

# TV NEWS & POLITICS

## A conflicting marriage that builds reality

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Brasileira de Pesquisadores em Jornalismo

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### ABSTRACT

This paper discusses the complex interactions between television and politics and the representation of social events on TV news programs. It is possible to confirm from the coverage of the testimony of Deputy Roberto Jefferson given to the Ethics Committee of the Brazil's Chamber of Deputies how the *Jornal da Band*, the *Jornal da Record* and the *Jornal Nacional* newscasts built their reports about the reaffirmation of the deputy's denunciations and their repercussions. It is observed that each edition of the news programs is a daily version of social reality. While considering television news as an informative genre with unique characteristics and as the most striking information product of our times, this paper suggests that there is a hierarchy of values in the media discourses. Concepts and identities are built through the use of language and narrative techniques. We have identified the responsibility of journalists and researchers in their role of opinion makers and/or articulators of the way Brazil and the world is seen.

**KEY-WORDS** Journalism; social reality; media discourse; narrative; ethics.

### 1 ■ THE VALUE OF NEWS PROGRAMS IN THE COMPLEX INTERACTIONS BETWEEN COMMUNICATION AND POLITICS

We are living in days of significant changes, when we are experiencing the dilution of the borders – in all senses – between natural and artificial, real and virtual, national and foreign, public and private, near and far, right and wrong. We are also experiencing transformations in the perception of time and space. The present times are marked by the fragmentation of identities, by the loss of references that, for better or worse, used to guide us. The abyss between the values that were theoretically defended by society and those that are actually put into practice, and the extinction of the concept of ethics have often flabbergasted the Brazilian population.

Indeed, many people are interested only in power, money and fame. There are some who even cynically adhere to an “anything goes” type of moral, assuming a behavior directed towards social action based on questionable policies in order to achieve personal interests. Others still clamor for a change in behavior, a collective reaction; however, there is not even a consensus about the core around which this reaction should take place.

Based on the presupposition of contemporary perplexity motivated by recent scientific findings and the advent of new technologies, Sardinha<sup>1</sup> points out that the concepts of ethics are dimensions built on a hierarchy of values, suggesting a greater balance between what is a duty and what comes next, and stressing the aspects of human compassion and solidarity extended to the whole world. She emphasizes that the media have a fundamental role in this context. According to her<sup>2</sup>, globalization allied with Neo-liberalism may not have provided satisfaction for everyone’s necessities, but it has certainly created new necessities for all, one of which is to “happen”, that is, to become a piece of news, to stand out from the others. Those able to do so, thus reinforcing the values consensually accepted by society, are celebrated and acclaimed by the media. To those without access to the legitimate means of social inclusion, this objective can only be achieved by the denial of consecrated values, that is, via transgression, if possible scandalous, when they will also begin to be flattered by the media. In a culture where the version is more valued than the fact, the importance lies in the image that others have of us. “I think, therefore I am” is replaced by “I am seen, therefore I am”.<sup>3</sup>

In principle, communication would permit visibility, since it gives an opportunity for public deliberation, exposure of controversial subjects, and different interpretations of social facts, increasing the quantity and, chiefly, the quality of access to the social debate. However, it is not always like that. Since it is subject to interests, communication has distortions, restricted subjects that become even more obscure, or biased approaches that usually standardize public opinion. The media not only act as an observer of events, but also as an actor. Barbero<sup>4</sup> explains that the act of “seeing” becomes a conceptual paradigm of the ties between democracy and communication, citizenship and media, and reveals that civilian society is a public arena where several classes and different social actors, more or less organized, interact. And in this context Barbero stresses the role of television and of news programs as courts and arbiters of the access to social and political existence. At the same time that media denounce, they do not have absolute power or control over civilian society that also transforms itself, creating news behaviors and demands. In fact,

television and news programs may function as fundamental instruments for broadening or restricting public interest and expression. Even if one recognizes that most of the important dimensions of contemporary politics are staged on television, it must be acknowledged that the latter also promotes knowledge of social reality. "The visibility offered by media such as television is almost always paradoxical: it is not a response to an ideal of complete transparency, but it is the more or less ambiguous result of the intersection between information and non-information, truth and artifice, ritualized settings and spontaneity."<sup>5</sup>

Corruption is one of the most ostensibly presented themes today on the Brazilian communication media. It is one of the issues that most occupy the public agenda not only in Brazil, but also in countries of the so-called First World. According to Barbero<sup>6</sup> corruption is not only identified with political power, it is also a net that involves the most different areas of social life: economy, technology, sports, means of communication, and even religion. Certainly, the media have an informative function and, in this sense, the media inflict a defeat on corruption, which, without this action, would follow its winding way without having to face any hardship. However, the media are committed to the conquest of a credibility that guarantees a place in the market, that is, the media are committed to the logic of publicity, the audience of the radio and TV broadcasting stations, and the print run of newspapers and magazines rather than to the broadening of the public's critical consciousness. The journalistic discourses prioritize the materialization of day-to-day expectations regarding the structure of the reports rather than the precision and quality of the information.

The media representations of social events lead many specialists to question and criticize TV news coverage by using the concept of "spectacularization" of politics or "society of spectacle" in distinguished debates, supposing that the spectacle creates illegitimacy by promoting disorganization, and considering that journalism's function is to organize the real, impose order on chaos, thus legitimating reality. However, do people really consider television an arena of spectacle and, therefore, see politics and the world as if they were spectacles, or are they aware of the fact that they see images of reality built, utilizing television language, on observation of the events? This question would certainly lead to reception research that is not the main goal here. This paper focuses only on the analysis of the different representations of Brazilian politics in the presentations of the three major TV news programs that featured the testimony of Deputy Roberto Jefferson to the Ethics Committee of the

Chamber of Deputies on June 14, 2005, which had significant effects on Brazilian society. This paper will investigate the discourses on the news programs regarding this event, considering that politics, corruption, or war, religion and even sports, i.e., everything that the media focus on with undeniable technical and professional efficiency, is subjected to “media truth” – whatever is presented and assumed as real takes the form of a great report.

The TV news programs were chosen as subjects for analysis because they function as a unique, daily and collective expression of the representation and construction of reality, reflecting and interfering in the expression of national identities. The TV news bulletin is the most striking information product of our times, through which TV creates and seeks to give visibility to national collective experience. It is an important area for construction of the meaning of national as a daily ritual.<sup>7</sup> Machado shows how the TV news bulletin operates with organized voices. The narrative of the news programs is a succession of versions of the same event, using the utterances of the several actors that appear successively, through sounds and images<sup>8</sup>. It can also be said that this applies to the way these sounds and images are articulated and related, receiving more or less importance in the set of different audiovisual texts that form the script of the news programs. “The matter of *truth* is, therefore, shunned by the significant system of TV news programs, as they does not work strictly with the truth, but with the utterance of each announcer regarding the events.”<sup>9</sup> And to understand better the utterance strategies of TV news programs, it can be fruitful to regard the truth as something that results from the possible combination of the fact and its representation. Thus, we can comprehend more clearly the relations between communication and politics, and perceive more attentively the social reality of which we also produce meanings.

## **2 ■ A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE COVERAGE OF ROBERTO JEFFERSON'S TESTIMONY**

This study relies on the same methodology used by the author in previous research, which offers a means for a critical analysis of TV news programs via both quantitative and qualitative comparative analyses and a set of 10 categories and 11 principles of utterance.<sup>10</sup> The way in which each TV news program presented the story of Deputy Roberto Jefferson's testimony, and how each TV news program transformed this social event into news is investigated. First, it was necessary to perform

a quantitative analysis of the three TV news programs, which generated a Production Board for each program. These Boards were built from close observation of the “mirrors”, the list of journalistic information selected in the sequential order they were broadcast on the *Jornal da Band*, *Jornal da Record*, and *Jornal Nacional* on July 14, 2005, with special emphasis on the audiovisual texts regarding the deputy’s testimony.

After this first systematization, it was evident that the TV news programs had regular narrative characteristics. They are made up of information segments separated by commercial breaks of nearly three minutes; they last an average of 32 minutes. One or two newscasters, behind a table, tell everyday stories from Monday to Friday, approximately at the same time. It was possible to observe through the mirrors analyzed that only 30% of the news was identical on the three TV news programs. The common news was about Roberto Jefferson’s denunciations and their repercussions, rebellions in penitentiaries in the States of São Paulo and Minas Gerais and the VT about the weather conditions. The three editions pointed to the Deputy’s denunciations as the main news of the day. The subject was also highlighted in the opening note made by the newscaster in each of the news program, but it received different treatments regarding the way it was distributed in the segments, the duration of the news, the newscaster’s comments, and also in the words of the anchors, commentators, and reporters, who offered the public different representations of the event.

The initial features of the *Jornal da Band* were 1min and 5s long, the same length as the initial features of the *Jornal da Record*. The initial features of the *Jornal Nacional* lasted the shortest time, about 50s. The *Jornal da Band* emphasized the information in the Deputy’s speech itself; it was more factual. On the *Jornal da Record* the testimony was pointed out as the instrument that revealed the severe political crisis of the PT (Workers’ Party) administration, endorsed by the denunciations made by the former secretary of advertising man Marcos Valério, which acquired more importance than Roberto Jefferson’s testimony since the first announcements of the initial features and during the whole news program. And on the *Jornal Nacional* the deputy, who claimed that he had received money from the PT and from the Brazilian Reinsurance Institute, was reaffirmed as a defendant. The same happened on the opening newscaster’s note in each of the programs. Nascimento (newscaster on *Jornal da Band*) announced a summary of the most intense and dramatic moments of the testimony in a coverage that was intended to reveal everything to us, marked by the principle of ubiquity. Casoy (newscaster

on *Jornal da Record*) stressed the political instability of President Lula's administration, relating it to the instability experienced during former president Collor's administration. The *Jornal Nacional*, as well as the *Jornal da Band*, also announced the complete coverage of the testimony and the reactions by the government, the Justice Ministry and the financial market on the July 14, 2005 edition. However, once again Jefferson's electoral crime was emphasized.

The stories about the testimony that lasted more than six hours had 3min and 15s on the *Jornal da Band*, 3min and 55s on the *Jornal da Record*, and 5min and 45s on the *Jornal Nacional*. On the *Jornal da Band* and on the *Jornal Nacional* they were presented as coverage notes and on the *Jornal da Record* as VT, that is, as a reporter's story with images that showed the reporter and a text off. All narratives showed the same images during the testimony with similar framing; however, the deputy's speech was organized by means of the verbal text according to a hierarchy of values, through the use of language, revealing that the image really has greater power of description of the event, but not of qualification. And that the meanings of the TV news programs are indeed produced by the combination of text and image, as well as by the interaction of the viewers, who can be paying more or less attention to these matters, but who, nevertheless, always "negotiate" the meanings of the messages clinging to their own socio-cultural, political-economical and even emotional repertoire. Observers of these discursive strategies cannot deny their role as the subject in the construction of a critical reflection, but need to keep a certain distance from the narratives in order to perform a higher quality analysis.

In the following section, we will observe what were the different aspects of the testimony of the Deputy Roberto Jefferson and how were they emphasized. The *Jornal da Band*, the *Jornal da Record*, and the *Jornal Nacional* used Roberto Jefferson's testimony in order to legitimate or prove the journalistic information about each of the aspects announced on the off texts that composed the stories. The *Jornal Nacional* even used a visual organization of the themes that were emphasized during the broadcasting of the story featuring the following titles: "Evidence", "Denunciations of *Mensalão* (Monthly Bribe)", "Denunciations of Lula", "Persecution of ABIN (Brazil's Federal Intelligence Agency)", "Suitcases of Money" and "Toucan (referring to the PSDB, the Brazilian Social Democrat Party) Police". The systematization of the journalistic information suggested an apparent objectivity and impartiality. The *Jornal da Band* emphasized the attacks on press organs and mentioned the former

secretary of Marcos Valério, named by the deputy as a witness of the delivery of the money. The *Jornal da Record* also showed the deputy's criticism of the press. It also affirmed that the deputy was not intimidated by the request of Valdemar Costa Neto, President of the PL (Liberal Party), for his expulsion from the Chamber of Deputies. The *Jornal da Record* showed the deputy's questioning of the absence of an official investigation of the Post Office Technical Department, controlled by the PT, and of the journalistic company of Mario Dutra, a friend of President Lula's. And, as in the *Jornal Nacional*, the lack of evidence was emphasized.

It was possible to ascertain that the everyday stories were not told in the same way in the media, even though in this case most of the emphasized aspects of the testimony were identical. They were not told in the same way for many reasons, among which were the differences of representation of the event that were intensified during the exhibition of each TV news program and that were evident in the interventions of the anchors, commentators and reporters, as well as in the selection of other actors that made declarations about the testimony and its repercussions. The *Jornal da Band* addressed the event more impartially, although somewhat tragicomically, mocking at the dramatization of Deputy Roberto Jefferson and the quarrel of the deputies, showing the events of national politics as playacting. The program has associated politics with farce, and has attributed to politicians, and not to the media, the representation of social events, giving more value to the effects of the deputy's denunciations on the organization of information about the testimony of Marcos Valério's former secretary. This was objectively shown in Nascimento's text on the last segment which consisted of a note with images from the website of the *Isto É* weekly magazine, in which the agility of the press regarding the investigation and disclosure of the facts to the public was more highly valued than the contents and the effect of the secretary's statement on national politics. This was also evident due to the fact that there was more space for public expression regarding the theme through a VT of 1 min and 10s about the reaction of youths to Jefferson's pronouncement and to the politician's behavior. They suggested that the politicians' attitude should be more ethical and committed to human values.

The VT about the repercussion of the testimony on the Congress has attracted attention because Jefferson was a defendant with all the characteristics of an accuser. The passage of reporter Fábio Pannunzio, where Jefferson appears in the video giving information, revealed that the

deputy's strategy was to defend himself by attacking others. The event was presented as playacting:

Reporter: **Fábio Pannunzio's** **Passage:** "When Deputy Roberto Jefferson entered this plenary session, his mandate was not worth a dime. While previously his expulsion was certain, now a question mark begins to grow."

The *Jornal da Band* stressed that the political events would not provoke any major reaction in the economy, as stated by the commentator Joelmir Betting. On the other hand, the *Jornal da Record*, through the declarations of Salete Lemos and Casoy, especially in the dialogue between the anchor and the commentator, made a clear criticism of the government's economic policies and of the maintenance of high interest rates by the Brazilian Central Bank, which, according to the specialist, have been hindering the country's development. Criticism of the government's economic policies was also obvious in the four newscaster's notes previous to the third segment, which revealed only negative data about the government and sales, criticized the adoption of the IBGE (Brazilian Geographic and Statistical Institute) socio-economic research data before they were published. It has also stressed the apprehension of the consumers, and praised stock exchanges and Neo-Liberalism. Even in the story about the repercussion of Roberto Jefferson's testimony on the Brazilian population in the first segment, the *Jornal da Record* deplored the administration of the Workers' Party, showing public workers that were discontent with the government's policies. Casoy suggested that instability in the country was due to the incapacity of the PT and of President Lula. This apparently undeclared political stance became evident in the analysis of Casoy's comments, intercalated and "diluted" in five stories with different reporters in the first segment devoted to covering the testimony and its repercussions, as well as in his observations on the former secretary's interview. Consider the text in the commentaries:

C2

**LOCV:** ... (sighs with grief) You see that history is repeating itself. With Collor we had the driver, Eriberto. Now it's the secretary, Karina. We still have to properly evaluate the girl's denunciations, which are supported by an

agenda that might or might not confirm many of the events. The denunciations are very serious and fit in perfectly with those made by R. J., extending and strengthening what the deputy has said. We need to investigate this until the bitter end, no matter whom it might hurt. And it will be very painful for Brazil.

C3

**LOCV:** This is a very serious moment. The nation observes, perplexed, the denunciations of corruption in the Post Office and of a supposed shameful *mensalão*. The secretary's testimony will probably further complicate a scenario that is already too complicated. Certainly, from now on the political along with the economic atmosphere will become heavier, as the Lula administration is put to the test and observes, divided and paralyzed, what might become its public immolation. We need to investigate and clean up things in Brazil.

With this well-known catch phrase, Casoy assumes the integrity and the competence of a press that is capable of judging and establishing order in the Brazilian political-economical "chaos". He takes on the role of a citizen above suspicion, interested in the public's rights. However, we must not forget that the press and the several media sources and news programs, as well as the *Jornal da Record*, with Boris Casoy, are also social actors striving for market and credibility. After all, there are no unintentional declarations or language uses. Therefore, the impartiality of the media is unattainable, as well as journalistic principles such as objectivity and neutrality, even though they can and should still serve as motivation for the professional practice of the profession. In Brazil the media occupy the symbolic role of defender of the citizens, due to a frail State and other institutions of public representation tainted by corruption, such as the Judiciary and even the Church.

The *Jornal Nacional* also built its discourse regarding the testimony of the Deputy Roberto Jefferson and its repercussions on an attitude of

absolute impartiality and integrity. From a very well structured synthesis of the day in Brasília consisting of two live transmissions in the third and fourth segments, the *Jornal Nacional* did not maintain its distance from the event as the *Jornal da Band* did.

The *Jornal Nacional* did not attack the PT administration or President Lula, but chose to engage in polemics directly against Deputy Roberto Jefferson, especially in the fourth segment, composed of three VTs about the repercussion in the Congress, the effects on the government routine, the reaction of the PT and of the President of the Party, the newscaster's note about the actions of the federal judges and other five newscaster's notes and a footnote, which functioned as authentic editorials resembling a right of reply granted by the Globo Organizations to the deputy.

These notes were intercalated by excerpts from Jefferson's testimony, emphasizing not only the social role and the political independence of the press, but also, and especially, the *Jornal Nacional* as the bearer of the truth, reaffirming in a way the deputy's role of a defendant. However, this was a different truth than that of the *Jornal da Record*. In the story about Jefferson's testimony, the deputy's criticisms of the Press were not considered, as in the coverage note of the *Jornal da Band* and on the VT of the *Jornal da Record*. However, these same criticisms were emphasized and carefully explored afterwards. Notice the last section of these "editorials":

Fátima

**LOCV/edit 5:** In his attacks on the Globo Organization, Deputy Roberto Jefferson forgot to mention what was said in the stories that angered him. It is important to remember their contents... The Globo Organizations' understanding is that *O Globo* newspaper and *Época* magazine simply fulfilled their mission to inform. And this will always be so, as Deputy Roberto Jefferson may acknowledge. No one holds back information in the Globo Organizations. Here, in order to be broadcasted, a fact only needs to be true.

### 3 ■ SOME LESSONS LEARNED

Therefore, it is possible to observe that TV news programs are mediation instruments. The basic function of the genre is to inform, but the “polyphonic” model of TV journalism can be accused, and not without reason, as Machado<sup>11</sup> explains, of trying to disguise the fact that every language production comes from somebody, from a group, or from a company, and therefore it is never the result of a collective consensus, but of an interpretative stance with relation to the broadcasted events. However, in spite of the fact that TV news programs are accused of Manichaeism or commitment, they also produce an ambiguity of meanings. The way in which the reports are organized makes it difficult for the audience to know for sure whether the news program is sympathetic or hostile to the announced event. The TV news program ordains and systematizes the real, but it is also a text that is open to the viewer’s interpretation.

We have sought to identify in this case study how televised information simultaneously becomes a testimony and a product of political negotiations; how testimonies and journalistic information were used as confrontation instruments and as an “impartial” form of reporting the denunciations. We have also seen how the meaningful effects of the discourses functioned as articulators for forming public opinion. We have verified how the edition of each TV news program is a version of daily social reality. Well, dear reader, both of us know that opinion arises from a confrontation between presumptions about possible truths. In addition, we already know that the press seeks and needs to achieve credibility in order to guarantee visibility and market. On the other hand, it is an important agent for social change, even though it imposes ways of looking at Brazil and the world from certain directions that are not exactly predictable. Undoubtedly, news programs have a strategic function because they synthesize the complexity of the interactions between television and society, media and citizenry.

While civilian society demands knowledge of the present time – the consolidation of a “we” before authoritarian and violent manifestations and the formation of a space in common and one of revelation, where it can express itself in its plurality –, the media, in search of visibility, appear as a space apparently open to the various social demands, as the voices of the population’s spokesmen. Apparently because we experience a more democratic atmosphere, the media coverage is marked, as shown by Capparelli and Lima<sup>12</sup>, by electronic “coronelismo”<sup>13</sup> – relations of strength, sustained by political “clientelismo”<sup>14</sup> among the wielders of

public power and the owners of TV channels – which forms a barrier to the representative diversity that characterizes a television where the public interest should be prioritized over private interests. For Rubim<sup>15</sup> the relation between the communication field and the political field takes place not only as a power dispute, which includes conflicts, but also as complementary fields that need to interact with other fields in order to exist socially. And the communication media, especially television, appear as the main source of social representation of politics, even though they do not have the absolute power of promoting and/or silencing the processes in the political field. Therefore, the media “do not impose their ideas on the audiences, but rather sketch the predominant thematic schedule of the public discussion.”<sup>16</sup>

The testimony of Deputy Roberto Jefferson and its repercussions have been mobilizing the nation and causing significant effects on civilian society and on Brazil's politics and economy. The subject filled several pages of the main newspapers and made the cover of the country's main weekly magazines. The deputy became notorious because, while defending himself by attacking others, he has publicly revealed that the money for political campaigns comes from entrepreneurs that, in most cases, are related to government companies, directly dealing with power relations. The deputy's denunciations revealed that the electoral legislation has allowed financial resources allocated to the campaigns to be used in an illegal way. And that indeed many politicians and entrepreneurs are not in harmony with the public interests and with the country's development. It is clear that there is an urgent need for reform of the political parties. The media have shown that immorality and lack of ethics have crossed the line in Brazil, even if they model the ways in which we perceive this reality. And different actors have begun to question whether President Lula was aware of the “anything goes” moral designed to guarantee power by keeping some of the PT party leaders' and their allies' pockets full. However, it is obvious that treason, ungratefulness and illegal use of public money are not exclusive traits of the PT and of the Lula administration, which have been directly attacked. Every party has corrupt and honest politicians, as Brazil's recent history shows. Undoubtedly, it is hard to accept the fact that leaders of a party that based its political campaign platform on social development, ethics, the common welfare and the public interest have also articulated schemes for tax evasion and money laundering. These facts cause disenchantment, disillusion. However, we would be naïve if we did not realize that the country's political stability is influenced intentionally and/

or in an organized way by forces that are not fully identified, also from and by the press itself.

There are not only inattentive and/or passive viewers in front of the television sets. We recognize that many of the most important dimensions of contemporary politics are developed on television, and that Roberto Jefferson, as well as other politicians, became propagandists of stories that unfold on the thin line between reality and fiction, because the characters and the social facts – the collection of events – are real. In certain situations, the lack of ethics regarding the management of government property and of the public interest was never fully concealed from the Brazilian population, which is due also to the work of the press. However, here the media legitimated this fact in a very significant way. The deputy's denunciations are serious and need to be investigated and, at the same time, the way in which these denunciations were treated transformed Roberto Jefferson into a transgressing deputy, but also into a famous one, "spectacular" and even courageous, broadcast through the whole nation. This way, he became visible and started to be present all over the country.

The journalistic companies and their professional staff, through their discourses, following the unattainable principle of objectivity and impartiality, build representations of national political events, attributing values to the companies and to institutions, qualifying or disqualifying the subjects as moral beings, judging citizens and constituting and scheduling the conflicts and the contradictions of Brazilian society. Therefore, it is possible to infer that there is a need to revise not only the press law and the ethics codes, but also to establish a new hierarchy of values regarding the elaboration of texts, the characters, the way in which we investigate, systematize and express journalistic information that builds regional and social realities, as well as the way Brazil is seen, considering the possibility of establishing a consensual basis and of collaborating in the construction of a new ethical horizon; even because ethics is closely related to a world view. This means aiming at the placing into context of social facts as they are transformed into news and/or media events.

However, it usually goes unnoticed that from the very media discourse, never-before-seen procedures for participation, protection of civil rights and affirmation of the population's autonomy and of citizens' identities are experienced. The new net of researchers in Journalism can also be a forum where we can unite several interests and social sectors in order to seek ways for democratizing Communication. If our understanding of our "being" in the world comes from narratives that produce meanings, it

is essential to evaluate the role of Journalism in Brazilian society and the effects caused by its texts.

After all, Journalism is not a missionary activity; it is not just a tool of knowledge that should always offer a public service of quality regarding the distribution of information, but also a business in which selling newspapers and reaching a broader audience are not sins. The question is how this goal is achieved. In Journalism, as well as in Health and Education, and in other fields of social life, there are responsibilities inherent to the human condition, along with the care people simply deserve. Perhaps it is necessary to hear more than at least two sides of a question in the same day. The journalist needs to be more open to themes and individuals than just to making contacts. The practice of quality journalism imposes an attitude of fresh questioning, a need to break with the observation routine.

As journalist Dines suggests, “investigative journalism is not only sensationalist journalism or journalism of scandals. It relates to interpretative or analytical journalism, because when it questions the causes and origins of events, it also seeks the connection between them and offers an explanation of their occurrence. Its practice does not necessarily compel a denunciation posture. It can have a serious, studious and, above all, responsible attitude. And when the journalist decides to adopt the philosophical principle that every question offers two perspectives – one favorable and the other contrary –, and understands that a good story is exactly the one that is able to present them equidistantly, objectivity and a sound ethical standard will be maintained.”<sup>17</sup>

Undoubtedly, investigative and interpretative journalism can be tools of a new professional attitude; perhaps turning to field journalism, in opposition to the closet journalism that has dominated our offices in the last decade. Therefore, as Sardinha suggests, perhaps instead of “finding” the truth, like detectives, it is more important to “build” the truth, like construction workers, as we grope to find and pile up the appropriate bricks in the structure that we believe to be the right one. The final work – truth – would come at the end of time, and it would have counted on our participation.

**NOTES**

- 1 SARDINHA, p. 353.
- 2 Idem, p. 215.
- 3 Ibidem, p. 208.
- 4 MARTIN-BARBERO, p. 88.
- 5 Idem, p. 100.
- 6 Ibidem, p. 98.
- 7 BECKER, p. 16.
- 8 MACHADO, p. 104.
- 9 Idem, p. 111.
- 10 BECKER, p. 60-106.
- 11 MACHADO, p. 109-111.
- 12 CAPARELLI, p. 79.
- 13 "Coronelismo" refers to the Brazilian social and political power system centered on political chiefs.
- 14 "Clientelismo" refers to the Brazilian social and political power system organized around groups .
- 15 RUBIM, p. 14-83.
- 16 Idem, p. 81.
- 17 DINES, p. 92.
- 18 SARDINHA, p. 141-142.
- 19 Idem.

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