Antropólis Podcast: far beyond academia

Guilhermo Aderaldo

Francisco Pereira Neto

Claudia Turra Magni

Ediane Oliveira

Gabriela Lamas

We often ask ourselves: why is Anthropology, which studies the entire universe of humanity, so unknown? Why is the newest of the Social Sciences often confused with Ornithology (study of birds), with Archeology (study of material remains of peoples) and other "logies"? We do not want to unravel this mystery here, we just seek means to make it more understandable. Through the report of the construction of our podcast, *Antropólis*, linked to the Graduate Program in Anthropology at the Federal University of Pelotas (UFPel), we hope to contribute to make this fascinating area of knowledge resonate better in your ear.

Anthropology in the podosphere

The use of digital technologies in the production and dissemination of anthropological knowledge has been an exciting challenge, particularly (but not only) for the new generations. Some academic centers, such as the *Image Bank and Visual Effects* of the Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul (BIEV, UFRGS) have had great success in this regard, as revealed in the interview we did with one of its coordinators, Professor Ana Luiza Carvalho da Rocha[1]. The conditions imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic have made these technological resources unavoidable, especially for teaching.

Microphones, computers, internet and cheering for everything to work out. Author: Guilhermo Aderaldo.

In Brazil, we are experiencing political setbacks, with budget cuts, authoritarianism and worsening difficulties in working in public universities. Faced with this new scenario, we were encouraged to develop other possibilities of exchange mediated by digital resources, such as lives, podcasts, open classes, image banks, virtual exhibitions, etc. These initiatives have become promising and have enabled new ways of exchanging ideas, opening up previously unthinkable opportunities. Research centers located outside large metropolises have been able to articulate through national and even international channels, giving great visibility and "au-

---

1   Episode #11: Available at: https://open.spotify.com/episode/5OpJBOf8YUj9sqJJ3DIWT5

dibility" to their scientific production, far beyond the academic universe. Among the examples of this decentralization of production via digital channels, we have, in the city of Sobral-Ceará, the Laboratory of Memories and Daily Practices–LABOME, of the Federal University of Vale do Acaraú (UVA), which has been weaving the history of Visual Anthropology in Brazil through a series of lives with old and new generations of researchers, broadcasted on YouTube [2].

But it is digital broadcasting that we want to focus on here, and its sphere of scope has been such that the term *podosphere* has been adopted by podcast lovers. In this case, in addition to our recent experience with Antropólis, from the Federal University of Pelotas, in Rio Grande do Sul, on which we will discuss later, we can cite other podcasts that have become established outside the South-Southeast academic axis, such as *Museológicas,* from the Federal University of Pernambuco (UFPE), or the *Observantropologia,* from the Federal University of Paraíba (UFPB), both presented in chapters of this book.

But it is not just anthropological production that has benefited from the expansion of its diffusion in the podosphere. The populations that were traditionally investigated by Anthropology became protagonists in this and other communication vehicles, bringing to the scene new languages, ideas and concepts capable of transforming this area of knowledge in theoretical, methodological, pedagogical and political terms. This is the case of podcasts produced and broadcasted by indigenous populations, such as, for example: *Audio Wayuri* or *Copiô, parente*–newsletter of the Instituto Socioambiental (ISA) that brings weekly news from Brasília concerning indigenous and forest peoples.

Furthermore, the access to dialogue between anthropologists and interlocutors was another possibility that opened up in the podosphere. This is what does Mundaréu, a podcast produced in partnership between the Laboratory for Advanced Studies in Journalism (LABJOR) at Unicamp and the Department of Anthropology at the University of Brasília (theme of one of the chapters in this publication). Similar to what *Dziga Vertov* did with the film *A Man with a Camera* (1929), which revealed the film making method, this podcast exposes the way in which anthropological research is constructed. It deals with negotiations in the "fieldwork" (as the process of elaborating research data is called), the exchanges

---

2   The interviews can be seen at: https://www.youtube.com/c/LabomeVisualidades/videos

with interlocutors, including the feelings of both, their joys, pains and tensions, inseparable from the ethnographic encounter.

It is not uncommon to encounter people who are disappointed with researchers (not only anthropologists), as they feel that their knowledge was used by expertise and not shared with the researched groups. In fact, Anthropology has developed in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, in a context of colonization of European knowledge about colonized peoples. But for several decades it has pursued a "turn" in this way of doing science, recognizing the importance of "native" knowledge, bringing together and sharing knowledge and practices of researchers and research subjects. Thus, the podcasts resource can contribute to establish mediations, returns and translations of advances and results achieved by researches. In ethical terms, therefore, the podosphere opens an excellent opportunity to strengthen exchanges and communication between anthropological production, the populations and collectives that give meaning to their existence and to the broader society.

Antropólis: experiencing new skills through the podcast

At the Federal University of Pelotas, the teaching of Anthropology has existed since 2008, when the Bachelor's Degree was created. The Master's and Doctorate courses started shortly after, in 2012 and 2016, respectively. The wide dissemination of studies and activities developed in these courses is the keynote of university extension projects. In 2017, Baccalaureate students, supported by teachers, created a weekly radio program broadcast by the Pelotas community radio (RadioCom, 104.5 FM): "Nós Nosotros: antropofonias e charlas" [3]. The extension project remains active until today and was converted into a podcast after the COVID -19 pandemic.

But *Antropólis* was the precursor in the *podcast experience*. Created in 2019, it was an initiative of Guilhermo Aderaldo, who had just arrived in Pelotas as a postdoctoral fellow and collaborating professor at the Graduate Program in Anthropology [4]. The desire to develop a dissemination project on themes related

---

3   Available at: https://www.listennotes.com/podcasts/n%C3%B3s-nosotros-nos-nosotros-ZorXN-7-HWMw/

4   The construction of a podcast was part of the work plan that the researcher intended to develop at the institution, however, with the formation of the current team, it was found that the desire to build a project like this was also shared by other colleagues, which made the proposal develop enthusiastically and in a deeply collaborative spirit, as we hope to make clear throughout this chapter.

to Urban Ethnography and Anthropology of Image came from his research trajectory in several academic centres: the Urban Anthropology Nucleus (NAU), the City Anthropology Study Group (GEAC) and Urbandata Brasil, at USP, in addition to the Laboratory of Contemporary Anthropology of the School of Higher Studies in Social Sciences (*Laboratoire d'Anthropologie Contemporaine–Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales*), in France.

In the Graduate Program in Anthropology at UFPel, the initiative was fully welcomed by the Laboratory for Teaching, Research and Production in Anthropology of Image and Sound (LEPPAIS) and the Urban Ethnographic Studies Group (GEEUR). It was understood that the creation of a podcast would allow the development of new technical, communicative and political-pedagogical skills, in a more interactive way and capable of strengthening exchanges, bridges and dialogues between centres inside and outside UFPel, as well as with society. At that time, there were not so many initiatives of this kind in the field of Anthropology, and the skills required to the podosphere were still scarce among us.

With the arrival of the COVID-19 pandemic, at the end of the first quarter of 2020, and the frustration of the social distance, the dedication to the construction of the project became an important associative opportunity or a "collective therapy", as we used to joke among us. We set up a small committee and a WhatsApp group with people connected to the aforementioned laboratories and we discussed possibilities related to the proposal, the title and the visual identity of the project. Guilhermo suggested the title *Antropólis,* a term invented to combine the words "Anthropology" and "Pólis" (a concept created in Ancient Greece to designate what we understand today as a city). The urban, in this case, is thought of in its cosmopolitanism, as an environment for exchanges, cultural interactions, circulation of knowledge and symbolic power. At first, the name seemed strange and we decided to leave it, provisionally, while we sought to develop images that, in some way, represented the visual identity of the podcast.

Some suggestions for images and logos emerged, until Gabriela Lamas, a graduate in Cinema and Audiovisual at UFPel and a master's student in Anthropology, created an illustration of the facade of the Institute of Human Sciences (ICH), with its characteristic *pixos* (a type of graffiti) and its cobbled street. Located in the port region of Pelotas, the ICH building is part of the city's industrial patrimony, which dates back to its past of economic prosperity and is among the buildings recovered by the Federal University for academic purposes,

and the pixos, a trademark of the ICH facade, bring social intervention in the urban. In the foreground, the drawing shows the cobbled street, also emblematic in the Pelotas region.

After a series of application tests, the drawing in white lines was applied over a photo of a peeling wall, with a violet color filter, with the intention of inserting the *Antropólis logo* in the city, like a *pixo* on a peeling wall. The peeling wall refers both to the marks of memory and aging, as well as to a characteristic of the city of Pelotas, which with its intense humidity does not spare architectural surfaces and structures.

On top of the illustration rests the sound waves symbol in orange. In balance with this warm colour, a cold colour, dark violet, was used for the title "*Antropólis* podcast". This image convinced everyone as a logo, as it conveyed the feeling of an expanded connection between the academic community and the city. In this illustration the name of the podcast seemed to make more sense, and thus the definitive brand of the project was approved. From this visual identity, the covers of the episodes were created, with small variations, according to the photograph provided by each person interviewed.

Cover images of the *Antropólis podcast episodes.* Author: Gabriela Lamas.

The next step was to define a technical team to organize and produce the episodes. Guilhermo began to act as host and editor; Gabriela, in addition to producing the arts and images, took on editing assistance; as respective representatives of the two associated centres (GEEUR and LEPPAIS), Prof. Francisco Pereira Neto and Prof. Claudia Turra Magni joined the team. With experience in community radio in Pelotas (RádioCom, 104.5 FM), Ítalo de Castro, an undergraduate student who had participated in the beginning of the project, left the project to take care of the podcast *Nós Nosotros.* Subsequently, the team began to count on the valuable participation of the master's student Ediane Oliveira, who currently shares the role of hostess with Guilhermo. Graduated in Journalism, Ediane brings with her skills as a cultural producer and as a presenter at *RadioCom,* where she maintained a weekly program for years.

To test the technical features and talk about the podcast proposal among ourselves we made a test with members of the initial team: Guilhermo, Gabriela, Francisco and Ítalo. With the result approved, we decided to publish it as a "pilot episode". For the premiere program, we arranged an interview with Prof. Claudia, also a member of the team, who was in France, away from UFPel for a Post-Doctorate at the University of Aix-Marseille. At that point, we were still taking the first steps in developing the necessary skills for audio editing and there was some difficulty in trying to deal with the technical challenges that were presented. But we were very satisfied with the first results and, little by little, we were advancing in the domain of *Audacity,* free software for audio editing.

Since the first meetings of the team, we had agreed that the podcast would have as its theme the areas of Urban Anthropology and Anthropology of Image and Sound. The idea was to use of the experience accumulated by the two aforementioned partner laboratories (GEEUR and LEPPAIS) to develop the following proposal: in each episode, invite a researcher to an approximately one-hour conversation about his/her trajectory and performance in those fields of research. To contribute to the interview with these researchers, we decided to invite, at each meeting, a person outside the permanent team, who was interested in studying the topic to be addressed. This way, the podcast has become a platform for increasing pedagogical experiences, opening up the opportunity for graduate students and professors to talk about their researches with leading researchers on certain topics.

It is not a coincidence that we had several deeply moving occasions, which unfolded from conversations with guests. In other words, the intention of our program was to honour the craft of Anthropology, revealing different facets of the personal paths in the formation and career of a researcher: the marks imprinted by their academic and extra-academic experiences; the choices of topics studied and the ways to reach them; the lessons learned and dilemmas inseparable from the challenge of building knowledge together with their interlocutors in fieldwork; the ethical reflections that accompany any ethnographic description of a culture; the commitment to return the results achieved; the conciliation between research and teaching/learning of Anthropology and much more...

With the development of the project, we started to bet more and more on editing experiences, inserting multiple voices and sound layers in the record of the conversation with the invited person, in addition to making available references to books, movies or other publications highlighted in the episode. As we experimented with new features and discovered other podcasts, we realized the incredible communicative possibilities of the podosphere and its ability to make us dive and move through different sonic universes.

Hearing: a sensory and educational experience

There are several styles of podcasts. Some have a more narrative profile, others are focused on dialogues and interviews; there are those who privilege comments on authorial works or biographies, among so many communicative possibilities. But in addition to this diversity of styles, which differ from strictly academic language, another peculiarity of podcasts is the insertion of sound effects produced by tape recorder, musical ambiences, excerpts of songs, sounds and audios available on the internet, in addition to the records from fieldwork. These sound materials integrated into the speeches that drive the programs are by no means an appendix or mere "flourish" of the discourse. In addition to the rational understanding of the topic being discussed, this sound environment excites the audience's sensory perception and contributes to the performance interaction of communication.

For a renowned contemporary anthropologist, Tim Ingold (2008), hearing and seeing are not separate senses: sound can make us see, just as vision allows us to hear. Both senses are integrated into a body that, in turn, interacts with the

environment. This way, the sound experience is not restricted to the ears, but is caused by vibrations in the surroundings and surfaces that surround us. For this author, sound is not an "object" that reaches us from the outside to the inside of our mind, which would remain in a passive attitude. On the contrary, we listen with the whole body, actively and immersed in the environment in which we are. Just as light is the "medium" through which we can see, sound is the "medium" through which we can hear. Therefore, we do not hear "the" sound, but "in" the sound. Hearing is a way of participating in the world, a way of experiencing it through our perception.

This way, when we recover and produce sound ambience to orchestrate them in the midst of the verbal language that guides podcast programs, we are, in some way, reactivating the memory of lived experiences, awakening the imagination of listeners and promoting experiences of immersion in the social and cultural universes which are being addressed. This is not, at all, a passive listening, but an attentive listening, through which the person interacts sensorially, interprets, assigns meanings and mobilizes memories and reflections on the subject in question.

In addition to enhancing, valuing and dynamizing the interviews, this sound montage allows "opening" the discourse to multiple voices, located in different contexts, times and places, around a common theme. The importance of this montage of programs with sound ambience and narrative diversification is such that, many times, the guests themselves are surprised by the final result. It is as if they rediscovered their own reports from other points of view and listening, opening themselves up to a new experience in the face of what was lived, hearing and seeing in a renewed way what they had once experienced and reported. In turn, they are often encouraged to share the program with others, and we have had the opportunity to receive positive feedback from many of these listeners.

At a pedagogical level, podcasts in educational experiences have become increasingly common, so much that the Brazilian Association of Technical Norms (ABNT) has developed a format to standardize the citation of this type of reference in academic works[5]. Among some successful initiatives for the production of sound materials, created specifically for classes, we highlight the series "Mundo

---

5   Citing *podcasts* should be done like this: Post title. [Voiceover by]: Speaker's name. Location: Producer, day month year. podcast Available at: link. Access on: access date.

na sala de aula", from the Mundaréu *podcast,* in which students of Social Sciences and, in particular, Anthropology, are invited to produce short episodes based on questions worked in class[6].

In our case, based on the experience of the Antropólis *podcast,* Prof. Guilhermo Aderaldo has made use of this resource in his disciplines in the Graduate Program at the Federal University of Pelotas (UFPel), and the initiative has shown to be very promising. The teaching method consists of the following: the researcher/professor guides students to do what he/she calls "audio-reviews", which basically consist of the audio recording of a critical reading of articles to be discussed in class. After receiving the audio files from the students, the teacher values that record, adding other sound materials, such as music, speech excerpts, both from characters indirectly linked to the discussion, and from the authors of the reviewed articles. Other narrative elements, sound ambience and narrations selected by the teacher are also included. Finally, the edited materials return to these students, stimulating a more comprehensive and immersive apprehension of the discussions contained in the texts. In pedagogical terms, conditions are created for a collaborative production of knowledge, involving several protagonists: the author of the reference work, the author of the review, and the educator, who reviews the material and contributes to enriching the final product, such as a maestro conducting an orchestra.

Learning from experience, creating networks, diversifying approaches and expanding sound universes

In 2020, we finished the first season of Antropólis, with 12 programs published. In addition to the pilot episode, several researchers participated as guests: Claudia Turra Magni (professor of the Anthropology course at UFPel), Otávio Raposo (audiovisual director and professor at the University Institute of Lisbon (ISCTE-IUL)); Denise Pimenta (post-doctoral researcher at FIOCRUZ); Guilherme da Rosa (professor of the Cinema course at UFPel); Rafael Bastos (professor of the Anthropology course at UFSC); Bianca Freire Medeiros (professor of the Sociology course at USP); Patrícia Pinheiro (post-doctoral fellow at the Graduate Program in Anthropology at UFPB); Handerson Joseph (professor of the Anthropology course at UFRGS); Edgar Barbosa Neto (professor at the Faculty of Education at UFMG);

---

6   For more details, see: https://mundareu.labjor.unicamp.br/series/mundo-na-sala-da-aula/

Ana Luísa Carvalho da Rocha (professor at FEEVALE and researcher at UFRGS). The season finale episode was built from conversations with podcast representatives who, along this path, became partners.

These exchanges with other *podcasts,* by the way, have been extremely stimulating for the Antropólis team. From the beginning of this process of collective construction, we could count on the fundamental help of João Freitas, host of "Urbanidades", a *podcast* organized by the Urbandata Brasil team, linked to USP and to the Center for Metropolis Studies (CEM). Later, we started to communicate with the teams of several other Anthropology and Social Sciences *podcasts*, especially: *Mundaréu*, *Observantropologia* and *Museológicas*.

These dialogues and exchanges were rapidly expanding and, inspired by other experiences such as the radio stations "Novelo"[7] and "Guarda Chuva"[8], we decided to create a podcast network*,* with its own label and visual identity (created by Thiago Oliveira, member of the *Observantropologia* team). The *Kere-Kere* network[9], in a short space of time, has already demonstrated its importance, expanding supporters and providing articulation and political, scientific and collaborative engagement between teams. Proof of this is the representation it obtained from important scientific organizations, such as the Brazilian Anthropology Association (ABA) and the National Association of Graduate Studies and Research in Social Sciences (ANPOCS).

For its part, the *Antropólis* team had the opportunity to make a final balance in December 2020, ending the first season with a lot of learning in the development of necessary skills to guarantee its space in the podosphere. In the closing episode of this first year[10], we dealt precisely with the *Kere-Kere* development process and, to do that, we had interventions from the three *podcasts* that, together with Antropólis, took the initial step in the network's founding process, that are *Mundaréu*, *Observantropologia* and *Museológicas*.

The realization of the episode also announced a novelty in the format of our broadcasts. This is because it was a narrative episode, with a script and a montage written and produced collectively. The experience stimulated us to think about

---

7   See: https://www.radionovelo.com.br/

8   See: https://www.radioguardachuva.com.br/

9   See: https://radiokerekere.wordpress.com/

10   See: https://open.spotify.com/episode/15MdGpkCiRcath6Kdk89ya?si=iied5CjGSU2nkr6_tk5v6g

a narrative series, which we intend to intersperse with the traditional series in a roundtable format, with interviews, from the second season onwards.

Cover image of the *Antropólis* Podcast season one finale episode. Author: Gabriela Lamas.

In the course of this journey, we also noticed that the thematic lines initially defined (Urban Ethnography and Anthropology of Image and Sound) were gradually becoming more flexible, which encouraged us to expand and diversify our field of action in Anthropology and also to invest in dialogues with other areas of knowledge, inside and outside the academy.

As previously mentioned, in the second season, we plan to invest in new experiments, in addition to the original format, characterized by dialogued interviews with leading researchers. The elaboration of narrative series has already become a reality and we also examine the possibility of creating episodes based, for example, on fiction plots produced collectively from ethnographic work (which we call ethnofiction).

Thus, it is possible to conclude by saying that *Antropólis* has configured as an experience not only for teaching, learning and practising the craft of Anthropology, but also, and above all, as a way of increasing dialogue and the collaborative construction of knowledge far beyond academia.

References

INGOLD, Tim. Pare, Olhe, Escute! Visão, Audição e Movimento Humano. *Ponto Urbe* [Online], 3, 2008. Acesso em: 06 jan. 2021.

Access the *Antrópolis* podcast page on Rádio Kere-kere here

Guilhermo Aderaldo holds a PhD in Social Anthropology from the University of São Paulo (USP) and is a researcher/professor of the Graduate Program in Anthropology at the Federal University of Pelotas (PPGANT/UFPEL). His research revolves around the following themes: urban anthropology, anthropology of politics, anthropology of mobilities and youth cultural practices. *Email:* guiade@ymail.com

Francisco Pereira Neto holds a PhD from the Graduate Program in Social Anthropology at UFRGS and is a professor of Bachelor's and Graduate Program in Anthropology at UFPEL, where he is part of the Urban Ethnographic Studies Group (GEEUR). *Email:* francisco.fpneto@gmail.com

Claudia Turra Magni holds a PhD in Anthropology from the Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales (EHESS) and is a professor at the Bachelor's and Graduate Program in Anthropology at the Federal University of Pelotas (PPGANT/UFPEL), where she also coordinates the Teaching Laboratory, Research and Production in Anthropology of Image and Sound (LEPPAIS) and the Anthropoetic research collective. *Email:* clauturra@yahoo.com.br

Ediane Oliveira holds a degree in Social Communication–Journalism Qualification (UCPel), a master's degree in Anthropology (UFPel) and is currently a PhD student in Journalism (UFSC). Her research addresses epistemological theories of black

women, media and necropolitics. She also works as a journalist, advisor and cultural producer in projects with black, social and artistic movements in Rio Grande do Sul. *Email:* edianecomunica@gmail.com

Gabriela Richter Lamas holds a degree in Cinema and from the Federal University of Pelotas (UFPEL), where she is currently a Master's student in Anthropology. She directed short films, including "Sesmaria" (São Lourenço do Sul, 2015), for which she was awarded at film festivals in Brazil and abroad, and works with art direction for cinema and audiovisual. *Email:* gabirlamas@gmail.com