Cartography with the Collection plus *Collage* of Captured Images



Source: Research Group "Project, Architecture and the City" (2023).

At the end of the day and the discussions about the transitional product, the group missed the expression of the senses, the weaving of the "between" the bodies and the environment, crossed by affections. It was a report only of the affecting objects, and not of the affective rhizome.

In this sense, on the morning of the following day, using paints, hydrocolors and colored pencils, the students connected the sensitive atmosphere with shapes, colors and words, reporting on the daily life of the Colonial Village of Bauru (Figures 9 and 10), making visible its dwelling beyond the functional and productive, the existential and the nomadic, until then invisible to the walking bodies.

Figure 9 - Cartography of Forces and Affections



Source: Research Group "Project, Architecture and the City" (2023).

Figure 10 - Detail of the Cartography of Forces and Affections



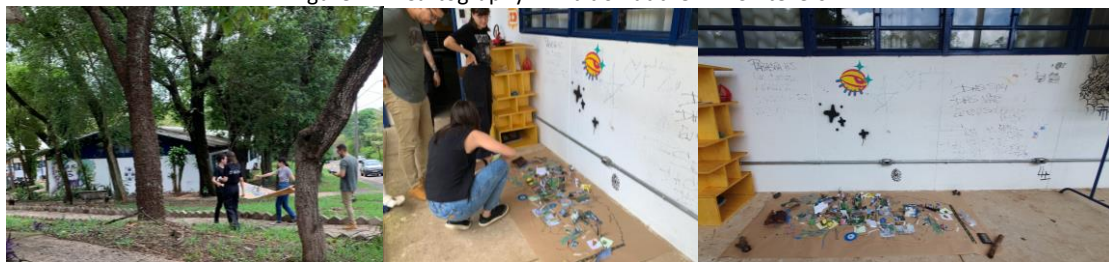
Source: Research Group "Project, Architecture and the City" (2023).

The cartographic expression, different from the traditional representation of space, relates in a non-verbal way, composing with artistic values, with non-objective and functional data, a city that needs to be visualized when thinking about any type of architectural and urban intervention.

## 5 OPEN SHARING

As a procedural method, cartography expresses an open-ended process, just like reality, which is in a constant state of transformation. Cartography always needs to be updated. As such, it needs to be shared with the bodies of the place and those outside the place. The construction of the city is collective and shared, and can only be justified in this way.

Figure 11 – Cartography Exhibition at the FAAC Ateliers



Source: Research Group "Project, Architecture and the City" (2023).

The experimentation of the course led the cartography to another space besides the classroom, in the studio spaces of the Architecture, Arts and Design courses at FAAC UNESP (Figure 11), as the beginning of a process of opening up to discussions with others, which needs to be expanded for the development of this proposed methodology, also constituting a movement of detachment from production.

This provocation placed in the students' creative space was not continued due to the end of the course, but it activates concerns in the creative processes of teaching and learning in Architecture, Urbanism, Design and the Arts. The cartography produced is also ephemeral in its materiality, because over time it has fallen apart. But, on the other hand, it remains inscribed in the bodies that made it and with the bodies that encountered and interacted with it.

## 6 REFLECTIONS IN MOVEMENT

The experiment was carried out despite the limitations of a postgraduate course, and considering that it was in its first version, it not only contributes to each student's research into whether or not to use this methodology, but also enables reflections that contribute to each student's development and evolution.

It was a process of singularization, as the experiment emerges from the protest movements of the unconscious against conventional ways of representing the world. In this context, the participants affirm other ways of being, other sensibilities, other perceptions. The discipline assumes a self-modeling function, capturing elements of the situation responsible for constructing theoretical references and practices that deviate from hegemonic actions. The procedure of making visible the invisibilities produced by the body's lack of experimentation with space leads to the discovery of territories that inhabit environments by deterritorializing and reterritorializing the city.

The difficulties of expressing this weaving of affections through bodies and environments on an open map, moving away from traditional representations of spaces, still remain, but the students are making progress, even with many gaps and noises. Without recognizing this singular city, of existential values, of the production of life, beyond the objective and functionalist, any project or intervention does not consider the city inhabited and built by the bodies that inhabit it.

The apprehension and cognition of the affections that run through this neighborhood enhance people's feelings of belonging to this place, activating actions in this territory that value life in the city, in a creative and ephemeral way, following its constant movement of transformation, considering becoming and otherness. It is through attempts to sensitize life that processes of reappropriation of subjective territories are unleashed (Rolnik; Guattari, p. 47, 2006).

The cartography is a transitory construction, with an open-ended expression that follows the flow of the changing movement of reality, which is never static, enabling a creative and ephemeral recognition that is coherent with the life of the city and always needs to be updated. The course was taught with students with different levels of knowledge and previous experience of the methodology, which did not interfere with the process of constructing the affective cartographies. As it was collective from the wandering, it was a sum of stories.

Likewise, the practice of graphic expression favored the composition of applications of visual arts techniques, according to the technical mastery of each one, but as an experiment, the students unleashed their traces, at first with few restrictions, to express the sensory values they had experienced.

As a collective production, the composition of reports accumulates, making it difficult to read the graphic expression created, indicating possibilities for creating layers of categories of apprehension and cognition with collected objects, *collage* of images and drawings, so that later, with the realization of cross-sections, certain ambiances become visible. As a procedural method, the experiment is open-ended, with the potential for further experimentation to be



carried out to add to the layers already made, in this disturbing and thought-provoking journey of shared construction of the city by and with the people who inhabit it and express their affections and make everyday life visible.

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