

INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION:

Journalism studies and discourse

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The mission of the Brazilian Journalism Researchers Association's scientific journal **Brazilian Journalism Research** is to "stimulate debates on theoretical-methodological aspects of journalism research while, at the same time, contributing to the creation and strengthening of a national and international network of journalism researchers".

The current edition is well-aligned with that proposal. The papers cover three geographical regions, Africa Latin America and Europe, and it brings together the work of researchers attached to teaching and research institutions in Argentina, Belgium, Brazil, France and Portugal. From the theoretical-methodological standpoint, a variety of approaches are adopted: study reviews, text analyses, ethnographic studies, semiotic studies... All of that boosts BJR's role as a privileged space for the discussion of the multiple objectives of journalism-related research in Brazil and other countries.

The opening article of this edition is 'Journalism Studies in Argentina: Background and questions' by Adriana Amado and Natalia Pizzolo, teachers at the Universidad Nacional de La Matanza (Argentina). It consists of a bibliometric analysis of publications on journalism in Argentina for the period 1960 to 2007. The authors conclude that in many cases that country's academic production tends to make a tangential approach to journalism as a study object, especially in media content analyses. They found that specific studies are not only rare but are limited to exploratory research of the ethnographic type, endowed with little scientific rigor.

In the second article, 'The WAN-IFRA discourse: advice, application, and disqualification of organizational models in media' Joël Langonné and Magali Prodhomme, of *Centre de Recherches sur*

l'Action Politique en Europe [Center for Research into Political Action in Europe] (CRAPE/France) propose an analysis of the discourse of the IFRA, an international organization that congregates newspaper owners and news publishers from around the world. The paper analyzes the items published in the association's monthly review addressing the issue of "the vital and inevitable transformation of news and newspaper companies". It portrays the evolution of the discourse, originally an appropriation of the concept of "convergence", but passing on to the production of enunciations that seek to boost the profession's mythical dimensions and the idea of "getting back to the origins".

'Journalism, social networks and global occupation movements: a systemic crisis in the contemporary semiosphere' proposes a dialogue between semiotics and journalism based on the concept of *semiosis*. In the text, Felipe de Oliveira and Ronaldo Henn, of the Unisinos University (Brazil), discuss the moment of systemic crisis that journalism is experiencing, illustrated on the basis of an analysis of the events entailed by the "25S" protest unleashed by the Spanish *Indignados* movement.

The edition goes on to present two papers involving transnational comparisons. 'Ombudsmen in the Brazilian and Portuguese media: a reflection on the activities developed between 1989 and 2013', by Fernando Paulino (University of Brasilia, Brazil) and Madalena Oliveira (University of Minho, Portugal), who propose a diachronic analysis of the evolution of Ombudsman practices on the two sides of the Atlantic. The authors underscore the need for a renovation of this activity based on new ways of interacting with the public aimed at "cultivating a firmer awareness in the audience of the role of communication in social and cultural development". In 'Journalistic identity and audience perceptions: paradigm and models under construction in the African Great Lakes region', Marie-Soleil Frère (FNRS and the Free University of Brussels, Belgium) compares journalism's recent evolution as a profession in three African countries (Burundi, Ruanda and the Congo Democratic Republic). By means of a field study conducted over a period of ten years in the Great Lakes region, the author portrays the reconfiguration of an identity originally defined by an external actor (the State) but now increasingly guided by the new expectations and perceptions of the public.

The next pair of articles addresses the theme of periodicals

published in Brazil's southernmost "gaucho" state, Rio Grande do Sul. 'Newspaper design – processes, routines and product: a study of Segundo Caderno, the Zero Hora cultural supplement' by Patricia Lopes Damasceno and Ana Gruszynski, of the Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul (Brazil), offers a systematic analysis of graphic space configurations in the culture supplement of the city of Porto Alegre's largest-circulation daily. In turn, Demétrio de Azeredo Soster and Fabiana Quatrin Piccinin (University of Santa Cruz do Sul, Brazil), in their text 'Literary narrative in the daily print media: Zero Hora and Gazeta do Sul', seek to identify the presence of texts classified as interpretive or entertaining in two southern Brazilian newspapers. Their research results point to a change of course on the part of journalism that requires new explanatory modalities for textual practices – modalities that would call for a revision of the categories of journalism proposed by José Marques de Melo in his classic work *A opinião no jornalismo Brasileiro* [Opinion in Brazilian Journalism].

Following that, two articles address the topic of emerging journalistic practices in Europe. 'What is the impact of the web on local journalism? Two case studies in Toulouse, France', by Frank Bousquet, Nikos Smyrnaiois and Dominique Bertelli, teachers at the University of Toulouse 3 (France). They describe the reconfiguration of local journalism in the southwest of France with the advent of the sites *Carré d'infos* and *LibéToulouse*. The creation of those two new start ups made it necessary to adapt business models involving local political elites, insofar as those local media endeavored to underscore a relation of editorial independence. According to the authors, even though they failed, the attempts revealed "some new practices and tendencies towards changes in handling news" and "an encouraging indication of a specific wish to animate the local public space". Florian Tixier (Free University of Brussels, Belgium), in the article entitled 'Working in a developing communication space. Facebook and Twitter as journalistic tools for European information pure-player websites', delineates the process whereby journalists appropriate the tools Facebook and Twitter in their coverage of European Community-related issues, making use of new codes and the transposition of journalistic production methods to the sphere of social networks and their logic.

On the same theme, Mabel Oliveira Teixeira (Catholic

University of Pelotas, Brazil), in the article entitled ‘User x newspaper interaction on a social network site: evidence of change’, makes a study of the relations established between a newspaper and users of its the social network site. Using Glasser and Strauss’s Grounded Theory as her theoretical reference framework, the author concludes that “the post-mediatic citizen rejects, or only accepts reluctantly the vertical hierarchies that leave journalists somewhat immune to questioning and criticism’. This new audience, in her view, is far more familiarized with horizontal relations, public discussion, and collaborative production and that is indicative of changes in its relations with the media.

‘Manipulation, professional practices and deontology in informational photography: identifying new parameters’ by Paulo Munhoz of the Federal University of Bahia (Brazil) proposes a mapping of the interventions available in the digital post-production processes of photography. Beginning with an exploratory analysis of a broad set of photographic competitions, the author exposes the tensioning provoked by these novel practices and points to the need to construct rules and ethical-deontological behavior standards for photographers working in the field of photojournalism.

This edition of **BJR** closes with a paper on applied research in journalism. In ‘Collaborative learning in digital journalism: Using JCollab for journalists’ education’ authors Kellyanne Carvalho Alves, Guido Lemos de Souza Filho, Sandra Moura and Fernando Brito, all from the Federal University of Paraiba (Brazil), describe the application of the JCollab collaborative journalism tool to broadcast journalism learning, on the part of students at their institution.

The various studies presented here all have a common point of interest, namely, to describe, discuss and question the scenario of transformations in journalism. The texts selected reveal the academic communities unease in regard to the profession’s future, constantly afflicted by problems associated to the emergence of new practices and technical tools.

That unease and the evident concern to conduct a profound and consistent reflection on Journalism are readily apparent in this edition and have been the mainspring driving the BJR in these ten years of publication. We hope to have merited our readers’ appreciation.