

Transformations in female representations in beer advertisements: a Strategic Actions Fields perspective

A transformação das representações femininas em propagandas de cerveja pela perspectiva dos Campos de Ação Estratégica

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Abstract: This article assesses the influence of criticisms of female representations in advertising practices in the brewing industry in Brazil between 2012 and 2017 from the perspective of Strategic Action Fields. Unlike existing analyses, the object of the study was conceived as a set of interconnected fields and the role of governance units in the dynamics of social change was emphasized. An analysis of the content of 213 advertisements for the country's largest beer brands, 99 lawsuits filed against the brewing industry in the National Advertising Self-Regulation Council (CONAR) and media reports was carried out. The results indicate that the loss of symbolic effectiveness of sexist advertising practices was driven by episodes of conflict that had wide media repercussions and affected the dominant companies in the brewing industry. These factors made it possible for criticism to circumvent the conservative performance of CONAR, the established governance unit in the fields of advertising in Brazil.

Keywords: Social movements; Markets; Strategic Action Fields; Internal Governance Units; Institutions.

Resumo: O artigo analisa a influência das críticas às representações das mulheres nas práticas publicitárias do setor cervejeiro no Brasil entre 2012 e 2017 a partir da perspectiva dos Campos de Ação Estratégica. Diferentemente das análises existentes, o objeto de estudo foi concebido como um conjunto de campos interconectados e o papel das unidades de governança na dinâmica da mudança social foi enfatizado. Uma análise do conteúdo de 213 propagandas das maiores marcas de cerveja do país, de 99 ações abertas contra a indústria cervejeira no Conselho Nacional de Autorregulamentação Publicitária (CONAR) e de reportagens da mídia foi realizada. Os resultados indicam que a perda de eficácia simbólica de práticas publicitárias sexistas foi impulsionada por episódios de conflito que tiveram ampla repercussão midiática e que afetaram as empresas dominantes do setor cervejeiro. Esses fatores possibilitaram que as críticas contornassem a atuação conservadora do CONAR, a unidade de governança instituída dos campos da publicidade no Brasil.

Palavras-chave: Movimentos sociais; Mercados; Campos de ação estratégica; Unidades internas de governança; Instituições.

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1 Introduction

Over the last few decades, authors of organizational studies and economic sociology have been trying to understand markets as historical, political and cultural constructions. These studies contrast both the under-socialized view of economic and administrative orthodoxy, which treats markets as products of atomized and strictly economic and technical action, and over-socialized views of functionalist structuralism, which assume that social norms and values are unequivocally followed by social agents (Granovetter, 2017; Fligstein, 2001). Among the findings of these perspectives, the discovery of the role critical movements play in the transformation of institutions that provide the basis for the functioning of markets stands out (King & Pearce, 2010). It opposes conventional views on the historical changes of the economy, according to which capitalism would transform itself due to a kind of evolution resulting only from objective factors, such as competition, technological development and demographic changes, approaching how the representations that provide a basis for the operation of markets change as a result of political dynamics (Fligstein, 2001; Boltanski & Chiapello, 2009).

Most of these studies were developed by authors of sociological institutionalism in organizational analysis and incorporating concepts from the theory of social movements (Davis et al., 2005). A key concept used by these actors is the organizational field, established by DiMaggio & Powell (1983), which is now used in different ways (Machado-da-Silva et al., 2006). By emphasizing the dispute dynamics involved in the fields, several studies have shown that markets transform as actors directly or indirectly questioning the legitimacy of their social order and business strategies (King & Pearce, 2010; Fligstein & McAdam, 2019).

While uses of the field concept have varied significantly, they have not systematically addressed the issue of interconnectedness between these arenas, which has to do with the comprehensive way in which the concept was used (Fligstein & McAdam, 2012; Candido et al., 2018). The Strategic Action Fields (SAFs) approach, presented by Fligstein & McAdam (2012), proposes that the fields should be more narrowly defined, and that greater attention should be paid to how these arenas interconnect (p. 167). This perspective also introduces concepts that are highly applicable to analyzing the influence of social movements on markets, as a result of the approach's effort to integrate several different theoretical perspectives into a framework to understand the dynamics of stability and social change. We highlight the concept of internal governance units, which has been little explored in empirical studies (Muzio et al., 2016). These units act in line with the interests of incumbent actors to maintain order and stability in the fields, which suggests that they oppose market critics (Fligstein & McAdam, 2012).

The objective of this article is to analyze the influence of criticism on female representations in advertising practices in the brewing industry in Brazil from the perspective of Strategic Action Fields. Advertisements in the brewing sector are known for using sexist appeal, representing women in an objectified way (Malta & Silva, 2016; Silva & Costa, 2017). The period analyzed between 2012 and 2017 was marked by a trend of loss of legitimacy of these practices, which became strongly contested. The National Advertising Self-Regulation Council (CONAR), the internal governance unit of the Brazilian advertising sector, played a key role in this process.

It is proposed that the SAF approach offers a reference on the dynamics of stability and social change that drives the understanding of changes arising from criticism of markets. Although this affinity has been noted by important authors (King, 2015), few

of them have promoted dialogue between approaches based on empirical studies. This analysis contributes, particularly to demonstrate that the concept of field used, which is more restricted, and the greater attention to the integration of arenas contributes to the understanding of changes in markets. It also advances the understanding of the influence of internal governance units in this process, something that has been under studied (Fligstein & McAdam, 2012; Muzio et al., 2016).

From an empirical point of view, the study contributes to understanding the role of feminist critics in recent transformations of advertising practices in the brewing sector, clarifying the conditions under which these changes were possible, as well as reflecting on the limits and possibilities of promoting the transformation society through markets.

2 Markets as multiple Strategic Action Fields and their transformations by critics

The SAF perspective was proposed by Fligstein & McAdam (2012) integrating influential theoretical perspectives from the social sciences. The contributions of economic sociology, the institutional theory of sociology, political science and the social movement theory can be mentioned, from which a synthetic and transversal approach to the different areas of social life was developed. The authors propose that the integration of these different approaches makes it possible to overcome their limitations. It is possible, for example, to overcome the excessive emphasis given to the individual and competition given by Bourdieu's approach (p. 24), the focus on conformity and the neglect of the importance of power relations of sociological institutionalism (p. 28), the lack of theoretical density in the analysis of social networks (p. 29) and the difficulty of explaining the stability and addressing the integration between social spheres of the social movement theory (p. 30).

The SAF approach addresses the dynamics of stability and change assuming that modern societies are differentiated and that they are organized around meso-level social orders. These fields encompass different activities, such as economics, politics, science, religion and art. Within each of these great social arenas are lower-order fields, such as "Russian dolls". Within the field of art, for example, are the subfields of music and theater. The field idea is relational and proposes that even though these social spheres are distinct, they have similar dynamics, historically constituted from cultural and power relations (Candido et al., 2017). The cultural order that stabilizes and gives meaning to social relations is biased by legitimate power relations, which makes dominant actors able to shape the agenda of others according to their perspectives and interests. This dynamic has a negative aspect, as it makes it possible to reproduce the domination of some groups over others. The positive side is the construction of shared meanings that stabilizes competition and enables the functional division of labor (Candido et al., 2017; Biazzin et al., 2020).

One of the innovations from the perspective of SAFs is the concept of internal governance units that are present mainly in mature fields and act in the maintenance of order. They provide information, regulate, supervise and certify practices in order to stabilize social relationships (Fligstein & McAdam, 2012). Their performance tends to be biased by power relations, which makes them act conservatively, favoring the interests of incumbents (Muzio et al., 2016). They have the important role of mediating the relationship of field actors with external actors, operating as intermediaries and representing the interests of space (Fligstein & McAdam, 2012).

Another important innovation of the approach is its emphasis on the interconnection between fields. Fligstein & McAdam (2012) propose that the relationship between spaces has a dynamic similar to the internal relationships of the fields, involving cultural and power relationships. The authors describe two basic types of relationships. The first is associated with inserting a field into others. A field can contain several others, and both higher-order fields can dominate lower-order fields, and the opposite can happen. Another type of relationship is between adjacent interdependent spaces. In this case, more powerful camps tend to impose their interests and visions on the weakest. When the asymmetries of power between spaces are small, more unstable relationships that depend on agreements between actors in the arenas tend to be established.

Based on the SAF approach, it is possible to analyze markets as a set of “economic” and “non-economic” social arenas interconnected from both a material and symbolic point of view (Fligstein, 2001; Candido et al., 2019; Candido et al., 2021). Although defining the boundaries of these fields is an empirical question, in economics, in general, it is possible to identify sectors as fields whose actors are companies and the governance units are business associations (Fligstein, 1990, 2001). Unlike the rationalist aspects of management and the economy, it is assumed that the rationality of these practices is conditioned by power and culture (Bourdieu, 2005).

Among the non-economic fields that influence economic dynamics, state-owned companies stand out, which are constitutive and tend to act to maintain the stability and predictability of markets. State SAFs have a dynamic similar to that of other fields, but they are distinguished by the power to define or ratify social rules in a territory and to impose them through physical and symbolic violence (Fligstein & McAdam, 2012; Bourdieu, 2014). Among the various rules imposed by the State that condition the legal and legitimate actions of companies, those that shape property rights, governance structures and conditions for trade stand out (Fligstein, 2001).

Markets can be influenced by several other “non-economic” arenas. For Fligstein & McAdam (2012, p. 99), this interference from external actors is one of the most common causes of the transformation of SAFs. Several studies have addressed how the criticisms of more or less organized social movements about business practices affect economic fields (Fligstein & McAdam, 2019; King & Pearce, 2010). This research relates to Polanyi's (2000) founding thesis of contemporary economic sociology according to which the economy is rooted in society, which morally constrains self-interested economic action. In the author's view, criticisms that affect the legitimacy of business practices tend to affect markets through the State, inducing new forms of regulation. However, contemporary research has shown that these criticisms can directly affect companies, forcing them to change their competitive strategies (Fligstein & McAdam, 2019).

One of the characteristics of these relationships between critical movements, companies and economic fields is the great asymmetry of power between the arenas involved (Fligstein & McAdam, 2019). To overcome these inequalities, challenging actors articulate public and morally-based criticism of companies' practices, affecting their image and reputation (King & Pearce, 2010). A critical factor for its success is the repercussion generated by these criticisms, which drives the mobilization of external challengers and sustains growing conflict and destabilization (Fligstein & McAdam, 2012). The attraction of media attention to these causes is a key indicator of this repercussion as its placement tends to reflect the public's interest and the appeal of a cause (King, 2011). Repercussion enables the mobilization of supporters and coerces

economic actors, undermining their legitimacy. For repercussion to drive mobilization, challengers need to act on the basis of narratives and frameworks that appeal to a large number of people, creating a coalition and a sense of identity for opponents (Fligstein & McAdam, 2012).

Persuasive tactics complement others that King (2011) calls disruptive, which alter the ability of corporate targets to operate effectively, such as boycotts and occupations. King (2008, 2011) shows that these tactics are more effective when capable of attracting media attention and accompanied by the persuasion of supporters. Persuasive tactics can also have disruptive repercussions, which happens when the deterioration of the image implies a loss of customers, investors and other material damage. Thus, King & Soule (2007) show that in the United States, between 1962 and 1990, protests led to reductions of between 0.4 and 1.0% in the price of shares of companies, and the more information generated, the greater the impact in the share price.

For Fligstein & McAdam (2012), the incumbents of the SAFs tend to respond conservatively to the crises sparked by criticism, fighting to preserve the sources of their advantages and taking the pre-existing order of the field for granted. They tend to appeal to their allies in the state, internal governance units and other camps to preserve their power. The results of this restabilization will depend on the alliances built with actors from powerful neighboring fields, including state-owned ones. These links tend to be reinforced due to the convergence of interests built between dominant actors from different fields.

In certain circumstances, even with largely favorable power relations, actors in the economic fields may be forced to concede to the demands of social movements. This, however, may not imply significant losses. As King & Pearce (2010) point out, in line with Boltanski & Chiapello's (2009) analysis, incorporating criticism can be an important basis for the renewal and re-legitimization of economic practices. In this process, criticism tends to be appropriated and instrumentalized for the purposes of economic gain.

3 Method

In order to achieve the proposed objectives, descriptive, qualitative and longitudinal research was carried out covering the period from January 2012 to October 2017. The analysis involved three secondary data sets, which made it possible to address the changes in advertising practices, their relationships with the performance of the internal governance unit of the advertising sector and the repercussion of the criticisms.

The first data set includes advertisements for the five most consumed beer brands in Brazil. They were identified based on the Euromonitor ranking (2016), including Skol, Brahma, Antarctica, Schin and Itaipava. The study focused on the analysis of audiovisual pieces collected on the brands' official YouTube channel. The Schin brand did not use this platform in 2012 and 2013 and, therefore, no data were collected for the brand in those years. Only advertisements longer than 30 seconds were included in the sample, ensuring that the videos had comparable content. Videos that were not restricted to brand advertising, such as those promoting sponsored events, were excluded, resulting in a corpus of 213 audiovisual pieces.

Data on the actions opened by the CONAR ethics council were also collected. CONAR is the governance unit of the Brazilian advertising sector, and its ethics council evaluates complaints from consumers, authorities, associates or its board of directors

against advertising content (CONAR, 2018). Data on the complaints made and the outcome of the trials were collected on the Council's website. All complaints referring to companies in the brewing sector were analyzed in the period, totaling 99 cases. From these, 24 were directly associated with feminist criticisms (24.2% of complaints).

Media reports portraying controversies about the brewing industry advertisements were also raised, serving to indirectly assess the repercussion of the actions of the critics on social media. The reports were identified using the Factiva database, a structured source of global news. The main vehicles in Brazil were consulted. The search string used was advertising and beer and woman and (femini* or male*), which resulted in identifying 40 articles. After analyzing the relevance and elimination of repeated items, 24 articles were selected, published in Folha de São Paulo, Zero Hora, Agência Estado, InfoMoney, O Globo, Correio 24h, Diário Catarinense, Diário de Pernambuco, Estado de Minas, O dia, Pioneer, Veja Magazine and Wall Street Journal Americas. Analyzing these reports was important in the evaluation of the media repercussion of the advertisements and to understand the strategic actions of the actors involved in litigation.

The three data sets were analyzed using the content analysis technique (Bardin, 2009). Considering both the literature review and the empirical evidence detected in a preliminary analysis of the collected videos, categories were structured to obtain an aggregated understanding of the characteristics of the datasets in an abductive way (Alvesson & Sköldberg, 2017).

The analysis of the videos was based on a set of categories indicative of sexism in the professional conventions of the creators of audiovisual pieces, defined based on the literature on sexist female representations in advertisements (Goffman, 1979; Belkaoui & Belkaoui, 1976) and inspired by other content analyses (Malta & Silva, 2016). The categories included: a) Advertising scenario; b) Sexualization of the characters; c) Role and focus of the woman, which involved verifying if the woman is serving and/or drinking the beer and if she has room to speak; d) Other traits of chauvinism. In understanding female representations (item c), the role of women in advertisements was classified according to the typology: i) Protagonist – most important role in the scene; ii) Supporting role - secondary role, acting opposite other characters and having a certain representation; iii) Component - presence as an extra, not being fundamental to advertising. iv) Object-banalization of the woman's image, in such a way that her appearance matters more than the other aspects that define her as an individual. v) Seducer – role of attracting the viewer, in such a way that their desires are also presented, even if sensuality and seduction are directed towards men; vi) Equality of conditions – non-occurrence of gender distinctions or reproduction of stereotyped attributes of femininity and masculinity. All female figures were classified in the advertisements, and the same character can be associated with more than one category.

To analyze CONAR's actions, the categories for data tabulation were: a) Month of trial; b) Company and/or brand; c) Advertising agency; d) Perpetrator of the representation; e) Aspect of the advertisement questioned (including complaints about chauvinism); f) Result of the judgment. They were defined inductively, based on the structure of the available data on the processes and on the float analysis of the content of the complaints.

To analyze the media reports, categories were established that considered, in addition to the basic properties of the advertisements (publication date, vehicle, title section, number of words): a) Focus of the report; b) Brewing companies and sexist

campaigns mentioned; c) Actors and critical actions; d) Means of protest; e) Reactions and changes in corporate practices; f) Reactions from the authorities; g) Other companies and campaigns mentioned and their framework (positive or negative); h) Experts and commentators mentioned; i) Other reasons for the changes (besides reacting to criticism).

4. Results

4.1 The transformations of the analyzed advertising pieces

A first relevant aspect when analyzing the advertisements is the scenario, which reveals the social imaginary behind the consumption of the product, maintaining a relationship with female representations. The recurrence of party scenes, beaches, bars, barbecues and soccer games was observed.

Few advertisements comprised only men, but there was a strong predominance of pieces in which men are the majority. There was a tendency to increase the share of the pieces in which numerical male and female representations are equated.

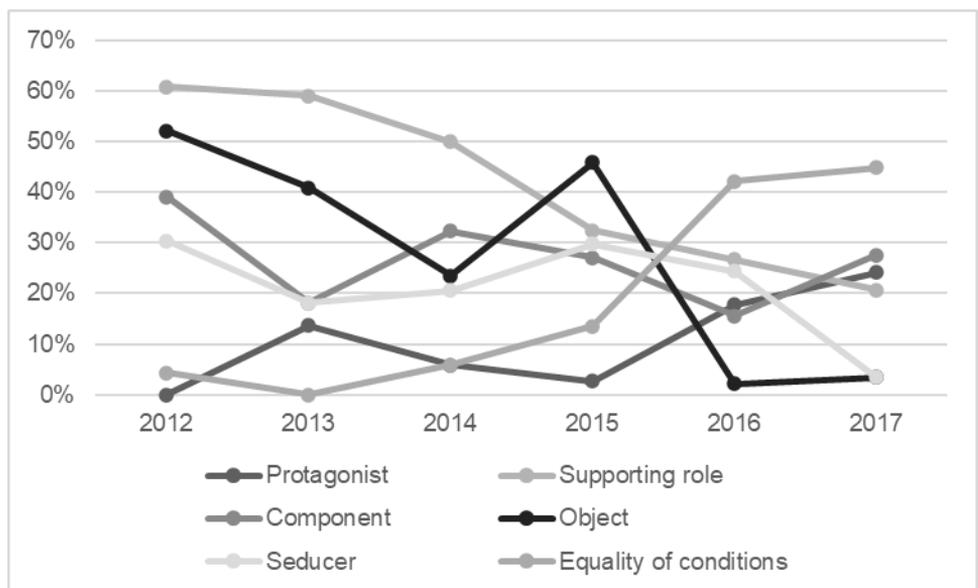


Figure 1. Representations of women in the analyzed pieces. Source: Authors' own work.

Figure 1 shows that there was a trend towards expanding female representation as protagonists, a reduction in their representation as supporting actors and an increase in the frequency with which they appear in equal conditions, especially from 2015 onwards, number of pieces with seductive and objectified representations between 2012 and 2014, followed by a sudden increase in the number of pieces in 2015. In 2016 and 2017, there was a sharp drop in biased gender representations. There was also an increase both in the number of women consuming beer and in the frequency of pieces in which female characters have room to speak (Figure 2).

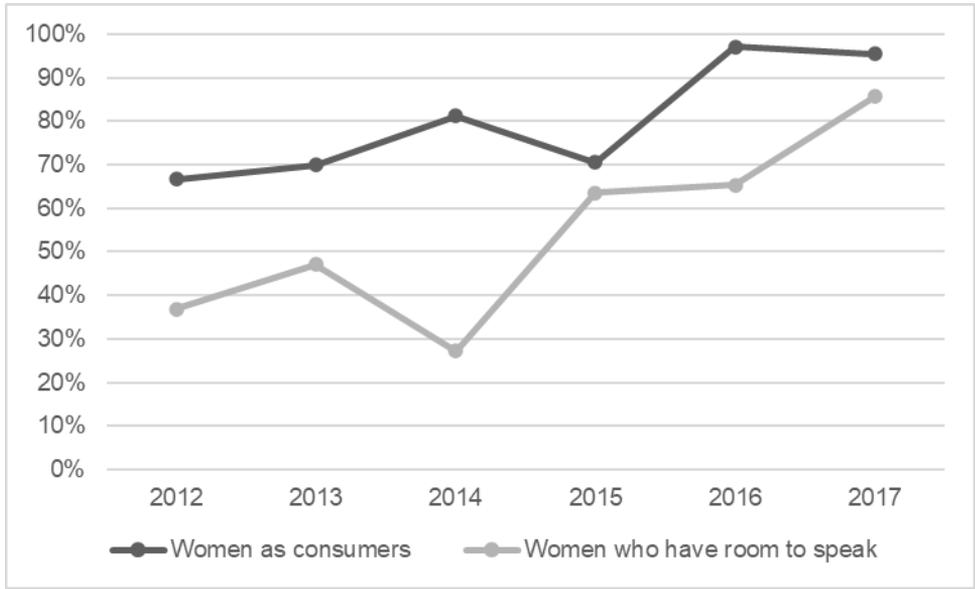


Figure 2. Percentage of pieces in which women consume beer and have room to speak. Source: Authors' own work.

The number of pieces in which the body of female characters is focused showed a downward trend but peaked in 2015 (Figure 3). This year's indicators were significantly influenced by advertisements for the Itaipava beer brand. At the end of 2014, this brewery launched the "This is our Summer" campaign, which involved an aggressive strategy to appeal to female sensuality (Silva & Costa, 2017). In this campaign, "Verão", which is the augmentative of the name "Vera" in Portuguese and also means summer, was a seductive female character. This year, from the fourteen pieces whose focus was the woman's body, twelve of them are from Itaipava.

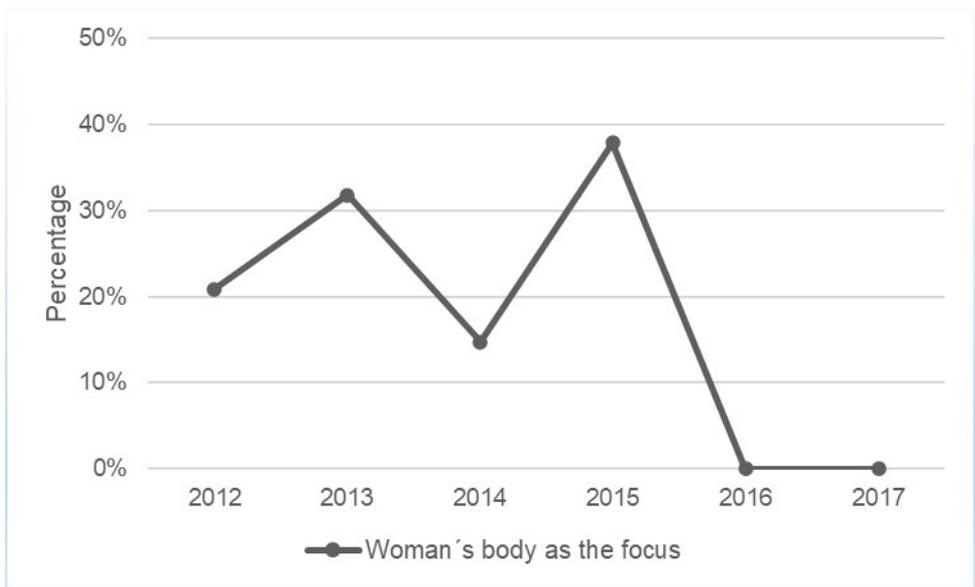


Figure 3. Frequency of advertisements focused on a woman's body. Source: Authors' own work.

In 2016 and 2017, there were no advertisements with this focus. Silva & Costa (2017) included a strategic repositioning of Itaipava, carried out in the campaign called “Itaipava, the beer that is 100%”, in which the character Verão started to be presented in a less objectified way, in greater equality of conditions and who had room to speak.

4.2 CONAR dynamics

Analyzing the complaints judged by CONAR, it was found that almost all of them were filed by consumers, the only exception being a lawsuit filed by the Ombudsman of the Secretariat of Policies for Women of the Presidency of the Republic, in 2014. The arguments that justify the actions are associated with the disrespect for the female figure, the use of the image of women with an appeal to sensuality and the apology for abuse against women. Disrespect for the female figure is the most common argument, and can be found in 22 complaints, while the use of the idea of female sensuality and the apology for abuse are present in 11 and two complaints, respectively.

The number of complaints associated with female representations in advertisements increased between 2013 and 2015 (Figure 4), reaching 11 in 2015, which represents 57.9% of the total cases faced by the brewing industry in CONAR. Concerning the brewing companies and advertising agencies involved in the lawsuits, the brand that was the target of the largest number of actions (nine) was Itaipava, which at the time ran the “This is our summer” campaign. Ranked second is Brasil Kirin, which was the target of five actions aimed at Nova Schin and two at Devassa. Conti Bier and AMBEV were the target of four lawsuits each, and in the case of AMBEV, the Skol and Antarctica brands were the targets. Regarding the agencies, it was found that Y&R, linked to Cervejaria Petrópolis, and Leo Burnett, linked to Brasil Kirin, were the most involved, with eight and five complaints, respectively. The F/Nazca S&S agencies had two complaints and the others only one, while the agency of six complaints was not informed.

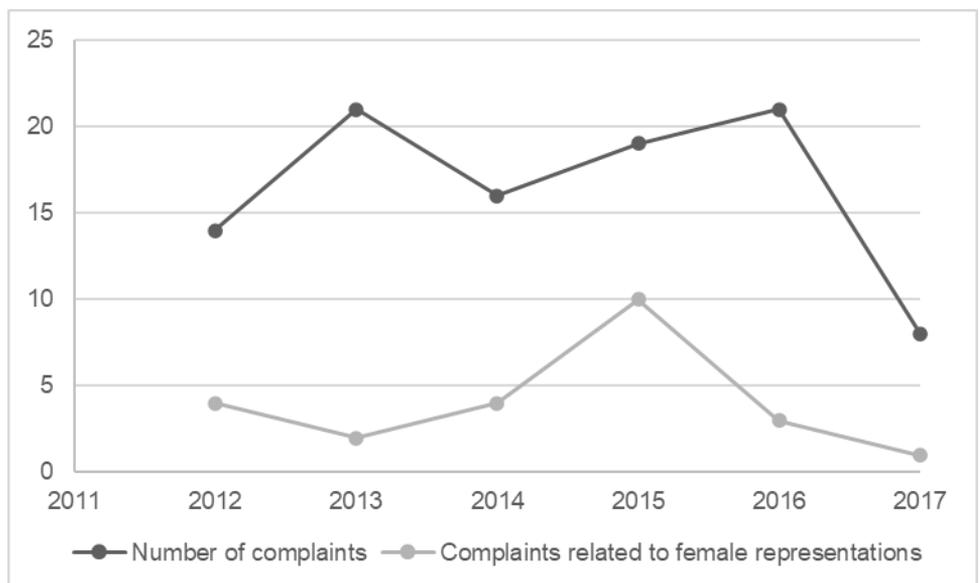


Figure 4. Number of complaints associated with female representations in the brewing industry in CONAR. Source: Authors' own work.

In the vast majority of judged cases, the Ethics Council opted for shelving, denying the accusations of the whistleblowers (20 of the 25 cases). Decisions against the companies were concentrated between 2013 and 2015, a period in which five campaigns were suspended and additional warnings were applied to the brands involved in two cases (Figure 5). The first two cases, which took place in 2013 and 2014, involved Cervejaria Casa de Conti, owner of the Conti Bier brand. The others took place in 2015, a critical year for the analysis.

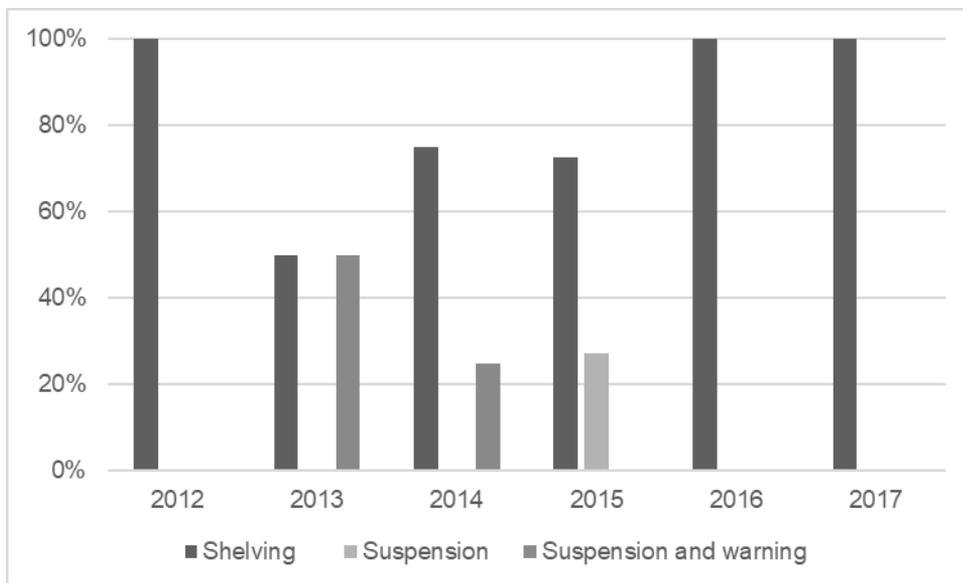


Figure 5. CONAR decisions on complaints involving the brewing sector. Source: Authors' own work.

In April of that year, Itaipava's "Get out of the sea" campaign, created by Y&R, was contested for its excessive appeal to sensuality. The defense's claims about the piece's "humor" were not accepted, resulting in the clip being suspended in open media. Another setback was experienced by Itaipava in June, when the advertisement "Make your choice" was suspended, in which a model's breasts were associated with one of the product's packaging sizes, after more than 50 consumers complained about abuse of sensuality and disrespect for the female figure. Finally, in December 2015, CONAR received 203 complaints against Schin's announcement on the theme of Oktoberfest in Blumenau. These complaints were aimed at associating alcohol consumption with female sensuality, the sexual connotation with a traditional party, and discrimination against women. The rapporteur of the case indicated that the advertisement was suspended for violating "the values defended by the city of Blumenau", considering, however, that he did not appeal "in an unethical way to sensuality".

In addition to the pieces suspended by CONAR, Cervejaria Petrópolis was the target of two other actions involving the character "Verão" that were shelved. In March, consumers alleged disrespect for the female figure against the piece "Verão has arrived", and their argument was unanimously refuted after the rapporteur declared that the clip was not disrespectful and that "the feminine attributes in the case are treated in a way that emphasizes the beauty of the protagonist in a subtle way, prevailing humor" (CONAR, 2018). In May, CONAR judged the complaint of about 125 consumers

about five advertisements aired in a television campaign and considered disrespectful to the female figure that had excessive appeal to sensuality. The rapporteur defended that the country “[...] is going through a notorious crisis of bad moods, aggravated, now, by heightened sensitivity of segments that find themselves offended by almost everything that is said” (CONAR, 2018). He added that “[...] spontaneity has vanished and made way for careful and elaborate neurological manifestations [...]” and that he saw the pieces exalting “[...] the beauty of the woman who has a sense of humor, without transforming the appeal to sensuality into the main message” (CONAR, 2018). After a split decision in favor of Itaipava, the advisor who had a dissenting vote requested that her opinion be recorded, saying that she refuted the “excessive exploitation of the female figure and, more specifically, the figure of the female body as a central and unique appeal to sell beer that, by the way, is secondary in the advertisements” (CONAR, 2018).

It is worth noting CONAR's judgment on other campaigns that were the target of feminist criticism in 2015, as shown below. Skol's piece “I left ‘no’ at home”, created by F/Nazca S&S, went to trial in April 2015, after a complaint that it “[...] could imply encouraging abuse, embarrassment and intervening in freedom of behavior and the autonomy of decision-making, especially women” (CONAR, 2018). The excerpt below, extracted from the defense of the advertiser and the agency, illustrates the position of the AMBEV defense:

[...] the contours of the campaign in which the marketing piece was inserted and which proposes to the consumer to ‘say yes to invitations that come along’. The defense denied the interpretation given to the phrase, noting that there is no image on the poster of who could be vocalizing it, which, in itself, should already rule out any understanding that there would be an intention to deal with matters related to sex. On the contrary, the defense argues, the advertisement *reinforces people's power to choose what they want to do* (CONAR, 2018, our emphasis).

AMBEV's defense also informed that it opted for the voluntary withdrawal of the ad, which led to shelving the action, against the will of the rapporteur, who recommended changing it.

4.3 Repercussions and interactions from the media

Media reports help to understand other aspects of the dynamics of criticism in the period and their consequences. The number of reports dealing with sexism in beer advertisements increased from 2012 to 2015, reaching a peak of fourteen reports and declining in subsequent years (Figure 6). This indicates that 2015 was a key year of media repercussion. Attention focused on a few specific brands and campaigns. In addition to the pieces linked to Itaipava's “this is our Summer” campaign, cited in eight articles, there is great media attention to Skol brand campaigns, cited eleven times, with three referenced pieces referring to periods prior to the analysis.

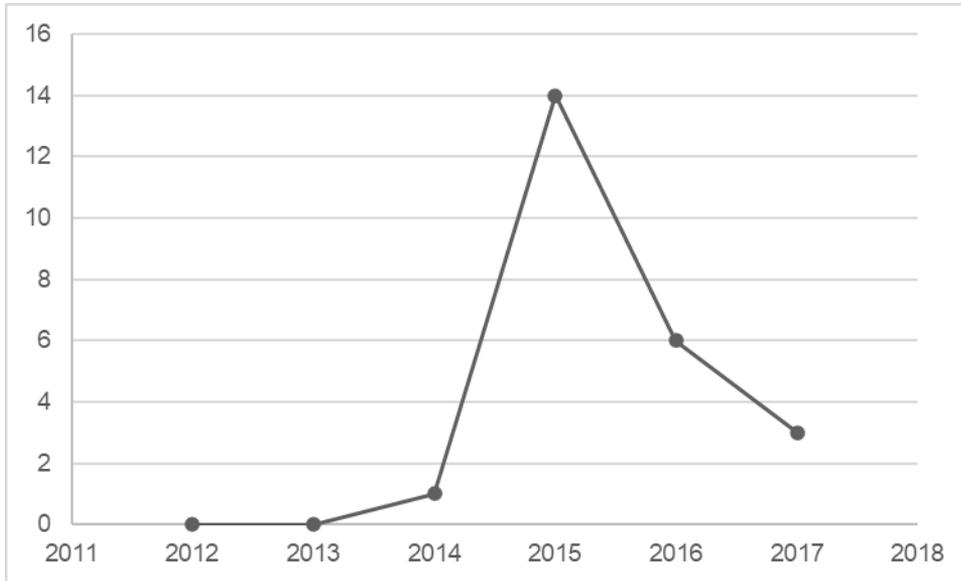


Figure 6. Annual distribution of articles in the corpus. Source: Authors' own work.

Eight reports cited the campaign “I left ‘no’ at home”, which had the greatest repercussion in the corpus, associated with the occurrence of a contentious episode in 2015. In it, a publicist and a journalist were outraged by a poster of a carnival campaign by Skol beer in the city of São Paulo that said “I left ‘no’ at home”. Taking into account the recurrence of women being harassed at Carnival, both of them interpreted the message as a stimulus to harassment. They also decided to change the poster by adding the phrase “And brought the ‘never’”, written directly on the piece on some tape, proposing an alternative for the message. By doing this, they posted photos disapproving of the advertisement on social media, leading to widespread repercussions. As a result, the AMBEV brewery retracted the same day announcing the removal of the posters. As also mentioned, the piece was also contested in CONAR.

Other news shows that, after the disputes, the company started to use feminist criticism as a basis for some advertising campaigns. In the Reposter campaign, aired in 2017, Skol invited six illustrators to recreate posters with sexist appeals from past campaigns, assuming changes in the company's advertising practices.

Analyzing media information also enables us to identify the influence of state actors in the analyzed transformations. In 2016, a judicial decision of the 7th Chamber of Public Law of the Court of Justice of São Paulo maintained a fine imposed by Procon-SP on AMBEV due to Skol's 2006 “Summer Muse” advertisement, for considering that the piece “objectifies” women, suggesting that they can be delivered and enjoyed by consumers as commodities (Agência Estado, 2016). The following year, Federal District deputy Erika Kokay (Workers' Party) sent a bill to the Chamber of Deputies defining a fine for commercials that objectify women. In it, advertisements from the brewing industry are mentioned as ways to encourage sexual violence against women (Agência Estado, 2017). In addition, in 2014, the ombudsman of the Secretariat of Policies for Women of the Presidency of the Republic filed an action with CONAR against the brand Antártica, from AMBEV, asking for a manifestation regarding the excessive appeal to female sensuality.

5 Discussions

From the approach of the SAFs, the analyzed market can be addressed as multiple interconnected fields and understand how the criticism of female representations transformed the advertising practices of the brewing industry. In Figure 7, these fields are schematically drafted. The size of the circles is proportional to the estimated power of the fields and their actors. The internal governance unit of the advertising field is represented by a dashed line. The structural relationships between the fields and the strategic actions developed are represented by arrows. In each arena, the actors or subfields and their positions are identified.

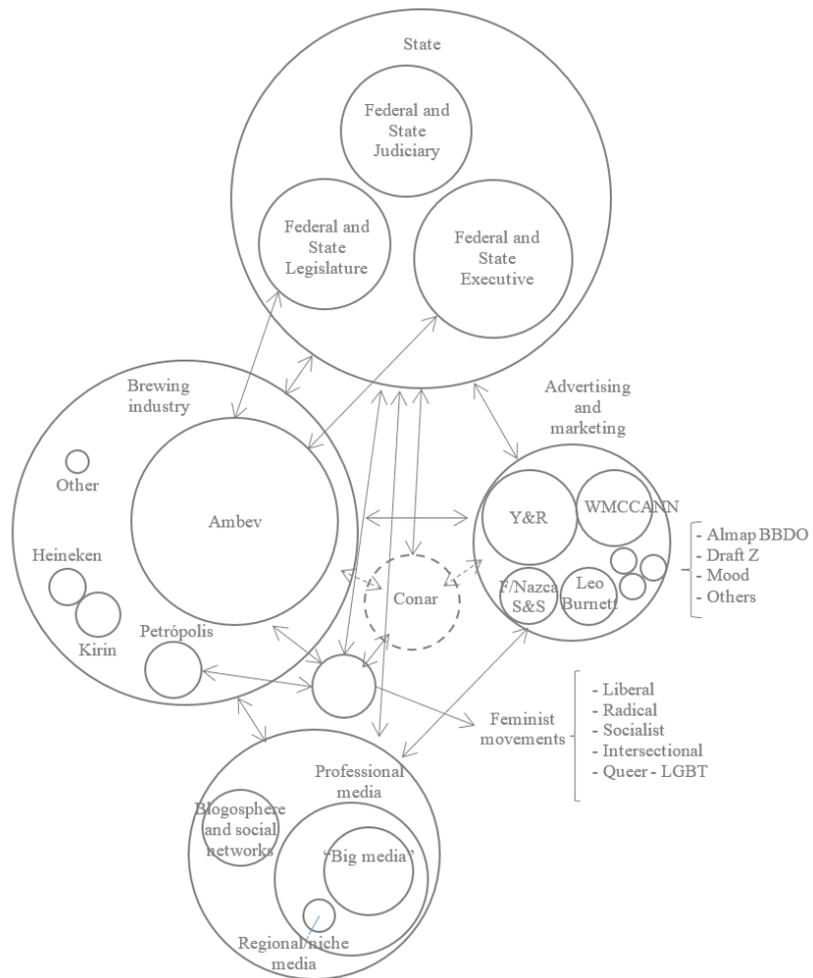


Figure 7. Interconnected strategic action fields in the analyzed disputes. Source: Authors' own work.

It is essential to take into account the power relations between the five fields involved. The two most powerful SAFs are the State and the brewing industry. State fields are also constitutive of the relevant relationships, having connections and regulating the legal and legitimate conduct of all other spaces. The advertising sector is close and dependent on the beverage industry, which is more powerful than it hires its companies to create campaigns and pieces. CONAR is a governance structure for

the advertising field, which encompasses both the beverage sector, which are major advertisers, and advertising agencies. The media is another important field involved, which is a significant vehicle for advertising in the brewing industry and which also has some connection to agencies.

Although the understanding of the internal structures of the fields is not the focus of this work, it is important to consider them. The brewing industry has a very hierarchical structure, in which AMBEV is the dominant company and Heineken and Grupo Petrópolis are the main challengers. The advertising sector has a less unequal structure. The two incumbent companies are Y&R and WMCCANN, followed by well-positioned companies, including F/Nazca S&S, Leo Brunett and a number of other small agencies. The field of feminist movements is fragmented, involving currents such as liberal, radical, socialist, intersectional and Queer-LGBTQIA+ (Martinez, 2019). The media is divided into professional media, comprising major communication groups (Globo, SBT, Record, Bandeirantes, Zero Hora, Estado) and regional or niche groups, and the blogosphere and social networks (Foletto, 2009). The data collected indicate the relevance of considering the influence of state actors, notably those of the executive, legislative and judicial powers at the federal and state levels. Although understanding the internal structures of the fields is not the focus of this work, it is important to consider them. The brewing industry has a very hierarchical structure, in which AMBEV is the dominant company and Heineken and Grupo Petrópolis are the main challengers. The advertising sector has a less unequal structure. The two incumbent companies are Y&R and WMCCANN, followed by well-positioned companies, including F/Nazca S&S, Leo Brunett and a number of other small agencies. The field of feminist movements is fragmented, involving currents such as liberal, radical, socialist, intersectional and Queer-LGBTQIA+ (Martinez, 2019). The media is divided into professional media, composed of large communication groups (Globo, SBT, Record, Bandeirantes, Zero Hora, Estado) and regional or niche groups, and the blogosphere and social networks (Foletto, 2009). The data collected indicate the relevance of considering the influence of state actors, notably those of the executive, legislative and judicial powers at the federal and state levels.

Understanding the structure of the relationships of these multiple SAFs provides the basis for the discussion of how the challenging field, which originated outside the broader economic arena, was able to promote the identified transformations. The content analysis indicates that the critical activity of the field in relation to advertising practices in the brewing industry gradually intensified between 2012 and 2015 (Figures 4 and 6). The repercussion of these criticisms was also amplified, reaching its peak in 2015 (Figure 6). Moreover, 2015 corresponds to the peak of this process and is also the year that marks an inflection towards less sexist female representations in advertisements (Figures 1, 2 and 3).

The way these criticisms were evaluated by the CONAR Ethics Council shows, as proposed by Fligstein & McAdam (2012) and by Muzio et al. (2016), conservative tendencies in the performance of this internal governance unit. The data indicate that the judges tended to have a more conservative stance in the judgments involving AMBEV, the incumbent of the beverage market, and less conservative when the judges were the challengers. The existing penalties were applied to Brasil Kirin, Grupo Petrópolis and Casa de Conti. AMBEV's protection trend was particularly evident in the case of the "I left 'no' at home" campaign. This does not necessarily indicate that AMBEV has coercive control over the Ethics Council. In the camps, control is above all a symbolic activity and the slightest tendency to punish the incumbent indicates the

legitimate advertising and aesthetic parameters compatible with the imaginary of the counselors about what “good advertising” is.

It is interesting to point out that as the campaign creation service is outsourced by most brewing companies, the structure of the agencies' field can influence advertising conventions and power relations in CONAR. However, the analysis of the associations between the brewing companies and the agencies indicates that it is the structure of the brewing field that was imposed on CONAR, which makes sense considering that the field of agencies is subordinated to it. The AMBEV pieces judged and not condemned by CONAR were developed by challenging agencies (F/Nazca S&S and AlmapBBDO). The pieces by the Petrópolis group, which suffered two suspensions at CONAR, were all developed in association with the incumbent agency, Y&R. Brasil Kirin's pieces were mostly developed with challenger Leo Burnett (one was developed with Mood, which is the name of the agency). Conti, which had two of its four pieces judged punished, acted in association with WMcCann (in one advertisement, in the others the agency was not informed to CONAR) and Proibida, which had one piece judged and archived, worked with DraftZ. Heineken did not have any pieces judged in the period.

The data also indicate that the conservative performance of the internal governance unit of the advertising sector was circumvented by critical actions against the dominant companies that achieved great repercussion. This finding confirms previous findings in the literature on the influence of governance units on markets, according to which persuasive tactics are a key mechanism for change (King, 2008, 2011). It can be noted, therefore, that the repercussion in the professional media and also in the blogosphere, spread quickly through social networks, has the potential to boost the protest capacity of critical movements.

As Fligstein & McAdam (2012) indicate, the heightened sense of crisis usually stems from episodes of containment and high-repercussion events in which movements act in an innovative way, breaking with established relationships. Contentious episodes involving Itaipava's “The Summer is ours” and Skol's “I left ‘no’ at home” campaigns bypassed CONAR's conservative tendencies to protect the company. These episodes stem from the aggressive use by these companies of practices that were already losing legitimacy. In the case of Cervejaria Petrópolis, this aggressiveness was prolonged, involving several controversial pieces starring a sexist stereotyped female character, which is in line with the strategies encouraged by her position in the SAFs.

In the case of AMBEV, the use of sexist representations in the analyzed period was more punctual, occurring during the 2015 carnival, but it generated great indignation, mobilizing a strong reaction that was also driven by the very strength of the brand and the power of the company. The mobilization process was driven by a strategic and innovative reaction on social networks that substantially amplified the negative repercussions. The impact of the action was not limited to CONAR, reaching the image of the dominant in the sector, which was forced to voluntarily withdraw and withdraw the campaign from circulation. This occurrence had an important symbolic effect, driving the verified change. This is because the incumbents establish the parameters for the functioning of the field as a whole and any transformation of their conduct tends to have repercussions throughout the space.

The data also indicated the occurrence of other events, associated with state action, which contributed to the changes observed, differently from what is predicted by Fligstein & McAdam (2012). The judgment of the legality of punishments carried out by

Procon-SP, indicating changes in the jurisprudence about sexism in advertisements and movements of actors from the executive and legislative powers, at the time dominated by actors considered to be positioned on the left in the political spectrum, also influenced the developments. These reactions reinforced the companies' sense of threat regarding the maintenance of their advertising practices, even in a sector where self-regulation was legitimized by the State.

Finally, the media data made it possible to verify another dynamic characteristic of the processes of cultural change in markets: the incorporation of feminist criticism as a propagandistic resource. In Skol's Reposter campaign, feminist activism is used for advertising purposes, which is in line with the views of Boltanski & Chiapello (2009) and King & Pearce (2010) that the capitalist market uses the moralities provided by its critics to renew.

6 Final considerations

In this article, the influence of criticism on female representations in advertising practices of the brewing industry in Brazil was analyzed from a perspective that takes the idea seriously that markets are historical, political and cultural constructions. Based on the SAF approach, it was possible to construct our research object as a set of interconnected economic and non-economic fields and systematically investigate the influence of social movements in the dynamics of changing advertising practices.

The results indicate that feminist criticisms were crucial in transforming advertising conventions in the brewing sector in the analyzed period. As predicted by previous studies, these transformations were conditioned by the repercussion generated by these criticisms and by their ability to mobilize supporters not directly involved in the disputes in order to affect the image of the most powerful companies and the legitimacy of sexist propaganda practices. Our analysis indicated that CONAR, considered as the internal governance unit of the advertising field in Brazil, tended to channel criticism and absorb it conservatively, favoring the interests of the dominant companies in the field. Directing criticism towards the channels established by the Council also tends to reduce the repercussion of criticism and contentious episodes, considered the crucial mechanism for changing markets through movements.

From a conceptual point of view, the research brought two main contributions. First, it demonstrates how the still little explored issue of integration between AFSs is important for a more accurate analysis of the social dynamics of markets. The emphasis on this interconnection contributed to integrating findings from the social movement theory in the SAF approach. The second contribution refers to the interactions between social movements and internal governance units, with little focus on studies in the area. It was found that the units can channel the criticism of social movements and structure their absorption in order to benefit the incumbents. The "shielding" of sectoral elites promoted by these associations can be circumvented based on innovative and strategic actions by movements that generate wide repercussions.

The research also makes significant contributions to the practices of both managers and social activists. The conventional training of administrators is strongly biased by rationalist, functionalist and managerial theories that underestimate the importance of culture and history in the configuration of markets. The approach developed here contributes to combating these biases and sensitizing managers to better understand and deal with the political dynamics of markets, especially with social movements that

exert increasing influence on the performance of companies. The contribution for activists stems from the detailed, theoretically grounded and empirically informed study of a case of relative success, which can bring valuable lessons and influence strategies to be adopted in promoting social change.

The diversity of actors and social spaces involved in the processes of institutional transformation of markets and the complexity of their strategic interaction implied difficulties. It was not possible in this work to understand in more detail the internal relationships of the fields and organizations involved, as well as the performance of their managers, which can be done in future studies. Research focusing on social relations in large companies and advertising agencies in the critical year of 2015 and on the role of decision makers would be particularly relevant to deepen the understanding of the case.

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