

DOSSIER

THE POTENTIAL FOR CRITICISM IN JOURNALISTIC NARRATIVES ABOUT THE DICTATORIAL PERIOD IN BRAZIL

Copyright © 2015
SBPjor / Associação
Brasileira de Pesquisadores em Jornalismo

MARTA REGINA MAIA

Universidade Federal de Ouro Preto (UFOP), Minas Gerais, Brasil

THALES VILELA LELO

Universidade Estadual de Campinas (UNICAMP), São Paulo, Brasil

ABSTRACT - This paper discusses the critical potential of narratives about the dictatorial period in Brazil (1964-1985), recovered by recent stories of actors involved in events hitherto not themed by journalism. As a methodological north, we seek to seize enunciation devices and forms convening this field. The discussion of how these devices appear will be pre-sented by two new interviews about that time and its reverberations in various media. We will follow here the effort of a strand of journalism that do not abstain connections between experience, collective memory and politics, on the trail of the context established by many Truth Commissions, pointing to a critical target in its way of establishing contact with the public.

Keywords: Dictatorship; journalism; narratives; memory; politics.

O POTENCIAL CRÍTICO DAS NARRATIVAS JORNALÍSTICAS SOBRE O PERÍODO DITATORIAL NO BRASIL

RESUMO - Objetivamos discutir, nesse trabalho, o potencial crítico das narrativas sobre o período ditatorial no Brasil (1964-1985), recuperadas por meio de histórias recentes de atores envolvidos em acontecimentos até então não tematizados pelo jornalismo. Como norte metodológico, buscaremos apreender os dispositivos de enunciação e as formas de con-vocação do leitor nesse campo. A discussão de como esses dispositivos aparecem será apresentada por intermédio de duas entrevistas inéditas sobre essa época e por suas re-verberações em diversos meios de comunicação. Acompanharemos aqui o esforço de uma vertente do jornalismo que não se abstém das conexões entre a experiência, a me-mória coletiva e a política, na trilha do contexto estabelecido por inúmeras Comissões da Verdade, apontando para uma visada crítica em seu modo de estabelecer contato com o público.

Palavras-chave: Ditadura; jornalismo; narrativas; memória; política.

EL POTENCIAL CRÍTICO DE LAS NARRATIVAS SOBRE EL RÉGIMEN DICTATORIAL EN BRASIL

RESUMEN - En este trabajo objetivamos discutir el potencial crítico de las narrativas sobre el régimen dictatorial en Brasil (1964-1985), recuperadas a través de las historias recientes de los actores implicados en los eventos hasta ahora no pautados por el periodismo. Como norte metodológico, buscaremos entender los dispositivos de enunciación y las formas de convocación del lector en este campo. La discusión de cómo aparecen estos dispositivos será presentada por dos entrevistas inéditas acerca de esta época y por sus reverberaciones en diversos medios de comunicación. Vamos seguir aquí el esfuerzo de una hebra de periodismo que no se abstiene de las conexiones entre la experiencia, la memoria colectiva y la política, indicando una visada crítica en su modo de establecer contacto con el público.

Palabras-clave: Dictadura; periodismo; narrativas; memoria; política.

INTRODUCTION

It has been over 50 years after the military strike Brazil faced and only now the country has access to the so-called transition justice, which should operate during the passage of the authoritarian regime to democracy. This is particularly possible from the installation, in 2012, of the National Commission of Truth (CNV - Comissão Nacional da Verdade), an official and temporary organization that assesses transgressions of Human Rights that occurred at the times of repression and thanks to the advent of the state and city commissions and those at universities.- We need to record that the country has paid fines to victims, assuring their right to legal repair, however the right to justice, to the acknowledgment of iniquities suffered and to the institutional reforms was not guaranteed right after the dictatorship; only in this last decade has this discussion about human rights truly emerged, as Piovesan states (2010). The implementation of Commissions now stimulate the emergence of events that had been so far reduced to the private sphere, whether they are grave disgraces or terrible personal marks, many of them even involving death and missing relatives and the torture and violation of citizens,

promoted by officials credited by mechanisms of Public Security from the time of the dictatorial regime.

It has been found that Brazilian journalism in the last years, has presented itself as a space of reverberating narratives on the military dictatorship, a period still clouded and misty in the recent history of the Brazilian society. In this article, we shall highlight the connection that there is in this conjuncture between the experience (journalism's yearning for addressing/channeling in its possible reader a sensibilization for stories of citizens who underwent traumas throughout the military dictatorship) the memory (a collective memory, pertaining to what occurred in a historical period, but had been so far erased or immersed in a dispersed and fragmentary flow of narratives); and politics (as narratives of traumas resulted from torture of murder point out to the unjustifiability of such suffering and to the need of some kind of reckoning/treatment). The discussion will be mobilized by two interviews and two reverberations in the *media*; with the perspective of entanglement of the knots of these instances through scrutinizing the "enunciating devices" (VERÓN, 2004) of the articles. The first of them was published by the magazine *Brasileiros*, and reports the case of Eugenia Zerbini, daughter of a general, who was murdered at the headquarters of DOI-CODI in 1970 (VILLAMÉA, 2013b) and another published by the news website *Terra*, tells the story of Maria de Fátima Setúbal, tortured by security agents from Rio de Janeiro, in 1971 (PIMENTEL, 2014).

These two narratives, among others that could be examined in this work, have in common the uniqueness of their telling, given that for the first time, those involved have made their experiences public. Another element that brings them together is the fact that they were catapulted from the collective memory that is now being reconfigured in the public sphere, enabled by the justice of transition in Brazil. We follow here an effort of journalism to transmute a personal experience into a shared experience, in the trailing of the context created by the Commissions of Truth, that bring solace to the desire of the speeches of these two victims and that bear with them a critique to certain ways of injustice from the part of the State.

1 CRITIQUE AND WAYS OF SUMMONING THE READER

When it is spoken about the media/dictatorship articulation in the Brazilian recent scenario, we realize the efforts of journalism (or at least of some of its materialized expressions in printed means and in audiovisual means)¹ of not abstaining from the *link* experience-memory-politics, pointing out to a targeted critique in its manner of establishing contact to the audiences. A situation different from what was pointed out, for example, with Maouillaud's diagnosis (1997b) upon highlighting a tendency of the contemporary press to erase itself amidst the events that it frames and deals with in its pages; and especially amidst the sources that are cited in the articles (filling out the texts of citations as if the blunting of voices would assure the polyphony of the discourse). In this horizon pointed out by Mouillaud, the journalistic enunciation is adopted as an utterance without its own voice, letting "the real appear as it is, or is supposed to be. The 'real' is the alibi of the missing voice" (1997b, p. 186). Tétu (1997) also follows this reasoning, indicating that the journalistic narration would have built a discourse upon which a new text without mediation would be configured, as if the reader, when reading a newspaper, was being directly associated to the abrupt reference to a singular fact, without filters or ideological and moral orientations. In his words, "as the newspaper is the place of merging a great variety of discourses, we could think that the 'social' speaks in it and through it. It is indeed the illusion that the newspaper wants to produce" (TÉTU, 1997, p. 198).

It is not necessary to linger on the fact that it is not presumable that an enunciation is free of mediations under a certain optics and framing, something that implies a specific way of reading and conforming to the social reality. As Mouillaud states (1997a), the information "is what is possible and what is legitimate to show, but is also what we should know and what is marked to be realized" (p. 38), so that we cannot forget that a price of information is always bordered by a frame of shadows. "The unspeakable is not only the upstream or downstream what is shown, but is preferably its next similar and is immanent to it" (MOUILLAUD, 1997a, p. 38). In this sense, it is viable to say that every information carries with itself a facet of the unknown, of that which could not be apprehended or tracked at that moment.

Therefore, the risk of understanding of the press as a “magnifying glass” or a “mirror” with the lenses directly pointed out to the public or notorious events is forgetting that upon leaning on the mundane weaving with these lenses directed to what is commonly asserted in a social-historical level, journalism can ingeniously or purposefully adhere to the hegemonic and oppressive visions of the world that are on vogue in a certain conjuncture. Thus, the profession would be undressed and devoid of its critical potency and would be condensed to the “maintenance of reality, which, as Boltanski verifies (2009), basically serves as a reinforcement of the relation between the symbolic formations and the states of things, that is, journalism would have its public function flattened in benefit to the production of articles that would merely reaffirm the coincidence of a specific configuration of social reality and the manifestation of this scenario in concrete events.

But there is a desire from a part of the press to speak about everything with the pretention that it would be possible to erase this extra field that comes along with the information or the spaces of enunciation, there are also journalists who are aware of their limitation of access to the world and, in this sense, empty themselves of this pretention of sovereignty about the occurrences and acknowledge the present circumstances (also regarding the limits) that conform them, as well as there are “dramatic” stories, let us say so, that channel readers and shout for audience. And if there is not this “entirety coherence” to be extracted and poured into text, there is not a “real” ready to be told. That which is named as “socially organized reality” is also fragile and events that place it under suspension or contradict its apparently concise logics. And these events emerge, in the specific case of journalism, from the part of shadow that follows information, paving the path for new arrangements and comprehensions about society to be formulated.

So, this way, we are inclined to affirm that the critical potential of narratives on the dictatorial times, retaken through recent accountings of those involved in events so far not approached in the *media*, is founded by a prerogative that paves the conduct of the journalist in this harvest: someone aware of their limitations in the access to the social world and aware of the fact that their acting is not devoid of sense, plunges into the dialogues between that which “is displayed” and that can be seen, with that which is beyond any conventional narration or that can even be

dealt/repared through a reportage. It is evident that here one does not advocate on behalf of a critical journalism uniquely managed through the isolated actors that are sensibilized for these matters regarding their professions. Likewise, one does not champion for the autonomy of “dramatic” stories, being necessarily exposed to the audience. Institutions exist and they imprint their strength on the subjects, as studies on *newsmaking* have already made clear (WOLF, 1995). However, even the organization can be projected enabling this kind of expressions, as will be clarified in the two cases that conform the *corpus* of this work.

In order to understand how this critical potential is processed in the reach of reportages that weave the leitmotif of this investigation, it is imperious to comprehend the as, in texts, the “enunciating devices” are drawn, summoning the reader in ways different than those associated to the traditional press, in order to establish with him alternative communication contracts. According to Verón, “an analysis of the enunciating device is what I call an analysis of production: but the contract is fulfilled, more or less well, in the reader: in the acknowledgement” (2004, p. 234). Fausto Neto and Sgorla are also occupied with this place of enunciation in generation of what they call “zones of contract/interpenetration” between paper/reader, treating the reader “as a product of an act of induction performed by the journalistic device, an action in which the binding and interactive possibilities are installed between means and the society” (2013, p. 2), so that the analysis is conducted with the purpose of understanding “how the inducing processes of their existence (the reader’s) have been engineered and transformed in the environment of journalistic practices” (2003, p. 4).

If we propose to ourselves to appreciate the “enunciating devices” traced in the conducting of reportages that deal with iniquities experienced in the Brazilian dictatorial regime, via analysis, it is basically because we understand that the following problematic is drawn in this horizon: if, as Mouillaud highlights (1997b), in contemporary journalism there is a crisis of the reader resulting from the fact that news vehicles sought to hide their way of reading and interpreting phenomena, what is caused when mechanisms of establishing communicative contracts are manifestos? In a specific level, what are the characteristics of the “enunciating devices” of framed interviews?

2 THE SHAME RESULTED FROM A POLICY OF INTIMIDATION

On September 18, 2013, the magazine *Brasileiros* publishes an article signed by the journalist Luiza Villaméa entitled “The General’s daughter”, bringing to light the case of Eugenia Zerbini, who in 1970 and at only 16, had been raped at the headquarters of Bandeirantes Operation by an agent related to the repression. Eugenia was the daughter of General Euryale de Jesus Zerbini who, in 1964, had his license withdrawn by having resisted to the military strike and of Theresinha Godoy Zerbini, who would become famous for leading Amnesty in Brazil.

Before anything else, it is important to remember that Luiza Villaméa’s journey in *Brasileiros*, since she was hired in 2013 as special journalist, already crossed paths with matters still scarcely debated by journalism regarding tortures promoted by officials during the military government. In the year she was hired, Villaméa published a great article about Carlos Knapp, the chairperson of an advertising agency that supported the armed resistance to the dictatorship for years. In the following year, the journalist signed a series entitled “Brazil’s Children”, which narrated the story of for people who went through traumatic experiences during connected to repression during their childhood.²

“The general’s daughter” walks on the same path of these productions, having as a motto the fact that Eugenia Zerbini (a successful executive of the financial sector, as the article highlights) had never before spoken about her being raped in the 70s (not even to her relatives, except her daughter Eleonora Zerbini). This is more discreetly highlighted in two circumstances in the text:

Eugenia went back home and *did not tell anyone about what had happened*: “Dad could do something mad. When I was born, he was 46. I was the first daughter. The woman he loved was in jail and I would say that had happened to me? Telling to my grandma Arminda, my mother’s mother? Give her such a pain? Her daughter was already in jail (...) It was a *policy of intimidation* (VILLAMÉA, 2013b, p. 56, authors’ highlights)

Eugenia decided to bring her own violation to light, for the first time, in *Brasileiros*, for considering that it was a very ill digested story: “I have spent hours on *Google Images* looking for pictures of the torturers, trying to identify that man. Now, (...) with the Commission of Truth, people can speak. My testimony will be taken into consideration. Before, the worst pain that could befall me, if the pains inflicted on February 13, 1970, would be people doubting my story.”(VILLAMÉA, 2013b, p. 57)

After the article was published, Eugenia Zerbini would participate in a public hearing at the CNV in the Legal Assembly of São Paulo (on November 2013), reporting the same case that had attained initial projection in *Brasileiros*. The article also caused a significant repercussion in other means, inserting, as Fausto Neto indicates (2010), in a complex system of distribution.

Reopening the texts means facing the inevitable distribution reality. If the texts are dated when written and when offered to readers for their first contact, they go through the interference of distribution, as they are retold in new moments when new listenings and readings can be produced. (FAUSTO NETO, 2010, p. 65-66).

This reopening process in other vehicles is entitled in different way, proclaiming above all, attention to the violence involved in the case: “I was raped by the military officials’, says the daughter of the general withdrawn by the dictatorship” (PRAGMATISMO POLÍTICO, 2014); “Daughter of the withdrawn general says she was raped when visiting arrested mother” (MADEIRO, 2013). In the first title, the use of citation aims for giving more authority to the previous testimony, but in the second title another element brought forth right at the beginning aims for highlighting the brutality and unjustifiability of the crime committed, which is the fact that Eugenia, when she was raped, was inside the OBAN headquarters in São Paulo (she had gone to the place to give her mother, Therezinha Zerbini, who had been taken to jail, personal hygiene accessories and underwear).

From the original article to its reverberation in other publications and news portals, resulting from the presence of Eugenia in CNV’s audience, there is a continuous connection between the trauma suffered, its retention in the *self* due to a bond fragmentation experience by a feeling of shame and a recovery of collective memory through the critiques on injustices perpetrated throughout the dictatorial period. Information dominates the scene loaded with shadows that involved a historical moment of the country and remained still somewhat blurred in the collective memory.

Journalism works hard to promote the articulation amongst these three elements: the trauma, the resulting shame and retention and its later recovery as a way of criticizing a set of unrighteous relations that took place in the dictatorial regime, that ended

up converging both in Eugenia's telling to *Brasileiros* and in its distributions in the portals *Pragmatismo Político* and *Notícias UOL*, which took place after Therezinha Zerbini's daughter went to the CNV's public hearing.

The wound inflicted upon Eugenia by the official who raped her at OBAN headquarters is considered by herself as something "ill digested", which was encrusted in her journey. The recollection of the event is terrifying, as she observes: "When it was over, he opened the door. Suddenly I saw I was at the exit door. I did not even look back. (...) I wanted to go home, stay away from that. So much that as I walked on Tutoia street, looking for a taxi, I spoke to myself 'go, go, don't look back'" (VILLAMÉA, 2013b, p. 56). The fragmentary aspect of this inflicted suffering, in first instance, speaks of an experience in which the perception was refrained, not enabling a full comprehension of the experience. Eugenia's telling highlights exactly this difficulty in processing what she underwent and making it part of a journey – an experience properly saying, which marks a life experience. As speech itself allows us to see, the possibility of "digestion" that occurred in her case, was intricately related to the vocalization of her agony per se, which gains existence for her when exposed to the audience: "Now that I made this public, I am lighter. I know it was not about me. They were doing that to reach my father and my mother. And I was the vehicle that was available" (MADEIRO, 2013).

The articles connect this refrained perception that marked Eugenia's life to her inability to tell what affected her before. This is brought forth both in *Brasileiros's* texts and in those that debate with her telling in CNV's hearing, through direct citations engulfed by a deep feeling of shame: "I did not have courage to tell him [my father], I did not speak to my grandmother. Her other daughter was in jail. Whom could I tell? Phone to Rio de Janeiro? We are more ashamed of the one who did it than of ourselves', she said." (MADEIRO, 2013). The shame that Eugenia says she went through and that made her perception about her experience so difficult is no way a shame dealt with in the sphere of intimacy, but as a public feeling that marked the politics of the Brazilian military government. Scheff (2013) suggests that shame is the most social of emotions, as it is directly related to the possibility of loss/fragmentation of bonds (we anticipated this possibility and detain

ourselves faced with a possible breaking of a bond oftentimes), and for taking the function of signaling before the potentiality of a moral transgression in a public environment, preventing the subject from committing an act that could later cause him a moral breach. As the reports suggest, her shame resulted from her fear that in case she told her relatives about her being raped, she could fall victim of the fragilization of their affective bonds or cause even more consternations than before, so she decided to keep it secret for decades:

This fear is also intertwined to the possibility of her telling being disconsidered or treated as a lie: “Telling my colleagues at Rio Branco School who said I was the daughter of a communist? At that time, the middle class and the upper middle class were euphoric. They made a lot of money in the financial market. People cared less and less about torture” (VILLAMÉA, 2013b, p. 57). This potential scorn to the pain supposedly inflicted on Eugenia would make it even more difficult for her “digestion” of the experience. Scheff clears out this matter in one of his reflections: “Perhaps the greatest obstacle in the process of resolution of conflicts is that one or both parts feel their stories were not told or, if told, they were not heard” (SCHEFF, s/d).

As shame is a social emotion, it is not possible to unfix the desolation experience throughout the years by Eugenia to a “policy of intimidation” (VILLAMÉA, 2013b) versed as a fulcrual element of maintenance of the civil-military dictatorship. This policy, responsible for hindering the collectivization of the dramas experienced by those who, like Eugenia, were victims of tortures or lost relatives, led to the shattering of the collective memory in a set of small tellings, which now are little by little organized in CNV’s audiences. If Eugenia says she started to believe that people would consider her testimony consistent only after the installation of CNS, it is because through this Commission the articulation of certain stories would be affordable with the same background³, in order to criticize the “official version” offered by the State institutions until that moment (although the CNV itself was formulated by institutions such as those).

3. END OF SILENCE AND NEED FOR REPARATION OF INJUSTICE

Another case placed for analysis was enabled by the Clinic of Testimony⁴, one of the places created from the discussions of the Commissions of Truth. Fátima Setúbal's testimony is emblematic in this sense, as it is only after going to the Clinic that she could publically expose (in a testimony accorded to the Commission of Truth in Rio de Janeiro on October 29, 2013), the tortures she underwent in 1971, when she was only 18 years old. After her testimony, there was a repercussion of the case in many means of communication, which allowed, like in Eugenia Zerbini's case, the articulation of the case in a complex distribution system (FAUSTO NETO, 2010). In the articles of the news website *Terra*, on the website *O Globo*, in the magazine *QC* (Globo) and in the special TV show of *GNT* "Women fighting", it is possible to realize this movement.

Fátima's journey is marked by traumatic situations, as she was arrested in two opportunities in the 70s. She was part of the group VAR-Palmares, which fought against the dictatorship through many direct actions, having experienced the death of two brothers during the 70s and 80s. Antonio Marcos Pinto de Oliveira and Januário José Pinto de Oliveira also participated in the same organization. The former was killed in what came to be called Quintino's Slaughter in 1972 and the latter was found dead in 1983, with signs of hanging and with no further conclusive political elucidation whatsoever until today.

In the interview accorded to journalist Mauro Pimentel from *Terra*, she says that only now after four decades of silence, she could speak and write about the period she was in jail in Rio de Janeiro. For her to be able to speak it was necessary to acknowledge her suffering was shared by many others and that somehow it had importance for the Brazilian collective memory.

I came torn to shreds. It was in this process that I discovered the psychological torture I underwent. I was only worried about the physical torture I had gone through. My life was before and after my testimony and the process of therapy due to the testimony at the Commission of Truth. I could get back to my relatives. (PIMENTEL, 2014)

The therapy also served well to improve her self-esteem, the valorization of her experience and her insertion in the collective

memory: “The Clinics and the testimony at the Commission of Truth of Rio de Janeiro showed that they are gone and I stayed, fighting for their memory. I have also a leading role in that” (BRANDALISE, 2014). She even highlights the political dimensions of her telling by reinforcing the need of reparation of this injustice: “It was very hard to visit the stories of the past, but I needed to do it for my brothers” (PIMENTEL, 2014), besides remembering the humiliations I suffered at the burial of my brother in 1972: “When my mother started to pray (...) and cry louder, they (the police-officers) arrived with guns and told her not to speak loud or cry loud”. (CASTRO, 2014)

The story also gained repercussion when it was taken to the TV, on March 26, 2014, at the premises of the special show *Mulheres em Luta* (Women fighting) produced by the TV station *GNT*. In this episode, she comments about the tortures inflicted upon her, how bad she was treated and the shameful situations she was forced through. She says that when trying to face the torturers in the dark torture room refusing to take off her clothes, she had them ripped and torn by the torturers who said; “oh! Such a brave girl!...” (GNT, 2014). She speaks about the vexing situation she faced, as wires were entangled around her naked body, which ran through her genitals with frequent electric shocks, intensified by water that was constantly shed on her in order to aggravate the shocks.

Fátima Setúbal, when she managed to narrate her experience at the torturing sessions, does it from a collective memory that begins to be forged in the interlocution of the unnumbered testimonies that emerged. As many others are able to speak, we can say that there is a contamination in the social fabric in a sense of the multiplication of stories that could have been forgotten or silenced by the so called official history. She supposes she can only tell her experience when she recognizes herself in the other participants of the Clinic: “It is the result of fostering those whom felt the same pain”. (BRANDALISE, 2014). From the therapy sessions of the Clinic to the Commission of Truth of Rio de Janeiro, amongst interviews like those cited in this work, Fátima started to value her participation in the history of the country: “I saw myself as a side participant, I thought my story did not matter”. (BRANDALISE, 2014). The memories of those that could be called new agents of history inscribe in the present those scars that come from the past. The remains of the past emerge as a kind of ultimate connector that enables the reshaping of time (RICOEUR, 2010b). The evidences

to these remains can be strong or weak, depending on the traces found in the files, documents and testimonies that configure the public space in which history is unfolded; it is resorting, as Paul Ricoeur says, to the “significance of a terminated past that, yet, remains preserved in its signs”. (2010b, p. 204)

When she learnt of similar stories, when she found out she could rely on a reparation policy from the same State that made her suffer damage, Fátima could articulate her individual story with a public story, from which she is also part. She can find a shared dimension for a pain that is not a personal prerogative.

Paul Ricoeur, by problematizing the relation between time and narrative, introduces the composition of intrigue as a mediating element of this process⁵. Under this perspective, the narrative does not come forth from the will of the subject, but as the channeling of facts mediated by the component of the intrigue, which in the present work, activates individual stories and even heterogeneous stories, in the shared space of experiences made public by the Commissions of Truth and reverberated by the traditional and independent means of communication from all over the country. Moreover, according to Pal Ricouer, “the composition of intrigue is never the mere triumph of the ‘order’” (2010a, p. 126), given that the narrative is updated by the presence of the receptor. We have here the possibility of the resignification of experiences in the reach of the public sphere.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

Journalism comes with a relative strength in the dispute of meanings of what the dictatorship represented for the country. By making voices consonant and dissonant to the period speak, it emerges as a narrative field able to potentially that which was latent in the social fabric, after all as Paul Ricoeur says: “can the past be intelligible of any other way that is not persisting on the present?” (2010b, p. 240)

This diegetic movement enabled by the contemporary journalism by engineering the access to memory and to history (ASSMANN, 2011) implies conflict and reshaping of the past in that which would be named its memorial attribute. Paul Ricoeur (2010a), when discussing the possibility of a potential history, what could

seem paradox, as history bears a symbology of that which was expressed, will say that the unsaid stories follow the journey of the individual and of society itself as the narratives also anchor in that which can emerge in specific moments and catapult new stories, exemplifying the need to salve the history of the defeated and losers (as in the case of the victims of the dictatorship) when he says “every story of suffering shouts for vengeance and narration”. (2010a, p. 129)

The attempt to erase certain events can be considered a strategy of totalitarian governments that operate the dynamics of physical elimination and, especially, in imposing symbolic violence, as “everything” can be forgotten. Vladimir Safatle (2010), while discussing the new aspect of the events in Auschwitz will argue that the *desire for disappearance*” (p. 237, highlighted by the author) is the strength of this event in the unfolding of the social history, once other genocides had already taken place at different times. The elimination of the other does not suffice. It is necessary that nothing remains; names, marks and traces must be wiped out of memory. The author also uses the examples of other Latin American countries like Argentina and Chile to justify that the only country that remained resonant to the Nazi-fascist discourse was Brazil, incarnating the prophecy of the Nazi executioners by defining in the aspect of what could be placed as “official history” (as histories are many and more), the *“prophecy of violence without trauma”*. (SAFATLE, p. 240, author’s highlight). It is noted, however, in the actuality, a disruptive process of this maxim.

As we can realize, the activities of the Commission of Truth and the narratives spread over by journalism participate in this process, allowing, as in both cases, the questioning of a way of introducing the events that took place between 1964 and 1985. We can realize that, in testimonies like those of the two interviewed women, the emergence of “existential tests”, which just like pointed by Boltanski (2009), place in suspension a way of historical-social organization that had not so far been publicly problematized, in order for journalism to take over a questioning posture, in these occasions, in the face of a certain hegemonic vision of the world, highlighting its place of enunciation and its ways of addressing the reader. If these texts are easily questioned as subjective when placed separately, this conjugation confers legitimacy and potency to deal with a set of events considered unjustifiable. “The critical

operations (...) are the base for existential tests in the acceptance of what they have to base on their experiences – experiences that serve to extract from the world (...) elements that can validate (...) the relations established” (BOLTANSKI, 2009, p.110, authors’ translations).

If during the dictatorial period, there was an attempt to break social bonds, as people were kept prisoners, tortured and in many cases killed and their bodies went missing, will there be any possibility of recomposition of these social networks? In the two aforementioned cases, we can see that the need for a collective support for the narratives accomplished by this assistance and reverberated by the journalistic field can be configured.

Thinking on the place of journalism in the context of repercussion that this theme operates in Brazil is like tensioning the heterogeneous dimensions that crosses this field. It is like considering the possibility of activating the memory as one of the devices journalism sponsors to sensitize the readers for political matters that are narrated in the investigated cases. It is postulating the critical place taken by journalism (or at least part of it) as a way of facing the “desire for forgetting” mobilized by the official discourse of the civil-military dictatorship. What several variables let us see is a pending process, still under constitution, provoking fissures in the official history and breaking barriers. In the cultural dimension of the present, the conjuring of possible futures.

Notes

- 1 Important to note that the anniversary of “50 years of the military strike” led to “specials” in practically all media, which caused a great reverberation on the theme.
- 2 This series of reports was analyzed in Maya and LELO (2014).
- 3 It is worth to note the case of journalist Miriam Leitão, which revealed previously unknown details of his arrest in 1972, claiming that the decision to bring to the audience his story is related to the discussions arising from the installation of CNV (FOLHA, 2014).
- 4 Project of the Ministry of Justice that works in partnership with the Truth Commissions. The various clinics started to operate in May 2013, with the aim of promoting an unprecedented psychoanalytic

treatment to the victims of the dictatorship and their relatives.

- 5 By understanding the art of representation beyond the internal structures of the text, Ricoeur will propose three mimetic dimensions, where mimesis 1 will set, in practice modality, a narrative that is already pre-understood by the human action, providing the configuring dimension of mimesis 2 until find the mediation of mimesis 3, responsible for the “intersection of the text world and the world of the listener or reader.” (2010a, p. 122)

References

ASSMANN, A. **Espaços da recordação:** Formas e transformações da memória cultural. Campinas, SP: Editora da Unicamp, 2011.

BOLTANSKI, L. **On Critique:** a sociology of emancipation. Cambridge: Polity Press, 2009.

BRANDALISE, Vitor H. Marcas de uma geração. **Revista GQ**, Rio de Janeiro, p. 1-1. 29 mar. 2014. Available at: <<http://gq.globo.com/Cultura/noticia/2014/03/marcas-de-uma-geracao.html>>. Accessed on: 20 jun. 2014.

CASTRO, J. Parentes de vítima da Chacina de Quintino se emocionam na Comissão da Verdade do Rio. **Portal O Globo**, Rio de Janeiro, p. 1-1. 29 out. 2013. Available at: <<http://oglobo.globo.com/brasil/parentes-de-vitima-da-chacina-de-quintino-se-emocionam-na-comissao-da-verdade-do-rio-10595732>>. Accessed on: 10 mai. 2014.

FAUSTO NETO, A. As bordas da circulação. **Alceu**, n. 20, p. 55-69, 2010.

FAUSTO NETO, A; SGORLA, F. Zona em Construção: acesso e mobilidade da recepção na ambiência jornalística. In: **Anais XXII Encontro Encontro da Compós 2013 – Salvador/BA**, 2013.

JORNALISTA revela tortura com cobra durante a ditadura. **Folha de S. Paulo**, São Paulo, 20 ago. 2014, Caderno *Poder*, p. 8.

GAGNEBIN, J. **Lembrar escrever esquecer.** São Paulo: Ed. 34, 2006.

GNT. Militantes que sobreviveram à ditadura relembram tortura; veja vídeo. Available at: <<http://gnt.globo.com/programas/mulheres-em-luta/materias/militantes-que-sobreviveram-a-ditadura-relembram-tortura-veja-video.htm>>. Accessed on: 10 mai. 2014.

MADEIRO, C. Filha de general cassado pela ditadura diz que foi estuprada ao visitar a mãe presa. Available at: <<http://noticias.uol.com.br/politica/>>

ultimas-noticias/2013/11/11/filha-de-general-cassado-pela-ditadura-diz-que-foi-estuprada-ao-visitar-a-mae-presas.htm>. Accessed on: 03 abr. 2014.

MAIA, M.; LELO, T. Memórias da ditadura militar no jornalismo: matrizes de sentido nas narrativas sobre crianças vítimas de tortura. **Fronteiras**, v. 16, p. 2-10, 2014.

MOUILLAUD, M. A informação ou a parte de sombra. In: MOUILLAUD, M; PORTO, S. (Orgs). **O jornal – da forma ao sentido**. Brasília: Paralelo 15, p.37-48, 1997a.

MOUILLAUD, M. Posturas do leitor. In: MOUILLAUD, M; PORTO, S. (Orgs). **O jornal – da forma ao sentido**. Brasília: Paralelo 15, p.173-190, 1997b.

PIMENTEL, M. 2014. Aos 61 anos, vítima relata tortura e morte de irmãos na ditadura. Available at: <<http://noticias.terra.com.br/brasil/aos-61-anos-vitima-relata-tortura-e-morte-de-irmaos-na-ditadura,7980a361a9b05410VgnVCM400009bcecb0aRCD.html>>. Accessed on: 10 mai. 2014.

PIOVESAN, F. Direito internacional dos direitos humanos e lei de Anistia: o caso brasileiro In In: SAFATLE, Vladimir; TELES, Edson (Orgs.). **O que resta da ditadura: a exceção brasileira**. São Paulo: Boitempo, p. 91-107, 2010.

PRAGMATISMO POLÍTICO. “Fui estuprada pelos militares”, diz filha de general cassado pela ditadura. Available at: <http://www.pragmatismopolitico.com.br/2014/03/fui-estuprada-pelos-militares-diz-filha-de-general-cassado-pela-ditadura.html>. Accessed on: 04 abr. 2014.

RICOEUR, P. **Tempo e Narrativa**. São Paulo, Editora WMF/Martins Fontes, vol. 1, 2010a.

RICOEUR, P. **Tempo e Narrativa**. São Paulo, Editora WMF/Martins Fontes, vol. 3, 2010b.

SAFATLE, V. Do uso da violência contra o Estado ilegal. In: SAFATLE, Vladimir; TELES, Edson (Orgs.). **O que resta da ditadura: a exceção brasileira**. São Paulo: Boitempo, p. 177-186, 2010.

SCHEFF, T. n.d. **Mobilization and silence**: Emotional/relational Dynamics. Available at: <<http://www.soc.ucsb.edu/faculty/scheff/main.php?id=44.html>>, s/d.

SCHEFF, T. Vergonha no Self e na Sociedade. **Revista Brasileira de Sociologia da Emoção**, v.12, n.35, p. 656-686, 2013.

TÉTU, J-F. Le Monde e Libération em perspectiva. Referências e significação: Le Monde. In: MOUILLAUD, M; PORTO, S. (Orgs). **O jornal – da forma ao sentido**. Brasília: Paralelo 15, p.191-202, 1997.

VERÓN, E. **Fragmentos de um tecido**. São Leopoldo: Editora Unisinos, 2004.

VILLAMÉA, L. O Brasil no divã. **Brasileiros**, São Paulo, n. 70, mai. 2013a, p. 76-81.

VILLAMÉA, L. A filha do general. **Brasileiros**, São Paulo, n. 74, set. 2013b, p. 52-57.

WOLF, M. **Teorias da Comunicação**. Lisboa: Editorial Presença, 1995.

Marta Regina Maia, Ph.D. in Social Communication from São Paulo University (USP). Currently is a Professor on the Master's program in Communication at the Federal University of Ouro Preto and Coordinator of the Research Group in Journalism, Narratives and Communicative Practices at the UFOP. E-mail: marta@martamaia.pro.br

Thales Vilela Lelo is a doctoral student in Social Sciences at the State University of Campinas (Unicamp). Masters in Communication at the Federal University of Minas Gerais (UFMG) and a member of the Research Group in Journalism, Narratives and Communicative Practices at the UFOP and of the Group Study in Work, Health and Subjectivity, at the Unicamp. E-mail: thales.lelo@gmail.com

RECEIVED ON: 28/02/2015 | APPROVED ON: 15/04/2015