



WHAT IS VEGANISM? SOCIOCULTURAL RESISTANCE TO STRUCTURAL SPECIESISM AND SPATIAL RECONFIGURATION

O QUE É VEGANISMO? RESISTÊNCIA SOCIOCULTURAL AO ESPECISMO ESTRUTURAL E RECONFIGURAÇÃO ESPACIAL

¿QUÉ ES EL VEGANISMO? RESISTENCIA SOCIOCULTURAL AL ESPECISMO ESTRUCTURAL Y A LA RECONFIGURACIÓN ESPACIAL



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ABSTRACT

Veganism is a sociocultural-identity, ethical-political, and spatial movement that confronts structural speciesism and the colonial continuities of the Plantationocene. Being vegan goes beyond renouncing what one eats or wears; it is a coherent and conscious choice about how one lives and with whom one chooses to share the world. This phenomenon is understood through a theoretical-conceptual anthropological approach, which examines three planes of spatialization: everyday practices that reorganize lived space and consumption circuits; intentional actions, such as occupations and activism, that establish zones of contestation; and digital territorialities that dispute narratives and reconfigure symbolic space. The articulation of these planes produces vegan places, non-places of animal exploitation, Foucault's heterotopias, and Bey's Temporary Autonomous Zones, connected by counter-cartographies that reveal human peripheries and spaces of animal exploitation. The synthesis of Harvey and Lefebvre's spatial theories demonstrates that such zones reterritorialize flows of food, labor, and affection, expanding socio-environmental and interspecies justice. Four ethical axes are proposed: justice for sentient beings; rejection of animal exploitation; recognition of ecological interdependence; and moralization of consumption and habitus. The conclusion is that veganism acts as a transformative cultural force, reorganizing sociocultural and spatial dynamics and inspiring new ethnographic investigations into the impacts of different spatialization plans on the local economy and sociability.

Keywords: Anthropology of Space. Structural Speciesism. Plantationocene. Production of Space. Veganism.

RESUMO

O veganismo é um movimento sociocultural-identitário, ético-político e espacial que enfrenta o especismo estrutural e as continuidades coloniais do Plantationoceno. Ser vegano vai além de renunciar ao que se come ou se veste; trata-se de uma escolha coerente e consciente sobre como se vive e com quem se escolhe compartilhar o mundo. A compreensão desse fenômeno se dá por meio de uma abordagem antropológica de caráter teórico-conceitual, na qual se examinam três planos de espacialização: práticas cotidianas que reorganizam o

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espaço vivido e os circuitos de consumo; ações intencionais, como ocupações e ativismos, que instituem zonas de contestação; e territorialidades digitais que disputam narrativas e reconfiguram o espaço simbólico. A articulação desses planos produz lugares veganos, não-lugares de exploração animal, heterotopias de Foucault e Zonas Autônomas Temporárias de Bey, conectados por contracartografias que revelam periferias humanas e espaços de exploração animal. A síntese das teorias espaciais de Harvey e Lefebvre demonstra que tais zonas reterritorializam fluxos de alimentos, trabalho e afetos, ampliando a justiça socioambiental e interespecies. Propõem-se quatro eixos éticos: justiça para seres sencientes; recusa da exploração animal; reconhecimento da interdependência ecológica; e moralização do consumo e do habitus. Conclui-se que o veganismo atua como força cultural transformadora, reorganizando dinâmicas socioculturais e espaciais e inspirando novas investigações etnográficas sobre os impactos dos diferentes planos de espacialização na economia e na sociabilidade locais.

Palavras-chave: Antropologia do Espaço. Especismo Estrutural. Plantationoceno. Produção do Espaço. Veganismo.

RESUMEN

El veganismo es un movimiento sociocultural, identitario, ético-político y espacial que confronta el especismo estructural y las continuidades coloniales del Plantationoceno. Ser vegano va más allá de renunciar a lo que se come o se viste; es una elección coherente y consciente sobre cómo se vive y con quién se comparte el mundo. Este fenómeno se comprende a través de un enfoque antropológico teórico-conceptual, que examina tres planos de espacialización: las prácticas cotidianas que reorganizan el espacio vivido y los circuitos de consumo; las acciones intencionales, como las ocupaciones y el activismo, que establecen zonas de disputa; y las territorialidades digitales que disputan narrativas y reconfiguran el espacio simbólico. La articulación de estos planos produce lugares veganos, no-lugares de explotación animal, las heterotopías de Foucault y las Zonas Autónomas Temporales de Bey, conectadas por contracartografías que revelan las periferias humanas y los espacios de explotación animal. La síntesis de las teorías espaciales de Harvey y Lefebvre demuestra que dichas zonas reterritorializan los flujos de alimentos, trabajo y afecto, expandiendo la justicia socioambiental e interespecies. Se proponen cuatro ejes éticos: justicia para los seres sintientes; rechazo a la explotación animal; reconocimiento de la interdependencia ecológica; y moralización del consumo y el hábito. La conclusión es que el veganismo actúa como una fuerza cultural transformadora, reorganizando las dinámicas socioculturales y espaciales e inspirando nuevas investigaciones etnográficas sobre los impactos de diferentes planes de espacialización en la economía y la sociabilidad locales.

Palabras clave: Antropología del Espacio. Especismo Estructural. Plantacionoceno. Producción del Espacio. Veganismo.



1 INTRODUCTION

Veganism, as an ethical, philosophical and cultural movement, transcends the practice of food, establishing itself as a form of resistance to the dominant logics of animal consumption and exploitation. Veganism was formally defined in 1949 by Leslie J. Cross as "the principle of the emancipation of animals from human exploitation" (The Vegan Society, 2025a, online), not limited to a change in diet and consumption habits, but also representing an ethical repositioning in the treatment of animals and the environment, proposing a transformation in existing social and cultural relations.

As Certeau (1994) observes, everyday practices often function as forms of silent resistance against the strategies of control and consumption imposed by the dominant society. In the context of veganism, food choices and alternative consumption practices can be seen as resistance tactics that reconfigure social and cultural relations. These practices, such as vegan markets, restaurants, and events, represent spaces of counter-hegemony, subverting the logic of mass consumption and animal exploitation, while offering cultural and social alternatives that challenge established norms.

The objective of this article is to present, through a theoretical-conceptual approach, an analysis of veganism, emphasizing the definition and expansion of this concept, as well as the interaction of vegans with the physical and symbolic spaces they occupy. This study also seeks to identify the unique contribution of veganism as a transformative movement and its cultural, social, ecological and spatial impacts.

Through an anthropological approach, this article explores veganism as a cultural and social phenomenon that challenges hegemonic norms of animal consumption and exploitation. This article demonstrates that veganism operates as a movement of spatial and cultural resistance, reconfiguring practices and sociabilities.

With the theoretical support of Augé (1994), who defines "non-places" as spaces without symbolic identity and disconnected from the full human experience, the article applies this concept to the context of animal exploitation, highlighting the invisibility of these spaces in society. Thus, an ethical reflection is proposed on how these places of animal exploitation, such as slaughterhouses, poultry farms, factories of animal products and laboratories that perform tests on animals, remain hidden from the eyes of the majority of the population, being socially devalued.

Although Augé (1994) describes "non-places" as neutral spaces, devoid of meaning and permanence, this concept is used in this article to show that certain spaces of animal exploitation, such as slaughterhouses, farms, factories and laboratories, lack visibility and ethical recognition in society. These places are ignored by the public consciousness and



devoid of social significance; By bringing this invisibility to light, the vegan movement questions the (im)morality of the animal exploitation that such spaces sustain.

2 METHODOLOGY

The methodology adopted is of a theoretical nature, supported by the critical analysis of the literature on veganism, cultural anthropology and the theory of spaces. In the light of Augé (1994), this article is based on the contributions of authors such as Bey (2003), Haesbaert (2023), Harvey (2015), Holmes (2008), Foucault (2013), Lefebvre (2000), Vargas (2021) and Whitridge (2004), whose reflections on the production of space and cultural resistance allow us to understand how vegan zones are configured as territories of resistance and counter-hegemony, promoting new forms of sociability and reterritorialization.

The debate is based on a bibliography that combines classic works from the social sciences, from anthropology to critical geography, and contemporary studies indexed in databases such as Scopus, SciELO, and Google Scholar. Thus, the aim of this article is not only to define and broaden the concept of veganism, but also to examine how this movement manifests itself in urban spaces, where vegans claim and reconfigure social and cultural territories. With this analysis, we seek to understand how veganism proposes a new ethical and social order, challenges the dominant speciesist hegemonic model and creates possibilities for a more just, sustainable and respectful coexistence with all living beings.

2.1 VEGANISM

The concept of veganism, already encompassing concerns beyond eating and consumption habits, was formally revised by The Vegan Society when it restructured itself as a charity and limited company in 1979 (De Boo; House; Calvert, 2014). The *Memorandum and Articles of Association*, available on the entity's website (The Vegan Society, 2025b), defines veganism in the following terms:

A philosophy and way of life that seeks to exclude, as far as possible and practicable, all forms of exploitation and cruelty to animals for food, clothing, or any other purpose; and, by extension, promotes the development and use of animal-free alternatives for the benefit of humans, animals, and the environment. (The Vegan Society, 1979 *apud* de boo; House; Calvert, 2014, p. 6)

However, The Vegan Society's official website preserves this wording and adds a more recent addendum: "In the dietary context, it denotes the practice of eliminating all products derived wholly or partly from animals" (The Vegan Society, 2025a, online)



While The Vegan Society's initial definition of 1979 and its more recent version are key to understanding the vegan movement, this work expands the look to the sociocultural, spatial, and political dimensions. Thus, contemporary veganism goes beyond mere nutritional and economic choices: it configures personal habits, discourses and collective practices, fosters political initiatives and incorporates ecological concerns, revealing how the interrelations between human beings, animals and the environment take place.

Based on the approach of Franco and Batista (2025), an expanded definition of veganism is proposed that, from an anthropological and philosophical perspective, incorporates elements of culture and identity, as shown below.

Veganism is configured as a sociocultural and identity movement that transcends the sphere of food and consumption, establishing itself as a way of life that challenges the dominant logics of speciesism and exploitation. As a form of cultural resistance, it proposes the reconfiguration of hegemonic structures of domination over humans and non-humans, destabilizing normative paradigms on the relationship between culture, nature and life. This is an ethical refusal that goes beyond the non-consumption of products of animal origin, extending to the rejection of the use of animals in any practices that imply suffering or objectification. Anchored in the moralization of consumption, in a context in which animals are systematically reduced to the condition of commodities, veganism articulates environmental, moral and social justice values, reconfiguring production systems and establishing new cultural frontiers. By reformulating symbolic norms and dynamics of belonging, it is constituted as a system of meanings that proposes a transformation in social and cultural relations, based on a cosmology guided by respect for life and the search for more ethical and sustainable models of coexistence. (Franco and Batista, 2025)

To understand speciesism, Ryder (2010) defines it as prejudice based exclusively on species, resulting in unequal moral treatment between humans and other animals. The author illustrates this with the hypothetical example of the "last Neanderthal", whose capture could result in recognition as a subject of rights or in his reduction to an object of experimentation, showing how the biological criterion legitimizes such violence.

As defined by Horta and Albersmeier (2020), speciesism consists of the comparatively worse and unjustified consideration or treatment of individuals because they are classified as not belonging to a certain species, regardless of the economic, cultural, or historical context. With this, this perspective broadens the scope of the debate beyond criticism of capitalism, shifting the ethical focus to moral justification, and not only to the socioeconomic system.

Complementing this reflection, Joy (2019) deepens the critique with the concept of *powerarchy*, in which human supremacy serves as a psychological and institutional model



reproduced in racism, sexism, and other oppressions. Nibert (2013) historically revisits animal domestication, which he calls *domesecration*, demonstrating how this process established the hierarchical logic later applied among human groups. Dismantling speciesism, therefore, weakens the matrix that sustains multiple discriminations, benefiting both non-human animals and human societies themselves.

For a more precise understanding, it should be noted that, although veganism is sometimes understood as intersectional, horizontally in relation to the various human social agendas, by tradition, and in line with its radical ethical and philosophical logic, its central focus falls mainly on non-human sentient beings, whose condition of slavery, suffering and death has been and remains totally invisible and culturally naturalized.

According to the Animal Rights News Agency (ANDA, 2015), it makes no sense to condition the adoption of veganism to the prioritization of humane political agendas, since its theoretical basis lies in the fight against speciesism and the abolition of animal slavery to achieve the full liberation of non-humans. While not denying the value of tactical alliances with other causes, ANDA (2015) rejects the attempt to articulate veganism in a way that is horizontal or even interdependent on human agendas, as this dilutes its ethical centrality and opens space for relativizations and the emergence of "postmodern intersectional vegans" (neo-vegans), whose practices, guided by anthropocentrism, prove incompatible with traditional abolitionist philosophy. According to ANDA (2015):

The end of slavery against blacks did not free women from patriarchy, the conquest of rights by women did not overthrow the capitalist system and not because these movements were elitist or did not care about others, but because the condition of their victims was so urgent that it made no sense to expect the world to be a fairer place for them to stop suffering. (ANDA, 2015, online)

Thus, although traditional veganism has an autonomous ethic, it does not oppose human struggles for justice and emancipation; By rejecting speciesist anthropocentrism, it can form alliances as long as there is no conflict with its principles, preserving its philosophical coherence. Even without merging with other agendas, the movement indirectly contributes to them by combating speciesism, the root of various forms of discrimination. This perspective does not deny intersectional agendas, but affirms that vegan ethics only dialogues horizontally with other social struggles when it maintains its centrality in the refusal of animal exploitation, without being instrumentalized or subordinated by human agendas.

Sentience, understood as the capacity to suffer and experience well-being, defines the moral horizon of veganism, dispensing with excluding criteria such as intelligence or economic value. Singer (2015) argues that every being endowed with this experience



deserves equal consideration, rejecting practices that subordinate non-human lives to human convenience. Thus, the moralization of consumption becomes a principle of interspecies justice, destabilizing hierarchies that have historically legitimized animal exploitation.

The combined criterion of sentience and intentionality avoids the false equivalence between the involuntary deaths of wild animals in agriculture and the intentional and systematic suffering imposed on animals raised for food. By analyzing the *crop-death argument* (Matheny, 2003), it is demonstrated that plant diets cause less global damage to sentient beings than any livestock model, including extensive ones. While reducing accidental deaths in agriculture remains desirable, this does not eliminate ethical responsibility for industrial livestock farming practices, which are marked by constant and purposeful suffering.

In this ethical horizon, the concept of *Ahimsa stands out*, originating from the Indian tradition, which synthesizes the conscious refusal of violence and drives changes in habits as the sentience of farm animals is recognized. According to Mace and McCulloch (2020), the incorporation of this principle into everyday life strengthens an ethic of non-exploitation of animals and favors the adoption of choices aligned with veganism, promoting conduct that is more consistent with ethical and moral values aimed at respect and protection of animal life.

On the other hand, Mace and McCulloch (2020) point out that the application of *Ahimsa* is often incoherent, even among groups that say they are committed to the principle. Many yoga teachers limit nonviolence to self-care or the anthropocentric sphere, ignoring sentient farm animals and perpetuating speciesist practices. Such a posture, according to the authors, highlights the contradiction between discourse and practice and the challenges to consolidate *Ahimsa as an effective ethical foundation*.

In this context, Spencer (2016) notes that the dietary flexibility that led humans from herbivorism to omnivorism was crucial to the expansion of the species, but points out that, currently, it is possible to thrive without meat. Therefore, the adoption of vegetarian and vegan diets driven by ethical, environmental, and health motivations is growing. Franco and Batista (2024) corroborate this picture by demonstrating that food systems without animal inputs consume fewer resources and generate less waste than speciesist models, making veganism an effective strategy to reduce the individual carbon footprint, promote social justice, and favor a more sustainable and healthy lifestyle.

In contemporary times, after centuries of exploitation of animals and nature by humans, the vegan movement is strengthened based on an anti-speciesist ethic that values respect and communion between species. In this context, the rereading of Lévi-Strauss's (1964) concepts of "raw" and "cooked", taken up by Franco and Batista (2025), is

fundamental to rethinking human relations with the natural world. For Lévi-Strauss, these categories go beyond the food sphere and express symbolic oppositions that structure myths and cultural practices, articulating in particular the distinction between "nature" and "culture".

Taking advantage of the resources of contemporary technology, OpenAI's GPT-4 model (2025) was used to generate the image based on Franco and Batista's (2025) definition (Figure 1). The result contrasts conceptual pairs, such as "raw" and "cooked", veganism versus "non-veganism", sustainability versus "non-sustainability", nature versus industry, and life versus death, thus resuming the logic of binary oppositions that Lévi-Strauss (1964) employs in the structural analysis of non-Western societies. In addition, the image generated with the GPT-4 model (OpenAI, 2025), based on the author's instructions, represents the hypothesis that the persistence of a social arrangement anchored in concepts contrary to veganism tends to produce an apocalyptic horizon, associated with the worsening of environmental devastation and violence against animals.

Figure 1

Contrast between veganism and "non-veganism"



Source: Elaborated by the author using GPT-4, OpenAI's tool (2025).

Franco and Batista (2025) reframe the opposition between "raw" and "cooked" by inserting veganism into the debate: by rejecting the exploitative domination of the



environment around them, the movement restores the state of "raw", refusing abusive control over animals and nature. This "return to the raw" does not represent a return to primitivism, but rather the emergence of a new "raw", arising from an ethical and philosophical moralization, based on respect for life, the refusal of speciesism and the search for peaceful coexistence between species. Thus, by shifting the traditional sense of "raw" to a horizon of consciousness and choice, veganism proposes a model of interspecies relationship based on renewed ethical principles, signaling not a return to brute nature, but the inauguration of a paradigm in which respect and non-violence are established as central principles of social and cultural practices.

In the light of Weber (2004), ethical precepts guide life conducts, instituting routines, discipline and criteria of legitimacy that reconfigure daily and economic practices. From this perspective, applied to veganism, an anti-speciesist ethic operates as a life orientation that rationalizes choices and habits, such as becoming vegan, converting moral convictions into socially recognizable methodical practices. Not based on religion, veganism is anchored in anti-speciesist ethical precepts that, through its expansion, can effectively subsidize the construction of forms of coexistence less crossed by discrimination.

Considering the reflections on speciesism and interspecies ethics, it is appropriate to return to the classic contributions of Hobbes (1974), who argues that, in order to avoid the chaos and violence inherent to the human natural state, individuals must cede part of their freedom to a sovereign power responsible for ensuring order and security. In contrast, Rousseau (1999) presents a more optimistic view of human nature, arguing that corruption derives from the inadequacy of forms of social organization. Rousseau (1999) thus proposes a collective contract based on consensus, with laws established with a view to the common good. For Rousseau (1999), legitimate power emanates from the people, and freedom is viable only when rules are formulated by and for all.

However, this perspective remains fundamentally anthropocentric, as it presupposes the exclusion of non-human animals from human normative processes. In this sense, taking up Ryder's provocation (2010), even a "last Neanderthal" captured, despite his humanity, could be more readily treated as an object of experimentation than recognized as a subject of rights. Thus, animals often continue to be deprived of ethical-legal recognition as possible subjects of law.

Considering that speciesism, understood as a structural phenomenon, has manifested itself since the dawn of humanity, evidenced not only by the conflicts between human animals and other animals, but also by those fought with their quasi-human counterparts, such as the aforementioned Neanderthal, it is important to point out that certain historical conjunctures,



especially the period that comprises the so-called "Plantationocene" and the "Negrocene", as presented by Ferdinand (2022), constituted especially favorable terrain for the rooting and consolidation of multiple forms of discrimination and prejudice, allowing us to perceive, from a broader perspective, the complexity and persistence of these dynamics of exclusion.

2.2 THE VEGAN AND THE PLANTATIONOCENE

The relationship between colonialism, social injustice, and environmental problems is analyzed by Ferdinand (2022), who takes a critical look at the way traditional environmentalism has addressed these issues and proposes a deeper understanding of the historical roots that connect social oppression to environmental degradation. The author introduces the concepts of "Plantationocene" and "Negrocene" to describe the experiences of the colonized in relation to the land and nature. The work proposes to denounce the artificially constructed fracture between "humans" and "the environment", emphasizing that the struggles for social and environmental justice are interconnected and must be addressed in an integrated manner.

The Plantationocene presented by Ferdinand (2022) is a concept that addresses the configuration of plantations, resulting from colonialism, as a historical era that profoundly influenced the relations between humans and nature. This term unites the agricultural practices of monoculture, established in the colonies, with the exploitation of slave labor, emphasizing how these systems not only generated wealth for the metropolises, but also caused severe ecological and social damage.

In the Plantationocene, plantations are seen as extensions of colonial logic, where land is treated as a resource to be exploited, while local peoples, often forced into slavery or exploitation, are dehumanized. This agrarian structure not only promoted the destruction of ecosystems, but also perpetuated social and racial inequalities that persist to the present day.

On the other hand, the Negrocene, a concept coined by Ferdinand (2022), describes an era shaped by Afrodiasporic struggles and experiences under the colonial-slave logic. The term brings to light black narratives and realities, often silenced in debates on climate change and ecological crises, and claims that the voices and knowledge of these historically marginalized peoples are central to the construction of a more just and inclusive ecology.

Through an analogy inspired by Ferdinand (2022), it can be seen that, in the Negrocene, blacks and indigenous people were silenced, subjected to domination, and treated as merchandise. Today, non-human animals remain under the logic of "objectification", often treated as property and, particularly in agro-industrial systems, as a productive resource and food.



Some groups enjoy limited protection: wild animals, as long as they do not clash with human interests, and pets, bred to provide companionship. Draft animals, on the other hand, are born destined for forced labor, trapped in a life of service without any labor rights. The so-called "consumer animals", such as cattle, pigs, poultry and fish, are reduced to industrialized resources. "Objectification" legitimizes exploitation, makes suffering invisible and naturalizes systematic violence in the name of consumption and productivity.

Adams (2018) analyzes the intersection between meat consumption and cultural issues of a sexual nature, such as fetishism, emphasizing how food choices are linked to the objectification of animals. The author argues that the way we consume meat is not only an act of eating, but also a social practice that reveals dynamics of power and desire. This reflection opens space to discuss the way fetishism manifests itself in the relationships between humans and non-humans, proposing a critique of consumption that goes beyond food, involving deep ethical and social issues.

Returning to the equivalence proposed in Ferdinand's (2022) speech, through human action, natural resources and habitats are often exploited without consideration for the communities of other humans, or even any animals or living beings that inhabit them. Both the struggles of Afro-descendant and indigenous peoples for recognition and social justice, and the rights of animals despised, reveal a broader pattern of exclusion and exploitation in social and ecological systems.

This analogy, analyzed from the perspective of veganism, highlights the need for a more inclusive approach, which recognizes and values all voices, whether human or non-human animals, in the fight for social and ecological justice. Thus, unfortunately, it is possible to conclude that both humans and exploited animals face a social invisibility that results in abuse and neglect. By evidencing the silencing and systematic marginalization of these subjects, this finding reveals the imperative of constructing new forms of representation and symbolic dispute, such as initiatives of social mobilization, activism, production of alternative narratives, and the creation of networks of support and visibility, conceived as strategies aimed at the emergence of new spaces of recognition, contestation, and social transformation.

2.3 SYMBOLIC COUNTER-CARTOGRAPHIES OF VEGAN RESISTANCE

In this scenario, the concept of symbolic counter-cartographies of vegan resistance gains prominence, as it encompasses practices aimed at mapping, on the narrative and cultural level, the dynamics of exclusion, struggle and resistance, transcending the restricted notion of physical maps to encompass processes of visibility and transformation of meanings.



To approach veganism from the perspectives of spatialization and activism, it is worth mentioning Holmes (2008), who analyzes practices of activist counter-cartography capable of intervening politically in lived experience and challenging power structures through the redefinition of directions and meanings. For the author, it is necessary to go beyond traditional models of research and action, adopting a critical and creative posture that promotes new understandings and political trajectories.

Thus, by applying Holmes' (2008) ideas to the field of veganism, it can be affirmed that vegan zones are configured as elements of a critical counter-cartography to the extent that they produce spaces of resistance where the philosophical and sociocultural normativities of the vegan movement, always in the process of construction and resignification, are tensioned, reevaluated and renegotiated, without, however, to be assimilated by the hegemonic speciesist logic.

To deepen the understanding of these spatial dynamics, it is necessary to conceptually distinguish spaces and places, whose correlation, according to Whitridge (2004), is of fundamental importance for the understanding of human and social practices. According to the aforementioned author, "space" is conceived as an abstract, quantifiable and measurable dimension, which often serves as a panorama for activities and interactions; The "place" takes on a more significant dimension, where individual and collective experiences are intertwined, giving an emotional and cultural meaning to the environment.

However, Whitridge (2004) mentions the notion of "toposemantics", which reveals how spaces and places can be similar when considering the way in which both are imbued with cultural meanings over time. Although the space has a more objective and quantifiable approach, it is intertwined with the place, loaded with subjective and emotional meanings. This intersection allows for a richer and more complex analysis of human interaction with the environment, emphasizing that both space and place are the result of social practices and cultural constructions. It can also be said that the aforementioned author does not operate with a rigid binarism between "space" and "place", treating them as co-constitutive dimensions that interpenetrate each other throughout the processes of signification.

Vegan spaces, whether permanent or ephemeral, manifest themselves in homes, shops, restaurants, traveling fairs, informal gatherings, and urban interventions, operating as places that challenge and reconfigure the spatiality of hegemonic consumption and articulate dissident ethical and political practices. In these nodes of resistance, the materiality of these spaces dialogues with the vegan experience, driving reterritorializations that affirm collective identities, promote alternative forms of sociability, and instigate innovative modes of activism and cultural resistance.



To understand how vegan spaces promote alternative forms of sociability and stimulate practices of resistance, it is necessary to resort to the concept of *habitus*, as proposed by Bourdieu (2007). The author describes *habitus* as a set of durable and adaptable dispositions, which direct both the perceptions and the actions of individuals. He further argues that the affinity between similar *habitus* leads to mutual recognition among participants, facilitating the formation of "primary groups," such as couples, friendships, or collectives with common values and interests. In this context, this approach helps to explain why people with anti-speciesist dispositions tend to converge and aggregate in vegan spaces, where they recognize each other, consolidate bonds of trust, and sustain the continuity of ethical actions that maintain the collective initiatives present there.

Based on the discussions of Vargas and Paiva (2021), it is observed that the contemporary urban space is intensely structured by the logics of the tertiary sector, in which commerce, services, and tourism act as vectors of morphological and symbolic transformation of cities, especially in the digital age. The consolidation of *marketplace platforms* and the rise of the consumer as a *prosumer* (producer-consumer who generates content, data, and returns that feed back into the algorithms) highlight the centrality of the consumer as a territorial and affective operator.

Comparing the perspective presented by Vargas and Paiva (2021) with the proposal of this article, it is clear that, while architecture and urban flows are redesigned to reinforce commercial practices and sensory experiences aimed at capital, vegan zones emerge as ethical counter-spaces, both physical and symbolic. They reconfigure spatial dynamics, not only through new uses and aesthetics, but also through a profound critique of the logic of commodification of life.

Following the line of Vargas and Paiva (2021), who describe "the city of consumption and the consumption of the city", a resignification of vegan spatialities can be proposed: "the city of ethical consumption and the ethics of consumption of the city". In addition, one can conceive of "the city for veganism and veganism for the city", where all human actions and habits, including consumption, are reoriented towards the life, both of non-human and human animals, based on the ethical principles of justice, solidarity and care.

Based on Foucault's theory (2013), these territories of vegan resistance can be understood as heterotopias. According to Foucault (2013, p. 116), heterotopias are "places that are outside of all places, although they are effectively locatable", and society can shape them to function in a variety of ways, changing their use over time. Thus, the spaces occupied by vegans, often in the midst of predominantly non-vegan contexts, put in tension the



speciesist logics of hegemonic consumption based on anti-speciesist practices, configuring heterotopic places in which divergent ways of inhabiting the Earth coexist.

In this sense, by analogy, vegan counter-spaces can be seen as contemporary examples of heterotopias, where the logics of animal consumption and exploitation are subverted, creating new forms of coexistence and social resistance. This dynamic manifests itself in the juxtaposition between conventional markets and vegan fairs, between traditional restaurants and experimental kitchens, between conventional leisure spaces and activist artistic interventions. Thus, these places operate as symbolic territories that simultaneously reflect and contest the hegemonic geography of consumption.

In addition, these spaces function as heterotopias that can be named as deviance, harboring practices that subvert the dominant social norm. Foucault (2013, p. 117) describes deviant heterotopias as a place "where individuals whose behavior is deviant in relation to the average, or the required norm, are allocated". Veganism, by rejecting animal exploitation, establishes a counter-hegemonic logic that re-signifies consumption and challenges speciesist normativity.

Vegan zones can be analyzed based on the spatial triad proposed by Harvey (2015): absolute, relative, and relational space. The absolute space of vegan zones is manifested in physical boundaries, such as restaurants, fairs and specialized markets, where the materiality of the place is clearly defined. However, these spaces also operate in a relative manner, as their practices and consumer flows interact with the hegemonic market, establishing dynamic relationships with conventional consumption spaces.

The vegan space is not isolated, but is part of a larger network of spaces that influence each other. In this context, vegan zones not only coexist with conventional spaces, but also enter into tension and negotiation with them, as new forms of consumption are established that challenge the hegemonic model of animal exploitation. These vegan zones not only propose ethical alternatives in the face of speciesism, but also confront a speciesism that operates in a structural way, crossing norms, public policies, and the very production of urban space.

More deeply, analyzing from the perspective of Harvey (2015), these zones are configured as relational spaces, as their existence is not defined only by the materiality of the places, but by the connections and meanings attributed by their participants. Veganism, by proposing an anti-speciesist ethic, reconfigures the space around individuals, creating networks of sociability that break with the logic of animal exploitation and traditional consumption. In this sense, vegan zones become places of cultural resistance, where



alternative practices of consumption and social interaction take shape, shaping a new understanding of space and its meanings.

The production of space in vegan zones can be analyzed from the perspective of Lefebvre (2000), who argues that each society creates its own space, reflecting its relations of power, economy and culture. These spaces are not neutral; they are disputed territories, in which different spatial logics overlap. In vegan zones, this translates into a clash between the hegemonic space of speciesist consumption and the construction of a counter-space, based on anti-speciesist ethics and the symbolic reappropriation of territories.

As Lefebvre (2000) suggests, the production of space is not only a reflection of the economic structure, but also a field of resistance and transformation. Thus, vegan spaces not only respond to the market, but actively challenge its norms, creating new possibilities for appropriation and use of territories, based on everyday practices that break with the logic of animal exploitation and traditional consumption.

Vegan zones can also be understood as Temporary *Autonomous Zones* (TAZ), defined by Bey (2003) as transitory areas where new social forms spontaneously emerge, without seeking institutionalized permanence. In this sense, such zones create ephemeral spaces of resistance, escaping hegemonic cartography and traditional control systems.

Bey (2003) points out that, instead of solidifying institutionally, TAZs aim at moments of lived autonomy, where new forms of sociability and organization emerge spontaneously. These spaces are not limited to physical geography, but also occupy symbolic and cultural territories, where counter-hegemonic practices, such as veganism, can flourish without immediate suppression by the dominant system. In this way, by operating as TAZ, these spaces challenge established norms and sketch a glimpse of an alternative reality, based on anti-speciesist ethics and the reconfiguration of the relationships between humans, animals and the environment.

2.4 VEGAN NON-PLACES OF RESISTANCE

Vegan zones emerge not only as spaces of resistance, but also as territories marked by exclusion and the struggle for recognition, whether in peripheral urban spaces or in areas of animal suffering, invisible to society. In this context, it is possible to explore the dynamics of these "non-places", conceived by Augé (1994), as spaces of marginalization and resistance both in human society and at the borders of systems that exploit non-human beings.

On the one hand, there is the so-called peripheral veganism, experienced by those who fight for ethical alternatives in contexts of scarcity, social invisibility, and economic



segregation. On the other hand, there are places of animal suffering, such as breeding facilities, slaughterhouses, transport vehicles, animal testing centers and industrial confinement facilities, which operate on the margins of public consciousness, almost always invisible and without symbolic value. These places, however, play a central role in maintaining the *speciesist* status quo.

The intertwining of these two dimensions, the human peripheries and the "non-places of animal exploitation", forms a field of resistance, where vegan practices emerge as an attempt to subvert the logics of exploitation and domination, creating spaces of emancipatory resistance for both humans and non-humans.

Among the "non-places", the holds of old slave ships stand out, as analyzed by Ferdinand (2022). These spaces were the scene of extreme oppression and confinement during periods of colonization and slavery. Inside these basements, black lives faced inhumane conditions, enslaved by shackles and deprived of freedom. These sites not only represented suffering, but also symbolized resilience and the struggle for survival in a setting of intense exploitation.

Ferdinand (2022) also highlights how these basements reflect the invisibility of the trajectories of resistance, of individuals who, even in the midst of silencing, sought ways to affirm their identity and claim their rights. These narratives, often relegated to oblivion, are essential for understanding contemporary social dynamics.

In addition, Ferdinand (2022) makes a powerful analogy by considering the wombs of black women as basements colonized by white men, illustrating the control exercised by colonizers over the life, death, and reproduction of the colonized. This perspective reveals the intersection between gender and colonialism, highlighting the depth of domination imposed on the bodies and destinies of entire communities.

The analogy to the basements and the colonized of the past is powerful and allows new correspondences with today's reality, as in the case of the exploitation of animals. It is worth making it clear that it is merely an example; it does not measure suffering, it only reveals the common logic of objectification. When reflecting on the colonial period, in which human beings were legally treated as property, it is clear that this same legal condition, the reduction to merchandise, persists today, now applied to animals, which continue to be classified by law as food and an object of commerce.

Animals classified as "for consumption", such as cattle and pigs, still face long and unbearable trips on ships, without due care and subjected to intense suffering. Reduced to commodities, they are treated as mere objects of purchase and sale, without any consideration for their pain or their singular existence.



The dairy industry is another example of such exploitation. Cows, forced into continuous reproduction by artificial insemination, have their uteruses controlled and instrumentalized for reproduction. The puppies, usually taken soon after birth, are often destined for the *baby beef* market, reflecting the colonial logic of exploitation and commodification of bodies. Thus, these beings are reduced to mere commodities, devoid of soul or identity.

These practices, observable both in the colonial experience and in the present, expose the same axis of depersonalization and subordination. Veganism emerges, here, as a form of resistance that seeks to break this hegemonic dynamic by affirming the right of non-human animals to dignity and respect. It is worth remembering that various forms of discrimination and prejudice, originating from speciesism, precede the colonial regime, although they found fertile ground to intensify in it.

According to Sueur (2019), speciesism corresponds to the attribution of unequal values and rights according to species, establishing a hierarchy that grants prerogatives to humans to the detriment of other animals. The term, coined by psychologist Richard D. Ryder in 1970, highlights these exclusive privileges and arbitrary segmentations among nonhuman animals, such as preferring bees to wasps or consuming pork while rejecting dog meat. Also according to Sueur (2019), the speciesist bias echoes prejudices such as racism and sexism, as they all operate by constructing boundaries between "us" and "them", legitimizing practices of exclusion. Based on this framework, vegan activism can be understood as a contestation of this ideological pattern.

In urban spaces, vegan activism erupts into artistic interventions: marches, pickets, and symbolic occupations, as well as murals, ephemeral installations, and street performances, making the structural violence inflicted on animals palpable and inviting passers-by to review naturalized consumption practices. In the digital environment, audiovisual campaigns disseminated by videos, images and reports of abuse exposed the reality of the meat industry, vivisection and mistreatment in fashion; By fostering debate and mobilizing public opinion, they articulate the virtual space with the physical space and call on society to realign values and behaviors.

These actions aim not only to denounce, but also to encourage ethical reflection on consumption choices, proposing more sustainable and animal-friendly alternatives. By taking a stand against the speciesist *status quo*, vegans challenge cultural and social norms, promoting a more just and compassionate worldview, in which animal rights are recognized and respected.



This vegan resistance, which manifests itself both in everyday actions and in artistic and social interventions, can be understood from the concept of territory proposed by Haesbaert (2023), which goes beyond the conceptions of private property and state sovereignty. For the author, territory is a relational field, constantly redefined by social, political, and cultural interactions. It is possible to infer, then, that just as subalternized groups claim spaces to assert their identities and rights, veganism, especially in its peripheral version, is also configured as a political and social struggle, reterritorializing the relations between humans, animals and nature.

Haesbaert (2023), when discussing the concept of territory, emphasizes its relational and dynamic nature, shaped by social, political, cultural, and economic interactions that constantly redefine its boundaries and functions. For the author, territory is not simply a physical or functional delimitation, as in the Eurocentric tradition, where it is linked to private property and state sovereignty.

On the contrary, Haesbaert (2023) proposes that territory is also a symbolic and affective construction, fundamental for the resistance of subalternized groups. It challenges the traditional functionalist view and proposes a broader approach, where the territory is configured as a field of political and social struggle, reflecting the disputes of power and identity within a society.

The idea of territory, then, is not restricted to a conception of physical or material control, but becomes a space in constant transformation, through processes of territorialization, deterritorialization and reterritorialization, involving both the struggles of hegemonic groups and marginalized groups. These groups, when claiming territory, seek not only the possession of space, but also the affirmation of their identities, rights and ways of life. Territory, therefore, is central to the struggle for recognition and emancipation, since it defines the conditions of existence of a group and the power it can exercise over its space and resources.

By relating these concepts to peripheral veganism and veganism as resistance, it can be seen how the vegan movement, especially in its most peripheral and contesting forms, fits perfectly within this vision of territory as a political and social struggle.

Peripheral veganism, as well as other subalternized social movements, claims the territory of ethics and conscience against animal exploitation practices and the culture of speciesist consumption. In this context, the vegan territory is not just a physical space, but a symbolic and affective field where social, cultural, and political interactions take place in order to redefine the boundaries of what is considered acceptable or legitimate within society.



Vegan practices, by questioning animal exploitation, go beyond the simple refusal to consume products of animal origin. They represent a resistance to the hegemonic model that treats animals as resources and commodities, and seek to reterritorialize the space of life and nature in a more ethical and sustainable way.

Thus, the vegan territory is often lived and practiced in spaces that challenge the dominant norms, such as markets, fairs, restaurants and even urban artistic actions, where resistance and reterritorialization happen in a symbolic way, subverting the norms of consumption and the dynamics of animal exploitation.

In addition, the vegan territory is not limited to a physical space, but is also a field of identification and reaffirmation of values. Peripheral veganism, by positioning itself against the *status quo*, challenges the boundaries of speciesism, proposing new forms of coexistence and respect. It reterritorializes social and cultural relations, creating a new understanding of life and nature, in which animals are seen as subjects of rights, and not as objects of consumption or exploitation.

This notion of territory, as a relational and symbolic construction, is crucial to understanding the vegan movement, as it is inserted in this field of continuous struggle, where borders and identities are in constant negotiation. The vegan territory is, therefore, a space of resistance where the relationship between humans, animals and nature is redefined, proposing a new ethical and social order, challenging the hegemonic speciesist model that dominates contemporary society.

As Foucault (2013) proposed in his theory of heterotopias, spaces of resistance exist outside the dominant social and cultural norms. These ideas can be related to vegan zones, which are configured as spaces of resistance within this perspective. When expressed through peripheral practices, vegan resistance reconfigures social and cultural dynamics, positioning itself against a system that oppresses both animals and marginalized communities.

In addition, based on Lefebvre's (2000) argument about the production of space, it can be stated that vegan zones are not only a reflection of an economic structure, but also spaces that generate new forms of sociability and cultural practices that contest established norms.

Therefore, the vegan territory presents itself as a symbolic and relational field, which reconfigures the interaction between humans, animals and the environment, challenging the speciesist hegemonic order that predominates in contemporary societies. This movement, which transcends food issues, points to the emergence of new forms of coexistence, fairer and more sustainable.



Peripheral veganism, by asserting itself as a counter-hegemonic movement, is not limited to the criticism of power structures, but proposes a radical transformation in ways of life and human interactions. By challenging the speciesist model that hierarchizes living beings based on their usefulness to humans, veganism offers an opportunity to rebuild the relationships between humans, animals, and the environment.

In a world where the boundaries between different forms of life and their rights continue to be disputed, vegan zones emerge as representative spaces of a new ethical and social order, where interdependence and respect for life are fundamental for the construction of a more just and sustainable society.

3 DISCUSSION

The concept of Plantationocene, presented by Ferdinand (2022), describes the colonial agrarian logic that transformed land and bodies into capital, establishing monocultures sustained by slave labor and socio-environmental degradation. This heritage continues to guide the "objectification" of animals raised for consumption; Confronting speciesism, therefore, means undoing the colonial continuities that naturalize the reduction of lives to simple productive resources. It is, therefore, a structural phenomenon, transversal to multiple dimensions of social life, whose overcoming demands profound transformations in the modes of organization, representation and appropriation of space and bodies.

As a response to this legacy, veganism reterritorializes space through vegan zones, physical or symbolic, enduring or ephemeral, that subvert dominant spatiality. The Foucaultian concept of heterotopia (Foucault, 2013) and the idea of the Temporary Autonomous Zone developed by Bey (2003) offer adequate lenses to understand how these vegan places suspend flows of exploitation, while the "non-places of animal exploitation" remain as reminders of a systematically veiled violence.

Food practices and the moralization of consumption create collective bonds capable of challenging cultural and economic patterns, in addition to reducing the individual ecological footprint, according to Franco and Batista (2024, 2025). Each vegan space, therefore, becomes a socio-environmental focus of resistance, articulating ecological justice with interspecies ethics, displacing market circuits and resignifying human and non-human bodies.

The movement redefines space in three planes: absolute, relative, and relational, categories formulated by Harvey (2015), and confirms Lefebvre's (2000) thesis that space is socially produced in fields of resistance and transformation. In the light of the spatial contributions of Harvey (2015) and Lefebvre (2000), this study identified that vegan ethics is



articulated in four essential axes: expansion of moral justice to all sentient beings, systematic refusal of animal exploitation, recognition of ecological interdependence, and critical moralization of social and consumption practices. By applying these analytical schemes to veganism, it is evident that refusing speciesism projects a sociability guided by justice and sustainability extended to all animals.

According to Horta and Albersmeier (2020), speciesism consists of the comparatively worse and unjustified consideration or treatment of individuals because they are classified as not belonging to a certain species, regardless of the economic, cultural, or historical context. In the light of Weber (2004), ethical precepts guide life conducts, instituting routines, discipline and criteria of legitimacy that reconfigure daily and economic practices. From this perspective, an anti-speciesist ethic can operate as a life orientation that rationalizes choices and habits, such as becoming vegan, converting moral convictions into socially recognizable methodical practices. In this way, the expansion of veganism contributes to forms of coexistence less crossed by discrimination, placing the debate in the sphere of moral justification, beyond strictly socioeconomic justifications.

The ethical centrality given to sentient beings, according to Singer (2015), gives veganism a philosophical autonomy that does not depend on the fusion with other social agendas. However, even as an autonomous ethic, the fight against speciesism reverberates beyond itself, challenging the ideological bases that sustain various forms of oppression. In this context, veganism can build strategic alliances with anti-racist, feminist, environmental, and other human emancipatory struggles, as long as such partnerships do not relativize the urgency and central focus on refusing animal exploitation. Thus, the movement proposes a horizontal and constructive dialogue with intersectional agendas, without being instrumentalized or subordinated to exclusively human demands.

To think about the invisibility of spaces of slaughter and exploitation, we resort to Augé's (1994) concepts of places and "non-places"; Although originally applied to another context, they help to understand how animal exploitation spaces (such as slaughterhouses, poultry farms, factories, and laboratories) remain outside the sensitive field, perpetuating the objectification of animals, while vegan places resignify routines of buying, preparing, and sharing. Through experiences and activism, making ethical and "non-ethical" territories visible expands the collective awareness of ethical ways of life and spaces with naturalized violence.

When vegan places and "non-places of animal exploitation" are installed in urban peripheries, it is evident that the territory does not constitute a fixed unit, but a web of disputes and welcoming; in this sense, Haesbaert's (2023) relational reading serves as a lens to point to the periphery as a space of multiple and hybrid territorialities, where socioeconomic



boundaries that separate human groups also extend to other animals. Forging solidarity that crosses species thus reinforces the intersectional character of the vegan movement, without losing the centrality of animal liberation.

By articulating Harvey's spatial triad (2015), Lefebvre's production of space (2000), Foucault's heterotopias (2013), Bey's Temporary Autonomous Zones (2003), and Haesbaert's (2023) relational territory, veganism goes beyond personal ethics and becomes a concrete practice of everyday reorganization. Its zones, physical or symbolic, operate as counter-spaces that transform local resistances into structural changes, establishing new sociabilities and anti-speciesist economic circuits.

The spatialization of veganism manifests itself, in the foreground, in everyday life and, by reorganizing practices and relationships in the lived space and in the circuits of consumption, it interferes in local routines (Certeau, 1994; Harvey, 2015; Lefebvre, 2000). In a second plan, it appears in intentional actions, such as activism and occupations, which create zones of contestation and establish new meanings for space (Bey, 2003; Foucault, 2013). On a third level, in the digital sphere, it expands its territoriality by disputing narratives and reconfiguring symbolic space (Holmes, 2008; Vargas and Paiva, 2021). These axes, articulated, highlight the multiplicity of territorialities that cross contemporary veganism (Haesbaert, 2023). The ethical-political transformation resulting from the vegan way of life reterritorializes flows of food, work and affections; strengthens individual and collective identities; it brings people together by ethical affinity; and redefines everyday spatialities, favoring interspecies coexistence based on solidarity and mutual respect.

It is argued, in this work, that by reconfiguring spatialities, redefining consumption practices and evidencing speciesism as the root of multiple discriminations, veganism emerges as a transformative cultural force, opening horizons of socio-environmental justice and interspecies coexistence, displacing economies based on animal exploitation and questioning conventional development paradigms. In the normative horizon adopted in this work, the diversity of cosmologies described by anthropology is recognized; Still, animal consumption remains a form of speciesism, regardless of the cosmological framework, because it subordinates non-human lives to human interests. Although accidental deaths in agriculture are recognized, this does not relativize the ethical centrality of veganism, whose priority remains to eliminate the systematic and intentional exploitation of animals, especially those endowed with sentience.

Acknowledging the limits and potentialities of this theoretical-conceptual analysis, it is emphasized that this article does not seek to exhaust the empirical dimension of veganism,



but to offer an analytical framework for future investigations, especially those that focus on concrete experiences and experiences in urban and digital contexts.

4 CONCLUSION

Veganism is configured as a sociocultural-identity, ethical-political and spatial movement that challenges structural speciesism, transforming social, cultural, environmental and power dynamics. More than food choices or consumption habits, it represents a reinvention of everyday life guided by cultural resistance. By questioning hegemonic norms and promoting the moralization of consumption and *habitus*, veganism builds anti-speciesist spaces of coexistence that value all forms of life, expanding social justice and environmental sustainability. By combating speciesism, a fundamental structure and root of other forms of discrimination, it also shows the confrontation of the colonial continuities expressed in the concept of Plantationocene, strengthening emancipatory causes. Although traditional veganism rejects full horizontal intersectionality, the movement can establish tactical alliances with other struggles, as long as it maintains the centrality of its ethical-philosophical principles.

In view of the above, this article constitutes an invitation to critical reflection and action, understanding veganism as cultural, social and political resistance that produces new spaces and reconfigures the sociocultural and spatial relations of everyday life. Being vegan goes beyond giving up what you eat or wear; It is a coherent and conscious choice about how one lives and with whom one chooses to share the world. These choices redefine the relationship with the lived world and reveal new forms of territorial belonging. Adopting veganism, therefore, means establishing a new paradigm of coexistence, based on respect for life and a commitment to a more just, sustainable, and equitable future for all species.

This work met the objective of understanding how veganism, as a transforming force, manifests itself and reconfigures physical and symbolic spaces. Vegan zones were identified as critical heterotopias that challenge speciesist normativity; it was demonstrated that the dispute of narratives in the digital environment constitutes an indispensable vector of ethical territorialization; and an integrated analysis of the daily, political and symbolic scales was proposed. By articulating the perspective of spatial anthropology and evidencing dissident territorialities, such as heterotopias (Foucault, 2013) and Temporary Autonomous Zones (Bey, 2003), this study shows how movement resignifies everyday symbols and values, expanding the understanding of the spatial and sociocultural dimension of contemporary anti-speciesist practices. These reflections highlight the need for ethnographic investigations on the impact of these zones on the transformation of local economies and sociabilities.



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