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# The Directionality of Practices in the Definition of “Solidary”, “Anthropophagic”, or “Foreign” Consumption Patterns in the Space

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## Abstract

In the present paper, we demonstrate that the work developed by the Brazilian geographer Milton Santos is suitable for studies in the field of practices and consumption. When we use the term ‘practice’ we are referring to a specific kind of practice that is found in the strand of theory created by Schatzki’s work. More specifically, with this merge, we created the construct of directionality of practices. Looking at this dimension, the researchers can see the origin of practices and the consequent consumption patterns in the places. As we argue, “solidary” consumption is created by horizontal practices, “foreign” consumption is created by vertical practices, and “anthropophagic” consumption is created by undifferentiated practices. We expect that this paper can also contribute to giving room for Milton Santos’s work in the field of consumption studies.

**Keywords:** Milton Santos; space; Schatzki; practice theory.

## Introduction

The field of consumption studies in social research has multiple and, sometimes, divergent onto-epistemologies (Arnould & Thompson, 2005; 2007; 2015; Askegaard & Linnet, 2011). Still, one prominent research stream is non-Cartesian and, consequently, marked by the idiographic and qualitative methods of research (Thompson, et al., 2013; Saatcioglu & Corus, 2019).

In doing so, the field of consumption has also approached the discussion of space and place (e.g., Moor, 2003; Visconti, et al., 2010; Warnaby & Medway, 2013; Martin & Schouten, 2014; Castilhos, et al., 2018; Castilhos, 2019). For instance, the work of Castilhos et al. (2017), rooted in geographic studies, indicates an effort to insert the complexity of space into market and consumer culture theory (CCT) studies, thus creating a general categorization of the types of space and the role of places. The spatial perspective addressed by these works, consequently, is ontologically linked to a non-Cartesian world view, as we follow in this essay. Anyway, some marketing scholars have been paying attention to the studies of spaces and places, bringing to the fore subjectivities and relational processes of these categories of analysis (Chatzidakis, et al., 2018; Giovanardi & Lucarelli, 2018). On the other hand, in the field of geography, scholars also have been approaching market phenomena beyond the naive notion of a site 'consisting of smooth exchange of commodities', giving to the space and its elements – as the subjectivities and objects – a prominent role (Cohen, 2018, p. 5). For this introduction section, is enough to say that in Santos' terminology, place is where life really happens, whereas space is a more transversal and fluid framework (Santos, 1997; 2013).

What we propose herein is to insert the work of an award-winning and renowned geographer into consumption studies, introducing some of his analytical categories (and creating new ones) to shed light on the directionality of practices and consumption patterns in places. Furthermore, we know that the practice approach in the field of consumption overreached the questioning of focus only on small and ordinary practices by highlighting, for instance, the plenum (Schatzki, 2009), nexus of practices (Hui, Schatzki & Shove, 2016), or formations (Welch, 2017). Thus, the practice empirical approach there also has been taken in a large (or macro) way in the field of consumption. However, the dynamic of imposition of practices in places is still diffuse in the literature and a specific construct for this would be useful. We argue that the construct of directionality of practices is more effective to treat the impositions, power dynamics, and ethical issues of the consumption and practices in the space (and between places). In addition, this construct is especially useful for researchers of the South.

Milton Santos was a Brazilian geographer of international relevance who left for exile in France in 1964 due to pressures exerted by the military dictatorship in Brazil. He taught at several universities around the world and returned to the country in 1977 (Lima, 2018). Due to the relevance of his work, Milton Santos won the Vautrin Lud Prize, the most important prize in geography in the world. Much of Santos' work was published in Portuguese, French, and Spanish, but only a few in English. According to Melgaço (2017), a researcher who is trying to translate the renowned geographer into English, more than theories and constructs, Santos created a rich and robust school of thought. The symposium edited by Melgaço in the *Journal Antipode* and the book *Toward an Other Globalization: From the Single Thought to Universal Conscience* (Santos, 2017) provide the Anglo-Saxon reader with an overview of the geographer's work. In the references in this article, it is

possible to see some of Santos' works published in English (1980b; 1974; 1979; 1977a; 1977b; 1977c).

To shed light on the directionality of practices and the consequent consumption patterns in places, we also used the framework of Theodore Schatzki and Alan Warde. According to Schatzki (2012) practices are composed of doings and sayings and "organized by practical rules, understandings, teleoaffective structures, and general understandings" (p. 15). On the other hand, according to Warde (2005), consumption is entangled with practice performances.

The aim of this theoretical essay is to introduce the construct of directionality to better understand consumption patterns in places. By the directionality dimension of practices, we can see if they have an external origin (verticality) or if they have grown in their own place of performance (horizontality). We propose that vertical practices create "foreign" consumption and horizontal practices create "solidary" consumption. Furthermore, practices which are more undifferentiated create "anthropophagic" consumption. By verticality and horizontality, we mean, according to Milton Santos' theoretics, the frame to analyze the imposition of techniques from one territory to another. In his theoretics, an imposition from Global North to South. As we argue, these "travelling" techniques are composed of understandings, rules and teleoaffectivities of practices. Our argument is that space is crossed by horizontalities and verticalities. If the practices are part of the space, practices also manifest these directionalities. Furthermore, if consumption is part of all practices, the directionality of practice can drive consumption patterns.

For instance, Giovanardi and Lucarelli (2018) suggested some paths to investigate places and spaces in marketing. One of the possibilities suggested by the authors is to approach "place as also networked and articulated through marketing pathways, which are reproduced by marketers, suppliers and customers in specific locational contexts" (156). However, our work contributes to the literature by giving the researchers a distinct framework with Miltonian and Schatzkian elements to see the directionality of practices and consumption patterns in places.

As is discussed in the vast literature on consumption and practices, changes in practices can modify consumption patterns. We use the term consumption and practices because we understand that consumption and practices are inseparable. Therefore, we will not use the term consumption practices as we understand that consumption is not a practice itself (neither a kind of practice), but its constitutive and inherent element (Warde, 2005; Shove & Araújo, 2010; Halkier, et al., 2011).

We will demonstrate herein how Santos' work highlights the importance of technique for the distribution of actions around the world. Also, we will demonstrate how techniques carry elements of practices which have an important role in creating practices (and consumption patterns) in places. The frame to analyze imposed techniques is called verticalities, and the frame to analyze organic and own grown techniques in places is called horizontalities. Based on these theoretics, objects turn into technical objects, and the diffusion of techniques and practices around the world reflects verticality (impositions), which manifests in opposition to horizontality (horizontal solidarities) in places. Verticality and horizontality categories could be interesting, for example, in studies such as that of Shove and Pantzar (2005; 2007), who investigate the diffusion of sports across countries and how these practices adjust to local realities.

In what follows, we present in the literature review a synthesis of Schatzki's practice theory in order to understand its elements. Second, we show Milton Santos' work and highlight the role of

techniques, verticalities and horizontalities to shed light on how they play a role in the dynamics of practices and consumption.

## The Schatzkian practice theory and its elements to shed light on consumption

The theories of practice we are dealing with came from a theoretical framework that emerged from the 1970s onwards with the cultural turn in the social sciences, focusing on analyzing practices that are carried by individuals (Schatzki, 2001; Reckwitz, 2002). With this, the social reality starts being understood as part of human action and not as an external objective datum, as Durkheim's social facts are (Schatzki, 2002; Reckwitz, 2002).

At the end of the 20th century and beginning of the 21st, a striking characteristic of the practice theory – still present today – was the strong inclination towards an empirical investigation of everyday practices, such as preparing food (Lehtokunnas, *et al.*, 2020), driving (Shove *et al.*, 2012), consuming energy (Gram-Hanssen, 2011), and also producing food in urban areas (Kontothanasis, 2017). In this sense, Elizabeth Shove and her collaborators played a central role, and it is possible to state that they managed to create a new strand of theory, with a strong empirical orientation. Along with these developments, the work of Warde (2005) was a cornerstone to linking the studies of practices with consumption, henceforth creating a strong strand of research.

In general, these theories are supported by the works of Reckwitz (2002) and Schatzki (1996; 2002). According to the author, the ontology for society studies must be based on the idea of the site. The social site is, therefore, formed by a *bundle of material arrangements and social practices* (Schatzki, 2002; 2019). Conceptualizing and understanding these elements, as we argue, is paramount to see what is involved when we frame verticalities changing or creating practices in places. We have a brief description of these elements in the paragraphs below.

At this point, we analyze one of the parts of this intertwining: the arrangements. Arrangements, according to Schatzki, correspond to social order and are made up of entities, which correspond to individuals, artifacts (objects made by man), things (natural things), and organisms. Thus, natural geography, rocks, mountains, trees, animals, buildings, cars, rats, storms, and a series of other entities belong to this arrangement and are important for social construction. Human beings and their bodies are clearly also part of this arrangement and relate to it.

What guarantees the cohesion of this arrangement, i.e., this order, are the social relations existing between entities. The most significant relationships, according to the author, are of four types: (1) intentional, related to the intentionality of individuals in relation to other entities; (2) causal, which determines cause and effect relationships between entities; (3) spatial, which concerns the activities that take place in each space and the physical distance between entities; and (4) prefiguration, which concerns the ability of arrangements to guide future activities, as in the case of constraining or enabling actions.

These arrangements, composed of entities and related to one another in the ways described in the last paragraph, position themselves in this social order, guaranteeing their meanings from this position in the arrangement. The *meanings* that entities have, concern how they are positioned

within this complex arrangement of individuals, artifacts, organisms, and things, as well as the types of relationships that exist between them.

The other part of this intertwining that forms the site of the social is composed of practices. Practices are made up of a “*nexus of doings and sayings*” (Schatzki, 1996; 2002; 2012). Doings are performances of either bodily or mental actions. Washing food, for example, is a doing pertaining to the cooking practice. In turn, sayings are a subclass of doings (Schatzki, 2012; 2016b) and concern what practitioners say about what they are doing within the practice.

For Schatzki (1996; 2002; 2012), the doings and sayings of the practices can only form a nexus if they manifest a series of *understandings, rules, and teleoaffective structure*. Understandings are responsible for individuals knowing how to identify, how to act before, and how to respond to certain actions. The teleoaffective structure, in turn, refers to an order of ends, tasks, projects, emotions, and humors related to a determined practice. Finally, rules are “explicit formulations, principles, precepts, and instructions” (Schatzki, 2002, p. 79) about practice.

Thus, within this intertwining of arrangements and practices, it is the practices that will shape the site of the social through the agency of entities, transforming arrangements and practices themselves, since practices also depend to a large extent on these arrangements. It should be noted, however, that humans are not the only ones capable of agency, other entities, such as things, organisms and artifacts are also capable of it. However, Schatzki is emphatic in saying that human agency, for example, could never be compared to objects’ agency as these are devoid of intentionality. This is also one of the author’s points of struggle with the actor-network theory (Schatzki, 2002). Non-human entities can exercise agency over the intertwining of arrangements and practices when, for example, rats appear in a vegetable garden, which demands a series of actions from producers to combat the invaders.

In one of his works, Schatzki (2016a) argues that he developed a *flat ontology* because every social phenomenon, wherever it manifests itself in the world, is composed of bundles of the same type of elements: material arrangements and social practices. Thus, the social world manifests itself as a *plenum* of practices. According to the author, the idea of macro and microstructures so frequently addressed in sociological literature is not supposed to be understood as superior and inferior hierarchies. The cause-and-effect relationships identified in the social world occur horizontally and the notion of macro and micro occurs due to the difference in density and extension of the bundles of arrangements and practices, for instance.

We argue that the ontology proposed by Milton Santos can also be considered flat because in his view, the world, as a space, is formed by *a system of objects and a system of actions*. Despite utilizing the term ‘verticality’ to address the relationship between territories, this does not contradict its ontological nature, as the term is used to characterize a relationship of power. Both the exporting and importing territories of techniques and actions also form spaces composed of the same elements.

Consumption, according to Warde (2005, p. 137) “is not itself a practice but is, rather, a moment in almost every practice”. So, if we can see elements involved with practices, it is possible better understand the correlated consumption. A remarkable example of this is the work of Woremann and Rokka (2015) which states that the time flow of practices is shaped by aligned or misaligned elements of them. In the same vein, the work of Moraes et al. (2017), based on

Magaudda (2011), helps to understand luxury consumption by unveiling elements of practices. Finally, the work of Bartiaux *et al.* (2014), using the Gram-Hanssen (2011) framework, shows how it is possible to decrease residential energy consumption by addressing four components of practices.

## The “Nature of Space” according to Milton Santos, horizontalities and verticalities

While for Schatzki the site of the social is composed of a bundle of material arrangements and social practices, for Milton Santos, the space is formed by a system of objects and a system of actions. The ontological similarity is visible. But first, it is important to make a few remarks about the terminology proposed by Milton Santos. In order to define *space*, it is necessary to make a distinction between the concepts of *places*, *regions*, and *territories*, as they are all specific forms of space. Despite the distinctions, it is important to understand that these concepts are transversal. See a few examples according to the way the author addresses each of these categories in his works. According to Santos (1997), territories refer to geographic configurations delimited by the materiality of the natural environment and, with the evolution of human history, increasingly by the artificiality of objects. Territories shape nations but cannot be treated only from a legal-political point of view, but also as a “life framework” (Santos, 2005, p. 255, our translation). Territories, in turn, are composed of diverse places and regions. Examples of places are cities, large or small. However, place is not synonymous with city. A place refers to any sort of configuration within the territory and is formed by things, objects, and people living their lives. Place is where social actors actually accomplish their actions. Finally, regions are part of territories and composed of a set of places (Santos, 2013).

The space, analyzed from such perspective, corresponds to a living (social) and material space where actions take place at a given time. The space is a living space-time. Hence, space is distinguished from places and territories by serving as a form of comprehensive onto-epistemological approach to the phenomenon of geography. The geographic space overlaps as a type of analysis of places and territories.

In a further step into Milton Santos’ world, we see objects as material entities that have a form. However, an object has no meaning outside the context of human action. What gives meaning to objects are the technical intentions present in their construction, that is, the meaning of objects is given by human action (Santos, 1980b; 1997; 2013). Even natural materialities, such as rocks or mountains for example, if used by man, come to have the status of objects. Therefore, objects are form *and* content.

The content of these objects is loaded with technique, thus forming a system of techniques, as the technique of a railroad, for instance, depends on the steelworks technique, the machinist’s technique, and so on. Technique, according to Milton Santos, is a *means* to accomplish human action. An object, as loaded with techniques, ends up regulating the action of those who will use it. Thus, while creating form and content, human action is also guided by objects.

For Milton Santos the technique is not neutral, and neither are technical objects. Therefore, within an ontology where, on the one hand, there is a system of actions and, on the other, a system of objects, the latter ends up shaping human actions in places through its technical and intentional

content. Milton Santos (2013) advocates that technique is more and more defined by large capitalist companies that, with their technical objects increasingly spread across the globe, end up *vertically* defining actions to the places that absorb these techniques. Thus, in the territories and places that are outside the centers of global power, there is an absorption of techniques that are “foreigners” to those created in the places themselves, which start being considered “outdated” by the new form of production. According to Milton Santos, there is the possibility that we – as citizens of underdeveloped countries – are carrying out actions (oriented by a certain technique and technical objects) that were defined in distant territories and places, instead of managing our own actions and techniques in a *horizontal way*.

In finishing this section, we explain the categories of horizontalities and verticalities quoting the geographer:

The segmentations and partitions present in the space suggest, at least, that it is admitted two frames. On the one hand, there are extensions formed by points that assemble without discontinuity, as the traditional definition of region. They are horizontalities. On the other hand, there are points in the space that, separated from each other, sustain the overall functioning of the society and economy. They are verticalities. The space is formed by one and others of these frames, inseparably. It is from these new subdivisions we must thinking new categories of analysis. (Santos, 1997, p. 225, our translation).

As the above definition, horizontalities and verticalities are both frames of analysis. With the frame of horizontalities, we can see in the space solidarities and more or less equal relationships amongst actors in the space, as the traditional and local economies are. However, through the verticality frame, we see the relations of power, as the imposition of techniques from one country to other. Milton Santos’ criticism of globalization lies in the verticalities, its impositions and its consequences to poor countries. Are the poor countries of the South importing techniques and actions from the North? Human actions, in line with Milton Santos’ ontology, in turn, manifest a technical load capable of orienting and organizing them in ways very similar to the teleoaffective structure, understandings and rules of social practices discussed by Schatzki.

At this point, we want to highlight the similarity between the content of the technique, exposed by Milton Santos, which is present in people and in objects, and the elements that structure social practices, which correspond to understandings, rules, and teleoaffective structure, conforming to Schatzki.

## **The role of the technique for Milton Santos and the analysis of practices**

Both Schatzki and Milton Santos bring elements that can be of great relevance for an ontology suitable for the investigation of practices and consumption. Milton Santos, in turn, emphasizes the importance of technique. In a globalized world, the techniques present in the objects and actions of individuals become “foreigners” to territories and places and, also, to individuals themselves, as these techniques are developed most of the time by large multinational companies that impose techniques on territories across the globe in a vertical manner (Santos,

1980a; 2017; 2013). The idea of technique is not clearly present in Schatzki but seems to be diluted in the organizing categories of practice: understandings, rules, and teleoaffective structure. It seems, however, that Milton Santos' interest in highlighting the role of technique in the social world involves the interest in questioning its origin and vertical violence directed at those individuals from places in underdeveloped countries.

The technique and its instructions embedded in objects, present in most part of Milton Santos' ontology, also seems to manifest what Schatzki (2002) calls intelligibility. According to the author, "intelligibility is what makes sense to a person to do. It governs action by specifying what an actor does next in the continuous flow of activity" (75). What makes this point relevant to our theoretics is that Santos (1997) gives a similar role to technique when affirming that

the rational space assumes a prompt and adequate response to the agents' demands, thus allowing that the encounter between the intended action and the available object takes place with maximum effectiveness. This depends on the technique contained in things and in actions (239, our translation).

For this section, a better definition of technique is necessary. Milton Santos (1997) treats technique as a means. Such perspective is also in accordance with the philosophical discussion about the concept of technique. Bruno Latour (1994, p. 61) affirms that "[t]echniques, we learn from archaeologists, are articulated subprograms for actions that subsist (in time) and extend (in space)". Therefore, technique, in a Bourdian sense, would work as a kind of *habitus*, which is carried by individuals and guides them in their actions.

This definition of technique as something that guides actions is also discussed by Habermas (2011, p. 509, our translation).

We understand by technique a system of rules that defines rational action with respect to ends – that is, strategies and technologies. We call the rules of social choice of strategies and the rules of instrumental action of technologies. Technologies work as principles that define procedures, ceasing to be properly a technical means. As technical means, desired things can be placed in a context of instrumental action.

The idea that technique is a means to achieve a certain end is present in Habermas' work. In other words, technique is an instrumental means carried by individuals through strategies and rules. Thus, individuals carry techniques to achieve their goals.

To finish outlining the definition of technique presented herein, we resorted to Aristotle and his *Metaphysics*. The philosopher (Aristotle, 2002) differentiates *ἐπιστήμη* (*episteme*) from *τέχνη* (*téchne*, translated as art), placing the former as autonomies and the noblest form of knowledge, as it would not be subordinated to ends and the creation of specific goods. *Téchne*, or art, is used by individuals in their activities, as is the case with the practice of medicine or architecture. Technique is, therefore, subordinated to ends for the creation of goods.



Based on the concept of technique outlined so far, it is worth asking: Where is the technique when we are discussing and analyzing practices? We argue that technique manifests the organizing elements of practice according to Schatzki: understandings, rules, and teleoaffective structure. Like these elements, which are the organizers of social practice and outlined by Schatzki, technique guides and organizes actions, both in the discussion carried out by Milton Santos and by philosophy itself. The technique of a physician guides good medical practice, just like the technique of an architect guides good architecture practices. Even so, it is not possible to affirm that within a practice all understandings, rules, and teleoaffective structure form a technique. *However, within a practice, a bundle directed towards ends and composed of doings, sayings, material arrangements, understandings, rules, and teleoaffective structure manifests techniques.*

The activities of Schatzkian practice are organized by (1) understandings, (2) rules, and (3) teleoaffective structure. Now, doesn't the technique carried out by individuals (1) determine the way in which we identify, act, and respond to actions, just like practical understandings? Doesn't the technique come with determined (2) explicit rules – also in the form of technical objects – of how to act in order to achieve a certain end, just like in social practices? Don't techniques (3) define a series of hierarchies of objectives, tasks, values, and humors involved in determined activities, as well as the teleoaffective structure of practices? What we want to emphasize with this is that techniques constitute a present and fundamental element to organize social practices and they are loaded with teleoaffectivities, rules and understandings.

Now, the novelty from the technical discussion carried out by Milton Santos to the analysis of practice and consumption is: If techniques are defined in centers of greater technical density (Santos, 2013) and imposed on underdeveloped territories, making individuals have “strange” and “unnatural” actions, we can affirm that the existence of imposed and unnatural practices in their places of action is possible. When defining a specific technique (and technical objects), a multinational company automatically defines understandings, rules, and teleoaffective structure, which will guide the performance of the practices. On the other hand, from the perspective of places that import techniques, the imported coexist in conflict with native techniques of organic growth.

According to Milton Santos, on the one hand, technique plays a perverse and central role in the distribution of action around the world, as they are increasingly created in the centers of power in the capitalist world and act as Trojan horses (1980b). On the other, Milton Santos' analysis of space helps to approach it (whether as territory, region, or place) as a “banal space” (Santos, 2005), that is, a complex, historical, and lived place full of contradictions, multiple techniques, verticalities (impositions), and horizontalities (natural and organic solidarities of space). Lacerda (2021), when investigating the role of civil society organizations in the Papua *favela* in Rio de Janeiro, shows the complexity of space by highlighting the contradictory actions of these organizations in their responses to inequality issues based on Milton Santos' perspective.

## Qualitative meta-analysis

We performed a qualitative meta-analysis (Stall-Meadows & Hyle, 2010; Levitt, 2018) to identify studies on practice and consumption in spatiality. Our first aim with this is to show how Milton Santos' constructs and theory are suitable to these studies and to give the reader a brief overview of them. Further, we will use some of the practices investigated in these works to

demonstrate their directionality (see Table 2). As we know, directionality is the construct we advocate here.

We used the Web of Science database with a few filters. We searched for the terms 'consumer' AND 'practice' in the *abstracts*. Afterwards, we limited the date of the search to 2005, which refers to the date of Warde's (2005) call for research on practices and consumption in the JCC. Another filter was used to limit the search to the following journals: *Journal of Consumer Research*, *Journal of Consumer Culture*, *Consumption, Markets & Culture*, and *Marketing Theory*. Next, by using the database export feature, we selected the articles that cited Schatzki, as this would be an indication that the article selected made use of a Schatzkian practice theory in its theoretical construction. If we want to show that techniques from verticalities are loaded with practice organizers from Schatzki's theory (understandings, rules, and teleoaffectivities), the Schatzkian works illustrate better our arguments. It is the reason for our choices. As we show in the final considerations section, the meta-analysis was consciously limited. Our intention is to show, with a minimum of discretion, how could be possible to use the concepts and the theoretical constructions presented herein.

At this point, the search result led to 40 articles (excluding the work of Warde, 2005). By analyzing the articles, our aim was to verify if they answered positively to three questions: (1) Does it have an empirical approach?; (2) Does the practice approach conform to Schatzki's work?; (3) Is spatiality (understood according to Santos' perspective) relevant to the empirical phenomenon investigated and would this analysis bring contributions? 10 articles positively answered these questions, which are presented in the first column of Table 1 and were grouped according to similarities of approaches concerning space.

Table 1

**Suitability of Milton Santos' Work to Studies on Practice, Consumption, and Spatiality**

<b>Works</b>	<b>Milton Santos' ontology and theory possible contributions</b>	<b>Possible research problems (not exhaustive)</b>
Phipps and Ozanne, 2017	<i>Investigating disrupted routines.</i> The technique and technical objects play an important role in the configuration of ontological security discussed by the authors.	(1) What is the role of landscape in the configuration of practices and consumption? (2) Are the verticalities of space responsible for ontological security?
Woremann and Rokka, 2015	<i>Investigating time flow of practices.</i> According to Milton Santos, technique is what provides the union between time and space, as the technique takes place on a material basis of space and also constitutes the perception of time through its use.	(1) What is the role played by techniques and technical objects in the perception of time by consumers of some practice? (2) Are the techniques carriers of elements that align or misalign practices?
Domaneschi, 2012; Crivits and Paredis, 2013; Rinkinen <i>et al.</i> , 2019; Erler <i>et al.</i> , 2020	<i>Investigating food consumption and spaces.</i> Milton's analytical categories of verticality and horizontality can analytically enrich the relations of production and consumption of food in places, as well as the relationships between urban and rural places. By creating a cosmopolitan taste frequently carried out by the middle class, globalization can be the result of the importation by the South of techniques and technical objects from the high technical centers of the Global North.	(1) How do contradictions between cosmopolitan and regional taste in food consumption manifest in places? (2) What is the role of practices and objects in accommodating verticality and horizontality in urban and rural places?
Boulaire and Cova, 2013	<i>Investigating space and technology.</i> Space is not only a background where technology occurs; it relates to technology in the value creation, for instance. Wouldn't technology, when promoting networks, be a disguised form of verticality imposed on places, thus breaking horizontal solidarities?	What is the role of networked digital games in creating local cultural barriers?
Jafari and Goulding, 2013; Zalewska, 2015; Gowricharn, 2019	<i>Investigating glocalization.</i> The "banal" space advocated by Santos can be identified in the glocalization phenomenon. At a global level, horizontality and verticality can also be identified. In this configuration, the techniques end up being responsible for the diffusion of practices across the planet and for systems of domination and resistance.	(1) How do local cultures resist vertical rationalities imposed by technical consumption? (2) How does the consumption of techniques help to create horizontal practices of resistance in minority groups?

Sources: elaborated by the authors.

We do not intend to imply that the authors of the articles would have to take this or that path in their investigations. We think these works are great. Our aim is only to point out the richness of Milton Santos' theoretical framework to address topics that are already being discussed in the field of practices, consumption, and space.

The empirical work of Phipps and Ozanne (2017), who have carried out a study during the drought period in Australia, shows how consumers went from a state of insecurity to a new state of security due to the need to adopt new water-saving practices, which is required by the natural phenomenon of drought. An approach inspired by Milton Santos could have added a great deal of ontological analysis into the work by showing how the landscape and things are embedded in our actions when forming space. In addition, another thoughtful approach to the role of techniques and

technical objects could have emphasized their roles in the constitution of understandings, rules, and teleoaffective structures, thus configuring a whole system of foreign practices, as previously discussed. Do these foreign practices help or not in the constitution of ontological security?

The role of space, as well as materiality and the activities involved in it, also seems to be relevant to investigating the time flow of practices, as addressed by Woremann and Rokka (2015). A closer analysis of the role of the techniques, whether carried by individuals or present in objects, could upgrade them to the centrality of an empirical investigation by understanding them, according to Milton Santos (1997) as responsible for the fundamental connection between time and space. To a certain extent, this was the discovery brought about by the authors (the relationship between time and space in the performance of practices), however without discussing the issue of technique. Wouldn't the techniques, as previously discussed, form packages of activities, understandings, rules, and teleoaffective structures that change the time flow of practices and consumption? According to the authors' findings, wouldn't be the alignment or misalignment of elements of practices that change the time flow?

It is common for studies involving food consumption and practices to adopt as objects of empirical investigation contexts in which there are conflicting practices between alternative food networks (AFNs) and conventional food supply networks. The study by Domaneschi (2012) demonstrates how the quality of food served by restaurants in Italy is inherent in the traditions of the territories, whether regarding their physical or abstract aspects. In this case, horizontalities are used precisely to combat (foreign) vertical impositions of food quality standards. Horizontality and verticality coexist – sometimes contradictorily and harmoniously – in the same places, as shown by Rinkinen *et al.* (2019) when identifying the role of the freezer as an enabler of the consumption of processed food and alternative and local food. In this case, the conflict between foreign and local practices is evident. While Crivitis and Paredis (2013) investigate AFNs in the context of the Global North, Erler *et al.* (2020) take the debate to India. In these two articles, it is possible to identify a few forms of resistance to traditional models of food purchase, in addition to the domination of spaces and territories by global rationalities, as warned by Milton Santos. In turn, it is possible to realize how elements of horizontalities start being incorporated into the equation due to the cosmopolitan taste of the middle class.

Boulaire and Cova's (2013) work investigates a type of digital game to approach issues related to informational technology and spatiality. A critical Miltonian approach could question if the network that permeates the discussion on the digitization of spaces occurs thanks to the impression of a false horizontality that could break local solidarities, e.g., through the creation of cultural barriers between classes.

Finally, globalization provides complex, contradictory and harmonious relationships simultaneously. From our selection, we emphasize the study of Jafari and Goulding (2013) when investigating the "Westernization" of Iran, the study of Zalewska (2015), which approaches the consumer revolution in post-Soviet Poland, and of Gowricharn (2019) when investigating Indian communities in the Netherlands. All these works shed light on complex relationships, both at the local and global levels. In this complexity, it is possible to glimpse techniques through the "transportation" of practices from one place to another on the globe, elements of horizontalities resisting in territories, and vertical and horizontal relationships coexisting contradictorily in spaces. Now it's the time to advocate for our construct of directionality of practices.

This meta-analysis is not exhaustive, and we know it has some limitations. First, defining the starting date of the query after the publication of Warde's (2005) study does not imply that there were no previous works empirically investigating practices and consumption. Second, we consciously restricted our qualitative meta-analysis to a few journals. This becomes a limitation when one realizes that there may be several other papers that work with a theory similar to the one we propose, however published in environmental journals, for example (see Røpke, 2009). Finally, the need imposed by us to select for analysis only papers that had at least one reference to Schatzki may have left those that used the framework of Shove and her collaborators, for instance, which we consider a ramification of Schatzki's initial discussions.

## **Directionality as a construct to analyze practices and consumption patterns in spaces.**

We've been until now demonstrating some similarities between the practice theory of Schatzki and the called nature of the space of Milton Santos as well as their ontologies. We argue that these ontologies are very similar and a theoretic with these two seminar authors could be fruitful for researchers who are willing to investigate consumption, practices, and space. To help to underpin our arguments, we also did a meta-analysis as shown in Table 1. In this section we show what we created from this merge: the *directionality* construct, a dimension to look at practices.

Practices, in directional terms, can be predominantly horizontal, predominantly vertical, or undifferentiated. As we discuss herein, the space is crossed by verticalities and horizontalities. Remember that to Milton Santos, the global North, with its technical density, spreads techniques around the world and, normally, the underdeveloped countries incorporate some of these techniques. These techniques, to Milton Santos, can be considered Trojan Horses (Santos, 1980b). As we argue, these incorporated techniques generate inside the territories and places (normally of the global South) "foreign" practices and, consequently, "foreign" consumption patterns.

Thus, we argue that practices mirror this dynamic. If we frame some practice which has roots abroad (because the technique which carries it through the global space is created abroad), this practice manifests vertical directionality. On the other hand, if we frame some practice which is created in its own place or territory, in a more organic way, we are talking about horizontal directionality. In the first case, we have "foreign" consumption. In the second case, we have "solidary" consumption.

In some other cases, we have practices which are very difficult to clarify if they are "foreigners" or "solidary". In that case, we label the consumption that emerged from these practices as "anthropophagic". The anthropophagic term refers to the writer Oswald de Andrade and his historic text published in 1928. The writer in his *Manifesto Antropófago* called the Brazilian artists to incorporate the culture abroad, but also to create something new and Brazilian. The main idea is to accept multiculturalism. This label seems very suitable to practices which are crossed by both verticalities and horizontalities in a way that is not secure to classify them and their consumption patterns as "foreigners" or "solidary".

Table 2  
**Directionality of Practices and Types of Consumption Associated with it**

	<b>Predominantly horizontal practices</b>	<b>Practices with undifferentiated directionality</b>	<b>Predominantly vertical practices</b>
<b>Description</b>	Practices which are “born” in their own frame of space	These practices have both vertical and horizontal elements of the space and none of them is predominant	Practices which are “born” abroad (in relation to the space in analysis)
<b>Pattern of consumption</b>	Solidary consumption	Anthropophagic consumption	Foreign consumption

Sources: elaborated by the authors.

Our work to identify a new construct (directionality) can enable researchers to see another dimension of practices and, consequently, see framed consumption patterns. Furthermore, we think we accomplished it in accordance with MacInnis (2011). According to the author, a construct is a type of conceptual contribution and “articles that contribute to identification [of constructs] make us aware of what we have been missing” (p. 143). Thus, in what follows we make an effort to justify the importance of this construct.

In the literature the practices have already been studied under the lens of entity and their capacities to spread through time and space (Shove & Pantzar, 2007; Røpke, 2009; Gram-Hanssen, 2011). However, we think the ideas of practice *plenum* (Schatzki, 2019) and *nexus* of practices (Hui, Schatzki & Shove, 2016), for instance, fall apart in the mission of problematizing the relations between *places which send* and *places which do* (Santos, 2013). The directionality dimension we propose herein draws attention to the dynamics of either imposition/resistance or harmonization of practices between places and territories. As researchers of the global South, we expect to question the dynamics of power when studying practices and consumption. It is not our interest just to take for granted some theories created in the North to just frame our specificities. In an “anthropophagic” way, we intend to create something unique and suitable to investigate our own issues.

For instance, the idea of “foreign” and “solidary” could be useful to consumer researchers who have been investigating power relations in places and territories. As aforementioned, Lacerda (2021) investigated the role of civil society organizations (CSOs) in the development of Papua *favela*, in Rio de Janeiro. To some extent, “foreign” practices imported by business school students “trying to improve the efficiency of the CSO” (p. 14) broke some horizontal practices and forms of solidary consumption over the MuseumOrg, a museum of *favelas*.

In relation to the idea of horizontal and vertical practices, we work in a Weberian sense of ideal types. In a practice *plenum* or in a global world we know it is very difficult to frame a “pure” kind of practice. Because of that, we use the term “predominant” in order to illustrate practices that are “more” horizontal or “more” vertical.

We use some examples extracted from our meta-analysis to finish this section and illustrate our framework. In what follows, we will no longer use quotes to refer to these terms.

Our solidary consumption is a conceptualization which helps to frame the phenomenon of space *and* practice, focusing always on the origin of the latter. Specifically, we are looking for a type of consumption which stands alongside – and make opposition to – some foreign ones. It is very important to note that with the solidary term we are not talking about either the consumption tribes or forms of communities. There already is consistent literature encompassing them (Arnould & Thompson, 2005). Furthermore, in order to make that difference clear, we bring an example. The Brazilians Harley Davidson motorcycles can be a tribe, but the consumption which emerges from the practice of attending to the group is not solidary in our terms, because it is foreign. In this way, the geocaching game studied by Boulaire and Cova (2013) has collective characteristics, but it is not solidary in our sense because it seems to pertain to a more cosmopolitan frame of space (in this case the consumption seems to be more undifferentiated). One example of solidary consumption is the case of the *food teams* studied by Crivits and Paredis (2013) in Belgium. These are “food systems which differ from the dominant agro-food system and are created as a reaction to the conventional productivist paradigm” (p. 312). In this case there is clearly some power struggle.

One example of foreign consumption is presented by Zalewska (2015) in her study of the “consumption revolution” in socialist Poland. In many cases, the technical objects from the Western world “invaded” the communist country and changed practices and customs. Consequently, consumption changed, as in the cited case of the technical advancements which gave women more time to work outside. This is a clear case when foreign consumption came with the verticality of practices (carried by techniques or technical objects).

An example of anthropophagic consumption, which is not easy to classify as solidary or foreign, is the case of millets consumption in India studied by Eler et al. (2020). According to the authors, “[i]n the urban parts of Bengaluru, millets have long been regarded as an inferior staple when compared to rice and wheat” (p. 2). However, the new Indian middle-class, influenced by a western and exclusionary idea of organic food, become more interested in this type of consumption and practices involved with millets. Despite using the consumption of millets as class differentiation, the Indian new middle-class, in an anthropophagic movement, incorporated an ancient food of North Africa and Asia to resignify it in a more cosmopolitan taste. The vertical practices of going to an organic shop and the horizontal practices of Indian cuisine merge and raised an anthropophagic form of consumption.

## Conclusions

We have discussed herein the potential provided by Milton Santos’ theory for research on studies of consumption and practices. More specifically, from this merge we created the construct of *directionality of practices*. With this, we also expect this work can give room for others interested in investigating consumption, practices and space using the Miltonian theory. The geographer’s work is very rich and can give so many insights into the field of consumption and practices. For instance, the idea of roughness (surviving old techniques) is very interesting when investigating practices and consumption patterns which are considered “backward”.

However, our focus here is that the directionality of practices drives consumption patterns in places. Predominantly horizontal practices create solidary consumption, predominantly vertical practices create foreign consumption, and practices with undifferentiated directionality create

anthropophagic consumption. Thus, at the end of this essay, we choose to point out three paths of investigation derived from our construct.

First, researchers who are interested in unveiling some critical issues in consumption and practices can use the directionality construct because it points out the origins of the practices and consumption patterns. For instance, our construct can be used in investigations on market dynamics, such as that of alternative food networks (AFNs) in developing countries. In some cases, it is possible to see impositions of the market agents on places, fostering inequalities, as in the AFNs' case investigated by Lopes, Menezes and Araújo (2017) in the city of Belo Horizonte. In this case, is the consumption from AFNs foreign to the Belo Horizonte dwellers?

Second, the directionality of practices, in our argument, drives consumption patterns in places. Researchers who are interested in unveiling some critical issues in consumption practices can use this kind of theoretics because it points out the origins of the practices and consumption practices. For instance, the investigation of Warnaby and Medway (2013) shows how the 2011 conflicts in London and the consequent governmental campaigns could be framed wrongly if we pay no attention to the verticalities and horizontalities of the space. This case also shows us that it is possible to use this framework beyond the scope of the global South.

Disclosing if the consumption is solidary or foreign can give some clues about the preferences for "foreign tastes" in countries of the South. This issue is the case of the aforementioned new middle-class taste in India discussed by Erler *et al.* (2020). The work of Castilhos (2019), for instance, sheds light on middle-class taste and its foreign consumption when highlights the case of the struggle of the condo dwellers to change the name of their neighborhood from *Vila Ipiranga* to *Jardim Europa*. In this case, the taste of the dwellers in a Brazilian city came with the market dynamics of the space. According to the investigation, the hegemonic practices (foreigners) of the marketplace raised boundaries between the middle- and lower-classes, promoting exclusion.

Third, knowing the origins of practices and consumption patterns helps to understand the origins of the general understandings of some practices. As we know, general understandings act likewise ethos in the performances of practices. Thus, find out what underpins moralities involved in consumption patterns and their practices can be a fruitful path for researchers interested in investigating ethical issues about consumption. In this way, our construct of directionality of practices can highlight the impositions between places in the discussion of the ethics of consumption and practices (Gram-Hanssen, 2021). On the other hand, our construct can also contribute to the discussion of teleoaffective formations raised by Welch (2017). According to the author, this construct, derived from general understandings of individual practices, points out an array of practices coordinating common ends and making sense to the participants. We expect the directionality construct can also contribute to these studies on consumption ethics. Are our motivations foreigners? Are our ethics imported? As citizens of the global South, is our morality strange to us?

As we said, with this essay we want to unveil paths to investigate consumption and practices in the space. We also hope the researchers can go further and explore the vast insights that the work of Milton Santos can give to the field.



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## Conflict of interests

The authors have stated that there is no conflict of interest.

## Inclusive language

The authors use inclusive language that acknowledges diversity, conveys respect to all people, is sensitive to differences, and promotes equal opportunities.

## Authors' contributions

**First author:** conceptualization (lead), data curation (equal), formal analysis (lead), investigation (lead), methodology (lead), project administration (lead), resources (supporting), supervision (supporting), validation (equal), visualization (lead), writing-original draft (lead), writing-review & editing (lead).

**Second author:** conceptualization (supporting), data curation (equal), formal analysis (supporting), investigation (supporting), methodology (supporting), project administration (supporting), resources (supporting), supervision (lead), validation (equal), visualization (supporting), writing-original draft (supporting), writing-review & editing (supporting).

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