

The notion of device and the framework of the press in the 19th century

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Abstract

19th century Brazilian periodicals were vastly different from today's informative newspapers. Articles laden with vitriolic language, diminutive headings, scant editorial expedients and a mixture of information and opinion are some of the characteristics of the 19th century press, characteristics that challenge the researcher to apprehend the formal framework of that journalistic discourse. We have aimed at analyzing elements such as the name, headings and titles of the newspaper *O Povo* (1838-1840), employing the category of *device* as proposed by Mouillaud (2002). Beyond the large blocks of text there is a complex network of meanings, traces of a journalistic practice different from that held by modern newspapers.

Keywords: History of the Press. Device. Communication.

Introduction

Contemporary researchers who venture to use as their source 19th century newspapers will be challenged, even before they can answer any of the questions posed by their research, to understand the framework of that type of journalistic discourse. Lengthy and monotonous type areas, vitriolic or ro-

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manced prose, diminutive headings, scant editorial expedients and a mixture of information and opinion seem strange to the reader accustomed to the modern standards of Journalism. Mouillaud attributes this change to the “invention of information”: “The writing of facts has fragmented the discourse of the press into short and heterogeneous sequences whose unity no longer originates from the internal order of the discourse, but from the external order of the layout” (2002, p.32). In the case of the 19th century press, the challenge arises to establish theoretical frameworks in order to analyze texts that will not fit into the categories of Journalism as we know it today.

Thus, we believe that, in order to approach the 19th century periodicals – especially those published during the first half of the century – it becomes necessary that a dialogue be established, not only with the text itself, but also with the specifics of the *device*, in an attempt to understand the role of the latter in the organization of the senses (MOUILLAUD, 2002). In his paper, we aim at presenting a methodological proposal, by means of an exercise performed with the newspaper *O Povo*, which was published between 1838 and 1840. This publication was placed within the context of the War of the Farrapos, or Ragamuffin War (1835-1845), one of the provincial uprisings which characterized the Brazilian regency period. For this purpose, we have analyzed elements such as the name of the newspaper, its headings, titles and footnotes, in order to approach a complex network of meanings which framed the discourse of the Brazilian 19th century press.

O Povo and the regency period

O Povo was the first official periodical of the Rio-Grandense Republic, the government that ruled over part of the Province of São Pedro do Rio Grande do Sul between September 11, 1836, and March 1st, 1845, during the War of the Farrapos. The regency period began after the abdication of Pedro I of Brazil, on April 7, 1831. The abdication of the emperor who had proclaimed the independence of Brazil nine years before, on September 7, 1822,

was an extreme act, resulting from a series of factors. Among these were the rising inflation and the increase in the cost of living, which ended up by placing the elites, the middle class and the general population on the same side.

After the abdication, there was division of interests as to how to continue the political process in Brazil: “There were, basically, three answers [to the revolution]: denial (absolutists or ultra-monarchists), conclusion and closure (conservative branch of liberalists) and continuation (revolutionary branch of liberalists)” (MOREL, 2003, p.21). Three parties struggled over power: the Restoration Party (or Caramuru) which advocated the return of D. Pedro I and the establishment of an absolute monarchy; the Liberal Moderated Party (Chimango), which represented the landed gentry and advocated a slavery-based monarchy, that is, the moderated liberalism of the elites; and the Radical Liberal Party (Jurujubas or Farroupilhas), which vehemently advocated total freedom for the provinces.

The confrontation between *farrapos* and legalist took place not only on the battlefield, but also on the pages of the newspapers. Although in its early stages – the first newspaper published in the province, The *Diário de Porto Alegre*, was founded in 1827 – the Southern Brazilian press also depicted the great political turmoil of the Brazilian regency period: “The periodical publications helped both sides of the conflict, since both *farroupilhas* and legalists started a series of periodicals through which they defended their own ideas and attacked each other” (ALVES, 2000, p.19).

O Povo was the longest-living official periodical of the Rio-Grandense Republic. It began to be published in the city of Piratini and reached 160 issues. The necessary printing equipment was purchased by the Minister of Finance, Domingos José de Almeida, with the profits from the sale of 17 slaves (HARTMANN, 2002). The first writer for *O Povo* was Luiz Rossetti, an Italian refugee and adherent of the Young Italy movement, the goal of which was to create a united Italian republic. According to Riopardense de Macedo (1994), Rossetti helped to create “good quality republican

propaganda, already presenting critical views of the bourgeoisie's particular processes" (p.7).

In addition to the political, economic and military struggle, a symbolic fight began, which caused grandiose gestures and passions that impacted the daily life of the Southern society, press included, in several ways.

O Povo has been used as a source for the historical study of the War of the Farrapos because, as a political, literary and ministerial diary of the Rio-Grandense Republic, it has recorded on its pages a wealth of information, such as decrees, official letters and manifestos of the time. In addition to the newspaper's informative aspect and its inflamed political stance, a contemporary reading of the *O Povo* allows us to capture a certain feeling of that era. This fact is related to the renewed importance of the press as an interactive point of reference within the complexity of a context. The press begins "to be regarded as a documentary source (in as much as it enunciates discourses and expressions from protagonists) and also as a historical agent that intervenes in the processes and episodes, instead of being a mere 'reflection' of them" (MOREL; BARROS, 2003, p.9).

Modes of reading the 19th century press

Research renews the *mode of reading* the periodicals and their relations with the context. The present study of those first Brazilian newspapers, founded at the time of the arrival of the Royal Family to Brazil in 1808, takes place from a cultural point of view, useful to both the fields of Communication and History, in that such study reevaluates the object as a source of the memories of a *lapsed time* (PESAVENTO, 2008), "putting forward different views of the same fact" and coming forth "as a historical agent which intervenes in the processes and episodes, being no longer simply an ingredient of the fact" (NEVES, 2006, p.10).

Marialva Barbosa, commenting on the relation between means of Communication and history, points to an analytical axis which encompasses, within a historical perspective, the internal and

external dimensions of the Communicational process, considering “the processual dimension of history and Communication as a system within which the content, the producer of the messages and the way with which the public understands the signals sent by the media gain importance” (BARBOSA, 2007, p.16). According to this view, the discourse of the 19th century press can be seen as a “universe de possibilities” (p.15).

Riopardense de Macedo understood and pointed out this systemic universe in his study of the *Farroupilha* press:

It is easy to understand that the press, even the official press as an agency bound to the government, also provides information of a non-administrative character. And it is understood that the periodical, even as property of a single individual or oligarchic group, is enveloped in its opinions, which are contrary to those of other periodicals; besides, because of the wealth of information that it is compelled to provide, the periodical cannot escape the prevailing general atmosphere of a an era.

That happens because the periodical truly lives in the atmosphere and depicts, even unwillingly, the heat of the events, of the several facts which intersect and relate to each other within a *system* of information (MACEDO, 1994, p.23-24, author's italics).

Thus, the emphasis on underdevelopment, censorship and officialism as explanatory factors for the early days of the press “does not appear to be enough to explain the complexity and understand the characteristics of said press, which was born within a changing society, during the downfall of absolutism” (MOREL, 2008, p.1). Therefore we understand that the birth of the Brazilian periodicals happened in a moment of social, political and economic agitation, which had as its initial drive the arrival of the Portuguese Royal Family to Brazil. From then on, newspapers, even the ones owned by governments or admitted representatives of political ideals, were always interwoven into the circulation of ideas and into the reality of everyday life through opinion pieces, news, *fait divers*, poetry and advertising. The *incendiary papers*¹

¹ Reference to the early printed or handwritten manifestations that, since the 18th century had been causing commotion and gossip in French urban life, presenting a notion of “public opinion”, in the view of historian Arlette Farge (MOREL, 2003, p.12).

were constantly fed by the “everyday extraordinariness” (MOREL, 2008, p.1), and also by the great social transformations, such as the independence movement or, later on, the conflict between the empire and the republican movements.

According to Rüdiger (1998), doctrine and opinion were predominant in the Brazilian press up until the 1930s, which delayed, to that date, the elaboration of a statute suitable to newspapers and newspapermen. They only became politically autonomous by joining the capitalist process, that is, only when the newspapers became truly profit-oriented corporations. Thus, the study of 19th century newspapers poses epistemological and methodological challenges, connected to the materiality and organization of printed contents. Among these challenges there is the question of how to define a theoretical framework within which to analyze texts written before the consolidation of Communication as a scientific discipline and which, roughly speaking will not fit into the categories of Journalism as we understand it today?

Luca (2008) mentions, as an example of those difficulties, her examination of facsimile issues of *Correio Braziliense*, a newspaper founded by Hipólito José da Costa in 1808:

The modern reader, accustomed to the modern daily newspapers, may be surprised by the format closer to that of a book, having as many as 150 pages, by the length of the articles, spanning several issues and by the internal division of each issue, which might include the following sections: politics; commerce and arts; literature and science; variety and letters to the editor. There is even doubt as to the best way to identify the *Correio*, since many would consider more appropriate to call it a magazine (LUCA, 2008, p.131).

In view of this unconventionality, we understand the relevance of the exercise proposed by this paper: creating tension between the categories related to the materiality and organization of the contents of the newspaper *O Povo*. Thus, it is important, when analyzing a periodical published in the first half of the 19th century, to investigate elements which can contribute to make sense of it, in order to define the place occupied by the newspaper

during its historical period, and also to relativize it in relation to the questions asked by the researcher's from his or her standpoint.

O Povo and its device

Mouillaud (2002) attributes an essential role to the frameworks of the journalistic discourse. The *device* contributes to the formation of meanings, because it is useful to “add some order to the chaos of the world [...] and allow the reader to recognize the same newspaper, from one issue to another” (MOUILLAUD, 2002, p.23). Therefore, it refuses the dichotomy of form *versus* content.

To the author, that notion accomplishes more than a simple description of the newspaper's support, configuring it as *preparation for meaning*. Mouillaud sees a dynamic relationship between the text and the *device*: they generate and establish themselves at the same time, so that the *device* configures a “*matrix* which imposes its forms on the text” (2002, p.35, author's italics).

In this context, the media are only one end of a long process of transformation of information, which go from a diffused state to homogeneous units:

The newspaper – and the media as whole – is not, however, standing face to face with the chaos of the world. It stands at the end of a long chain of transformations which provide it [...] with an already tamed reality. The newspaper is another operator among a set of socio-symbolic operators, being apparently only the last one: because the meaning it conveys to the readers. The latter, in turn, rearrange it according to their own frame of mind and put it again into circulation within the cultural environment. [...] Information is not the conveyance of a fact, but an unbroken cycle of transformations (MOUILLAUD, 2002, p.51).

Thus, the production chain on which the mediatic information is based turns the experience and information one has about it to less than perfect reflections of each other. Mouillaud (2002, p.54), defines social reality “as a product of a consensus supported by the set of interactions and negotiations between social partners”. The mediatic discourse is a part of this set of interactions e negotiations, framing fragments according to its model of speech,

quotations, titles, images and other elements of the journalistic deontology, which has not been the same throughout the years.

In order to be printed on the pages of a newspaper, the experiences are removed from their totality and undergo a framing process. According to Mouillaud (2002, p.61), “the experience cannot be reproduced. It is connected to a place, appoint in space and a moment in time”. This brings us back to the phenomenological notion of *ground zero*, according to which the body represents coordinates that allow the individuals to navigate in the world and define the types of knowledge that are within their reach, or potentially within their reach, and also the contact with the legacy of their past and the prospects of their future (CORREIA, 2005). There is no way to reproduce all those factors in the mediatic discourse, as they are in the experience. On a newspaper’s page, the event is fragmented into multiple facets, each one of which corresponding to the capture of a single one of its dimensions: “The disposition on the page is the location-support of a rhetoric of discourse” (MOUILLAUD, 2002, p.62-63).

The author focuses on the media production set within a contemporary context and poses the question of the transformation of information through implicit and explicit agreements between networks. In the case of *O Povo*, a periodical that was first published in the first half of the 19th century, the structure that fostered the transformation of information is not equal to the contemporary logic of the networks but, for the purpose of generation and establishment of *devices*, it is possible to set analogous parameters that may account for the reality of *O Povo*.

Regarding the name of the newspaper, the author affirms that it is a part of the implicit *pact* entered by the reader and the publication, establishing its public reading, as opposed to its private reading, which happens with every issue. Considering Mouillaud’s contemporary reference to newspaper reading, the author regards each issue as an autonomous unit. It is not the case of *O Povo*: one of its recurrent practices was the use of the expression “Continuar-se-há” (To be Continued) at the end of the articles, indicating that they would continue on the next issue. It was a

part of the ways of doing this newspaper the possibility that a same article could span two, three or even four issues, as it was the case, for instance, of the famous 1838 Manifesto (published in three parts), authored by the President of the Rio-Grandense Republic, Bento Gonçalves da Silva, and also of the transcript of the trial of the defendant Francisco Sabino Alves da Rocha Vieira for his participation in the uprising known as Sabinada, in the state of Bahia, which spanned issues 9, 11, 12 and 13 (in the latter, there are editorial comments about the trial). The linearity and contiguity between issues reflect more than the mere organization of contents, encompassing a notion of historical awareness. In issue 67, that becomes clear in the following statement:

As of today, the Bulletins of Campaign operations will be given in this Newspaper and will only be published individually when demanded by the subject matter or the circumstances; not only for the sake of saving paper and services, but also in the interest of *the knowledge of our Military History, as it is easier to keep a newspaper collection than individual detached bulletins*. We shall give to the public, therefore, said Bulletins, beginning with the 1st Bulletin in Piratini (OFÍCIOS, 18/5/1839, p.2, our italics).

Thus, besides the assumed linearity in reading, the newspaper also aimed at historical perennality, proving itself aware of its documental role in a moment of conflict and interested in offering conditions for the preservation of the collection. The collection, named *O Povo*, establishes a reference that is part of the interplay of hypotheses between the subjects of speech, as remarked by Charaudeau (2008). The name of the publication, always followed by the subtitle “Political, Literary and Ministerial Newspaper of the Rio-Grandense Republic” complements the reading of all statements present in its discourse, revealing the liberal identity that *O Povo* has made known to both its contemporaries and successors, such as the numerous researchers who turn to its pages in an attempt to better understand the ideological foundations of the republican movement in the state of Rio Grande do Sul:

A double relationship is then established, which refers to the double meaning of the newspaper: its name is a title that defines all its statements and

identifies them, the same way a presupposition would. For their part, the statements fill a name which would become, without them, an empty reference (MOUILLAUD, 2002, p.92).

The name *O Povo* has caused problems of interpretation due to the difficulty in defining who was part of the “people” to whom and about whom talked the republicans of Rio Grande do Sul. Both on the occasion of the newspaper’s foundation and in the modern historians’ interpretation, that definition stirred controversy. The participation of Luiz Rossetti as a writer accounted for the insertion of some of the ideas of the Young Italy movement, deemed too advanced for the liberal *farroupilhas*, and soon set aside. *Prospecto*, the newspaper’s opening article, stated that one of the main goals of the publication was “to disseminate among the People essentially *democratic doctrines*” (PROSPECTO, 1/9/1838, p.1, our italics). According to the Young Italy movement, the lower classes were included in the definition of *people*. According to the liberal conception of the republican government “only a well-endowed elite was capable of ruling” (FLORES, 1978, p.59). Simultaneously, the Republic needed to defend itself from the accusations of lack of democracy in its government. After all, the excessive centralization was one of the main criticisms the people of Rio Grande do Sul had against the Empire. The democratic varnish of Young Italy seemed a good way to attenuate, at least at the level of discourse and at an early stage, the centralization of decisions practiced by the revolutionaries: “To get from Tyranny to Freedom, one needs must take measures which are incompatible with regular and permanent Freedom” states an excerpt translated directly from the publication *Young Italy*. Later on, it is stated that: “all those demands [of the Revolution] cannot be met in any other way than by concentrating the will of many into the will of very few, or a single one” (PROSPECTO, 1/9/1838, p.1). In a letter to his friend Giovanni Batista Cunneo, where he comments on the backstage moves before the publication of the first issue of *O Povo*, Rossetti writes: “They do not want it even mentioned the notion of a dictatorship, since they need to support themselves on dictatorial decrees” (BONES, 1996, p.104).

It was precisely the question of the importance given to the *people* that precipitated the departure of Rossetti. The straw that broke the camel's back was a fight Rossetti had with the proof-reader who, considering the phrase "the people is as invincible, eternal and omnipotent as God" to be heretical, altered it to "The people is invincible and the day is not far when they will call you to account for your crimes" (BONES, 1996, p.108). In the letter where he tends his resignation to Domingos José de Almeida, Rossetti argues that the ignorance and pedantry of the cadet responsible for the proofreading created a religious interpretation of his "political and poetic phraseology, used by every writer in the world and not at all religious" (ROSSETTI apud BONES, 1996, p.109).

In short, Rossetti's view of the *people* was not the one held by the republican leadership in Rio Grande do Sul, as Flores states:

Although the newspaper *O Povo* did transcribe articles from *Young Italy*, this does not mean, as wrongly interpreted by many writers, that the Rio-Grandense Republic had adopted, wholly or partly, Mazzini's democratic doctrines, for two fundamental reasons: The liberals wanted a federal system and did not want popular participation in the government (FLORES, 1978, p.63).

From this example we conclude that the title, in the case of *O Povo*, establishes a relationship of construction of meaning with the other articles in the newspaper; however, it is necessary that this element should be related to the context of the time to be understood properly. We can affirm that the *knowledge* of the notion of *people* shared socially among the *farrapos* was different from the one shared by Rossetti and the Young Italy movement.

According to Mouillaud (2002), the sort of digression about the meaning of the newspaper's name, as it happened to *O Povo*, only makes sense within this type of context, when "the name made the transition between a meaning, which it represented, and statements, which it named" (MOUILLAUD, 2002, p.94). Out of this context, the title becomes a given name and goes further, becomes the designation of a "set of connotations which condensed themselves under a name during the course of their

history” (MOUILLAUD, 2002, p.94). *O Povo*, as many other newspapers of that period of time, did not live long enough as a publication to give impulse to that semantic transformation.

Besides the title, other fixed elements of the header accompanied the newspaper during the whole period of its publication, with small but meaningful variations. Below the name, the subtitle “Political, Literary and Ministerial Newspaper of the Rio-Grandense Republic” brought other elements to the *contract* entered with the reader: it was an official publication of political nature and would feature contents from other works and authors. It seems to us that the periodical’s *literary* characteristic does not relate only to the casual publication of poems in honor of the new homeland, but also to the doctrinal goal which became explicit since the publication of the first issue and appeared clearly in Rossetti’s letters to Cuneo, where the writer showed his dissatisfaction by stating that “the newspaper strayed from its original course, which was to be more doctrinal and less occupied with local affairs” (BONES, 1996, p.107). In the *Prospecto*, the dissemination of doctrines was one of the main objectives, as we have said. Besides that, Rossetti states the role of the journalist, “so that he can be equal to his mission and to our time, must be essentially the one of an *Educator*” (PROSPECTO, 1/9/1838, p.2), which reinforces the doctrinal perspective and the belief, at least on Rossetti’s part, that the people needed to be educated in order for the revolution to prosper.

Other fixed elements in the newspaper cover were two inscriptions side by side, one of practical and another of ideological nature. On the left, the information: “This periodical is a property of the government. It is published on Wednesdays and Saturdays, every week. It is sold in the city of Piratiniat the Casa do Redator (Writer’s House), where subscriptions are also available at 4\$000 silver réis per semester, to be paid in advance. Separate issues at 80 réis”. The first phrase clarifies the origin of the ministerial content of the newspaper and engages the reader even more with the fact that the whole publication is subordinated to the Government of the Rio-Grandense Republic. Besides, it explains the periodicity,

the price and the ways to purchase the newspaper. Important information, given how difficult it was the distribution of printed material at the time (*O Povo* itself has published official letters and decrees, describing attempts at organizing the placements and the beginning of the organization of the new Republic's Postal Service.

On the right side, a highlighted motto, translated from *Young Italy*: "The power that steers the revolution must prepare the Citizens' spirits for the feelings of fraternity, modesty, equality and passionate and selfless love for the Homeland". Once more are revealed the connections between the newspaper and the ideological influences of Rossetti, and also the role of the newspaper the Government's Communication instrument to guide "the citizens' spirits". In this excerpt one can read the influence of the French Revolution in the revolutionary movement, through the evocation of the words "equality" and "fraternity", in addition to the emphasis placed on the importance of the Homeland in the newspaper's discourse, a subject of continuous discussion which reveals an ambivalence through the difficulty, on the part of the Rio Grande do Sul republicans, in defining the rest of the Brazilians as enemies or otherwise. Below the inscriptions there is information about place, printing house and year ("Piratini, Printing Office of the Rio-Grandense Republic; Year 1838"). Issue number, place, date and volume are displayed at the top of the page, above the name.

The header underwent some changes through the course of time. When Caçapava became the capital city, the motto "Liberty, Equality, Humanity", which up to the present is a part of the coat of arms of the State of Rio Grande do Sul, became a permanent feature on the cover, beginning with the issue #46, published on March 6, 1839. Besides that the inscription on the left column was changed from "This periodical is a property of the Government" to "This periodical is a property of the Republican Printing Office". Among the bibliographic references we have examined, we could not find any information about that modification, and not even the newspaper itself offers an explanation of the fact. The change of capital city, in addition to suspending the publication of the newspaper for about a month, seems to have affected the

conditions of production, since the rapid increase in publication of transcriptions from other newspapers became noticeable, and so did the more exalted tone of the criticism against the Empire. Soon after the change to Caçapava, Rossetti decided to resign his position as director of the periodical. In April, 1839, he had already moved to the city of Camaquã and joined the Navy for a second time (MACEDO, 1990).

The most radical change underwent by the header happened towards the end of the newspaper's trajectory, in issue #155 (the complete collection comprises 160 issues). The subtitle became only "Ministerial Newspaper" and the information on the left column (ownership, subscription price, etc) was removed.

Mouillaud (2002) also examines the headlines. In Brazilian newspapers during the first half of the 19th century this element appears in the form of what the author calls a *title-subject*, the apex of a hierarchic structure:

Title-subjects are nouns without a determiner, devoid of predicate. Approached from a linguistic standpoint, they are neither phrases nor the result of the transformation of a subjacent phrase. Their status is comparable to the objects of a catalogue or to the individual pieces of a repertoire (MOUILLAUD, 2002, p.103).

This hierarchy hardly underwent any developments in the newspapers of the first half of the 19th. The titles generally indicated only the location, date, or type of text that would ensue. Some examples are: *Official Letter, Letters to the Editor, Advertisement, Notification, Decree, and Domestic, Foreign (Ofício, Correspondência, Anúncio, Decreto, Interior, and Exterior)*. It is worth noting that the latter two were used by *O Povo* as a strategy to affirm the sovereignty and the independence of the newly created Nation. Below the title *Foreign* was displayed the information about events occurred in Rio de Janeiro, Bahia, Pará and also in the villages of the Province of Saint Peter (Província de São Pedro) which remained loyal to the Empire, such as Porto Alegre, São José do Norte and Rio Grande. There was a necessity, due to the situation in which the Rio-Grandense Republic

found itself at the time, to mark emphatically its territory, even if in a symbolic field.

Mouillaud (2002) states that, from an informational standpoint, the *titles-subjects* are empty. They hark back to a referent which is considered, a priori, to be known to the reader. The *titles-subjects* are part of the horizon of expectations created by the subjects of the speech, and also part of the meanings shared by the subjects. They guide the reader towards a category to which the ensuing meanings belong, but they do not provide any information to guide the reading itself. Thus, for both the reader of the time and the researcher who reads *O Povo* more than 170 after it was written, it is not possible to gain access to basic information without reading further into the text. Besides that, in reading the text, it is important to seek vestiges of the voice which commands the word because, contrarily to the generalizations about the 19th century press, the explicit political bias of these newspapers did not prevent the inclusion of dissenting, unofficial voices in its pages.

About the system of the citations, Mouillaud (2002, p.117), states that:

The relationship between the newspaper's speech and other speeches has changed along with the change in role and structure of the press. Until the end of the 19th century the tribune newspaper was to Clémenceau or Jaurès, to Rochefort or Vallès, a mouthpiece. It provided the politicians with a vehicle to their speeches (in the ordinary sense of the word) which went beyond the parliamentary. [...] The newspaper imitated an anthropomorphic voice.

Here the author validates the expression *extended tribunes*, used in reference to the newspapers of the first half of the 19th century by Benjamin Constant (BAHIA, 1990, p.36). He states that, with the development of the *reflection-press* (as in reflection of events) and the *echo-press* (of voices other than its own), citations multiplied and, in many cases, distanced themselves from the source of the statements, forming an amalgam of agency dis-patches, specialized sources, and articles signed by columnists. The manner in which those voices are used is a part of the publication's

strategy, and the frontiers between them are not clearly defined in many cases: “The newspaper [...] commands the effect it imparts to the voices reproduced by it. [...] The citation places face to face different universes of discourse, which must be articulated within a single enunciation, that of the speaker who reproduces the statement of another speaker” (MOUILLAUD, 2002, p.121-122).

In a dialogical scheme, for instance, the separation between subjects is clear. However, when the newspaper appropriates citations from several sources and includes them in a single discourse, a transformation occurs, of the formal status of the statements. In *O Povo*, the tendency is to emphasize the separation of statements. The publication of letters, orders of the day, bulletins and excerpts from other newspapers is marked by several alternating elements. There is the use of quotation marks, introductory phrases, signatures, and the name of the source newspaper in brackets. Even the private letters intercepted by the police or the Army (mail theft was a common practice), indicate their illicit source. The commentaries of the writers of *OPovo* are separated by a new paragraph, or by a line, and are rarely signed. In this sense, it is interesting to note the use of footnotes, indicated by asterisks (*) or by alphabetical sequences (a, b, c, d). The publication of a letter by Antonio Elizario de Miranda e Brito exemplifies these expedients:

Letters from the Hero of the Red Clay²(Herói do Barro Vermelho) intercepted by the police of the State of Rio Grande do Sul

Mr. Luiz Pereira Leal. I have received your letter dated from November a few days ago, and I thank you, Good Sir for, your good offices as an honorable man (a) and loyal Legalist. I must ask you to press Mr. Pedro Moreira into accepting the commission, so that we may know anything of interest. I had not the opportunity to speak to Mrs. Adelaide Javita da Penha, for I had already travelled to Porto Alegre when she arrived to Rio Grande; let the lady return bearing whatever she needs to take back to her home, for I have the utmost respect and affection for. Dr. Nicolau Penha.

Good Sir, be as kind as letting me hear the news about you, for I am your Attentive Admirer and Humble Servant. Antonio Eliziário de Miranda e Brito. Porto Alegre, February 13, 1839 (VARIEDADES, 1/5/1839, p.4).

² *Hero of the Red Clay (Herói do barro vermelho)* was a humorous nickname given by the republicans to the President of the Province of Rio Grande do Sul, referring to an important battle lost by the imperial troops in the city of Rio Pardo.

The footnote below, indicated by the letter “a”, contains the comments of the Rio Grande do Sul republicans about the letter:

(a) Not all of our Readers will know that the renowned Luiz Pereira Leal and the Scoundrel commonly known as Luiz Carolina are the same person. Indeed, we understand very well how a General, albeit a General of the Red Clay, can, without degrading himself, employ as a Spy the first rascal on whom he happens to put his hands, and who seems to him the most suitable to the performance of such an infamous office. But we are incapable of understanding how a self-styled Imperial President, a general of the Empire, or any man of good standing, aware of his own dignity and possessor of a modicum of honor can debase himself to the point of writing to and treating familiarly and friendly the Carolina Thief, notorious and recognized member of the profession who has been demonstrating his carefulness and dexterity in the falsification of Paper Money, a line of work in which he excels. We must confess that the Legal caitiffs are consistent in their own principles, because by living on extortion, theft and plunder of Public Monies, and by sacrificing all considerations to this vile interest have, of necessity, to associate and bind themselves to the most notorious Thieves and Gentlemen brigands, to better achieve their ends; that is how far they are from finding it repulsive to be in league with every type of scoundrels and blackguards (VARIEDADES, 1/5/1839, p.4).

In this case an interesting phenomenon should be noted. The speech of the source (here, the letter by Elizeario de Miranda e Brito) takes on features that are more transparent than the text of the newspaper itself. We notice that Elizeario’s letter, in itself, does not mention espionage, secret operations or falsifications. The way the newspapers interprets the letter does not reveal the quotes which could attest the serious accusations it makes. Whether to adhere to this interpretation seems to be a matter of political bias or reader’s option: “The reminder of the speaker’s status leaves in doubt the legitimacy of his or her discourse”, states Mouillaud (2002, p.132). Thus, the newspaper’s discourse does not assume a neutral character; instead, it is result of the assimilation of other references, which are not explicit in the discourse itself.

In the exercise presented in this paper, we have attempted to demonstrate the importance of understanding the meanings which arise from the analysis of a 19th century periodical from the

perspective of its *device*. Beyond the large blocks of text there is a complex network of meanings, traces of a journalistic practice different from that held by modern informative newspapers. Finally, we hope to make a methodological contribution to a broader view of the 19th century newspapers.

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