

Environmental intervisuality in a Brazilian protected area in the Atlantic Rainforest Biome

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To apprehend the contemporary environment implies in observing it through technological interfaces and interdependent cultural filters; images arise from a multitude of technomedia and social networks. This research project explores the emerging processes of capture, processing, networking and dissemination of representations that extend and modify our perception of the environment.

We become immersed then, through these technological devices, in an increasingly informational space. Wandering as a cyberspatial flâneur, we see the contemporary natural environment from digital interfaces that exploit the earth in various ways: through the vertical gaze of the drones, satellites and probes, technologies that create, decipher and reinterpret images. They provide or recreate an intervisual Earth, a planet defined through simultaneous and interactive modes of visibility.

Intervisuality presents a strategy to make visible hidden interconnections, to highlight issues pertaining to contemporary spaces which increasingly encompasses environmental challenges.

This research takes as its case study an Environmental Protection Area, the APA Embu Verde in the city of Embu das Artes, in the State of São Paulo, Brazil, where the author Eunice Maria da Silva lives and works. In this territory of remaining areas of the Atlantic Rainforest Biome, an endangered fauna coexists with human settlements and industrial buildings continuously advancing into the area, conquering territories from animals and plants.

The purpose is to create an intervisual apprehension of the territory overlapping layers of technical information, coming from Geographical Information Systems [GIS] along with aesthetic, historical, communitarian images and narratives.

This cluster of human-derived information taken from residents, photographers, activists and artists, creates a mapping of multiple visualities forming a contrast with the technological-based information. They complement each other and at the same time they make visible the contradictions of the territory.

The resulting images displayed several road maps overlapping with wildlife corridors, water currents and springs but also with the graphic representation of local knowledge evidenced by photography and video.

The method of overlapping human and informational layers makes evident the inadequacy of actions taken by the authorities. They constantly ignore the local, communitarian and ecological dimension favoring financial and political interests. In the last decade, for instance, many springs deemed essential to the water supply of the large city of São Paulo were blocked, destroyed and interrupted.

The research will disseminate the ensuing compositions coming from the association of scientific mapping, made possible by digital technologies, with the interventions of activists and artists who have also appropriated the technological devices in order to enrich the understanding of the multiple dimension of the territory.

The work is being developed to construe pedagogical proposals that would bring to mostly poor and vulnerable the communities inhabiting the territory, a more meaningful understanding of the systemic aspects of the environment and a greater awareness of the potential of contemporary visual technologies.