Analysis of South American, European and Asian online news media coverage of indigenous peoples affected by the Belo Monte dam

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Abstract

With the first repercussions of the construction of the Belo Monte hydroelectric dam, indigenous peoples started a continuous claim making against the project. The press gave attention to both the progress of the plant's construction and the manifestations of the Brazilian indigenous peoples in refusal of the plant. This research aimed to investigate the visibility and representation of these peoples on news websites of greater circulation in Brazil and 12 other countries. The sample consisted of 54 newspaper articles published between 2005 and 2017. Data were analyzed through Bardin's Content Analysis (1977) and the results revealed that indigenous peoples are described as "invaders" and "less able" in the newspapers. Foreign newspapers gave more voice to indigenous peoples, for them to express their stance against the Belo Monte dam project, than Brazilian newspapers, while the latter prioritized the government's discourse and political interests.

Keywords: Social representations. Brazilian Amazon. Content analysis. Belo Monte. Indigenous peoples.

Introduction

According to the last census conducted by the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE, 2010), the indigenous population of Brazil numbered approximately 817 thousand people. Also, according to this census, 63.8% of this population was in rural areas,

36.2% in urban areas, distributed in 698 demarcated lands, of which 470 were regularized and recognized by the State (RICARDO *et al.*, 2015). Far beyond being housing areas, Indigenous Lands (IL) "represent the maintenance of the traditions and identities of the peoples living in them" (DOURADO *et al.*, 2017, p. 231).

Before the arrival of colonizers, just over 1500 years ago, the Amazon was already occupied by indigenous peoples (LIMA-FILHO, 2015). Amid the biodiversity of this region, these people continue to build a lifestyle and traditions based on the use of natural resources to meet their food, health and socialization needs (SCHWARTZMAN *et al.*, 2013). On the other hand, in large cities, there is a "rapid growth of the global demand for new energy sources and an ever-decreasing number of sites on the planet with the potential to provide them" (FRANCO; FEITOSA, 2013, p. 94).

Lima-Filho (2015) recalls that, in the past, to return their own lands, indigenous peoples fought with bows and arrows against the colonizers, but nowadays, they resist loggers, prospectors and dangerous dam builders. Invasions by large hydroelectric projects have become latent threats to peoples (CARNEIRO FILHO; SOUZA, 2009, VERDUM, 2012).

In this sense, there is the case of a dam designed to be the third largest in the world, the Belo Monte hydroelectric plant, which occupies part of the areas of Paquiçamba IL and Arara da Volta Grande IL, in the municipality of Vitória do Xingu, Altamira microregion, in the state of Pará (BERMANN, 2012).

According to Stropper (2014), the area where the hydroelectric plant is located has a rich fauna and flora, and is populated by riverside dwellers, farmers and fishermen. However, these actors are rarely consulted about the decisions made regarding the land they inhabit (SANTOS *et al.*, 2012).

The press, indigenous peoples and Belo Monte

In the 1970s, indigenous peoples were already demonstrating their disapproval of the Belo Monte plant, at that time called Usina Kararaô, a name alluding to the indigenous cry of the Kayapó people (FEARNSIDE, 2015). During this period, Hydroelectric Inventory Studies of the Xingu River Basin began, published in the 1987/2010 National Plan of Electric Energy (BRASIL). These studies, supported by the government of José Sarney, stressed that "the exploitation of the Xingu River will possibly represent the largest national project at the end of this century and the beginning of the next" (BRASIL, 1987).

In 1989, the Meeting of Indigenous Peoples of the Xingu was held in Altamira (PA). This meeting gathered "the director and future president of Eletronorte, Antônio Muniz Lopes, as well as the president of the Brazilian Institute of the Environment and Renewable Natural Resources (Ibama), the mayor of Altamira, environmentalists, indigenous peoples and the English singer Sting" (FLEURY; ALMEIDA, 2013, p. 143).

At that time, before the national and international press, the Indian woman Tuíra pointed her machete to the face of the Eletronorte's president. The scene was widely

publicized around the world and, due to media repercussions about the plant and pressure from environmentalists, the construction project was kept in low profile for some time.

"Years later, José Antônio Muniz Lopes resumed the project to dam the Xingu River" (ALONSO, 2015, p. 83). But, he was not alone. With the support of Lula's government and the "Programa de Aceleração do Crescimento – PAC" (Program for Growth Acceleration), conditions and incentives were created for the construction of the hydroelectric plant.

According to Montaño (2014), Lula asked the Minister of the Environment, Carlos Minc, in 2009, to simplify the environmental licensing process and, thus, speed up the progress of the PAC and investments in Belo Monte.

Lula also had the support of Dilma, who before assuming the presidency was the minister of Mines and Energy (MME) and chief of staff. Fainguelernt (2016) recalls that in 2004, due to numerous irregularities pointed out by the Federal Public Ministry (FPM), Belo Monte's environmental licensing was paralyzed. "Even so, a year later (2005), the MME, through its then minister Dilma Rousseff, officially informed the Ministry of the Environment (MMA) and the National Indian Foundation (Funai) that Belo Monte would be considered a strategic priority of the government" (FUNAI, 2009, p. 12).

Later, upon assuming the presidency, Dilma guaranteed, according to Fisher (2014), lower prices for electricity, with the hope of attracting more investors to Belo Monte. Amid dozens of protests by environmentalists, social movements, and the indigenous peoples themselves, on May 5, 2016, Dilma Rousseff, president of Brazil at the time, inaugurated the Belo Monte dam, with an installed capacity of 11,233.1 Megawatts (MW) (BRASIL, 2016). Despite social and environmental mobilizations, "the Dam Project was immune to all arguments - logical, legal and moral - and was successful in obtaining support from the government agencies that promoted it, the banks that financed it, and the companies that invested in it" (FEARNSIDE, 2018, p. 164).

In 2010, the winner of the construction auctions of the Belo Monte dam was the Norte Energia S/A (Nesa) consortium, composed of state-owned companies such as Eletrobrás, Chesf and Eletronorte; private companies such as Vale and J. Malucelli Energia; and other powerful investors (OLIVEIRA; MARQUES, 2012). The National Development Bank (BNDES) granted a loan of R\$ 30 billion for the construction of the plant (FAINGUELERNT, 2016).

The BNDES' money consisted of public resources (OLIVEIRA, MARQUES; 2012). With these resources, the hydroelectric plant in Xingu took shape and the "number of people affected by the construction of the Belo Monte dam and their consequences reached 40 thousand people and 24 ethnic groups that inhabited the Xingu basin" (SUDATTI, 2014, p. 15).

The project also gained support in the form of speech. Influential researchers, such as the director of the coordination of Graduate Programs in Engineering at the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro (UFRJ), Luiz Pinguelli Rosa, said in an interview that socio-environmental impacts such as Belo Monte will always exist, but there is a need for development of the country with energy supply (OLIVEIRA, 2010). By exposing the

opinions of influential people in the media, "Brazil went on disguising the great oppression to which the indigenous population has been subjected over the years" (BAPTISTA; RODRIGUES; LOPES, 2016, p. 155).

Lula and Dilma not only endorsed the pro-dam discourse in the Amazon, but also used maneuvers for the project to be approved by hook or by crook. "Tax exemptions, facilitated credit. There was a concomitant attack and inevitable weakening of public bodies and institutions responsible for monitoring and evaluation studies of the technical feasibility of this venture" (FEIO *et al.*, 2020, p. 44-45).

In view of the potential of the media to expose opinions and stakeholders in matters of global interest, this research aimed to investigate the visibility and representation of indigenous peoples in online journalistic content of greater circulation in Brazil and 12 other countries. The role that journalistic vehicles have had in giving voice to indigenous peoples is questioned, and the function of the media as a source of information for the world on the socio-environmental impacts of the Belo Monte dam is investigated.

Methodology

The research was carried out through Content Analysis (CA), according to theorists Bardin (1977), Chizzotti (2010), Silva *et al.* (2005), Caregnato and Mutti (2006). Content analysis is "a set of communication techniques aimed at systematic and objective procedures for describing the content of indicator messages, which allow the inference of knowledge related to the reception/production conditions" (BARDIN, 1977, p. 48).

Chizzotti (2010, p. 114) points out the CA is like "a type of analysis of communication that aims to guarantee objective impartiality, using the quantification of clearly defined units of text to generate quantifiable results or establish the statistical frequency of the units of meaning".

Content analysis is a research technique used in both quantitative and qualitative studies. The difference, according to Silva *et al.* (2005) and Caregnato and Mutti (2006), is that quantitative studies results in a frequency of repeated characteristics in the content of the text whereas qualitative studies verify the absence or presence of a certain characteristic of a part of the message.

Content analysis represents "a transport of meanings from an emitter to a receiver controlled or not by the latter, which can be written and deciphered by the techniques of content analysis" (BARDIN, 1977, p. 32).

In this work, three procedures were used for the construction of the content analysis of newspaper articles: pre-analysis, categorization and data treatment. The pre-analysis consisted in choosing the most widely circulated vehicles of journalistic communication in the world, selected from the ranking of the largest newspapers in the world produced by the National Newspaper Association (ANJ, 2010). The choice of websites was also based on the

authors Zago and Bastos (2013), who updated the vehicles with the greatest circulation in the world following specialists in national and international media research and audits.

Among the selected newspapers, those with the greatest impact/circulation in countries of the American (United States, Argentina, Brazil and Colombia), European (Germany, Spain, France, Portugal, United Kingdom) and Asian (China, South Korea and India) continents were identified.

For the choice of countries in each continent, priority was given to the most populous ones, those with a historical connection with Brazil, or whose foreign press reaches the Brazilian public. Two online newspapers were selected in each country, totaling 24 webpages.

A first sample of articles about the Belo Monte dam was made in the 24 selected journalistic websites. The sampling was delimited from the search icon of the websites, in the countries' original language, so that the newspaper's website itself made the general content overview. The keywords used were: "Belo Monte hydroelectric" and "Belo Monte".

Then, only articles that dealt with the theme of indigenous peoples were selected. In a third screening, the words used by journalists to refer to indigenous peoples were identified. They were: "Indigenous", "Indigenous Peoples", "Guardians", "Amazonian Peoples", "Indigenous", "Protesters", "Ethnicities", "Groups", "Man", "Families", "Environmentalists", "Demonstrators" and "Brazilians". The articles were surveyed in publications from 2005 to 2017. The 12-year period is justified by the fact that in 2005 the National Congress approved the licensing process for the hydroelectric plant (BRASIL, 2005) despite protests by indigenous peoples. The year 2017 was chosen because it was when this research was started. The sampling was limited to news reports and feature articles of the informative journalistic genre (MARQUES DE MELO, 2010). Tavares (1997) defines news reports as facts of immediate interest, unlike feature articles which address a subject in greater depth, analyzing and interpreting it.

The categorization of data took place by reading each newspaper article. The following categories were then established:

- *Frequent terms*: the words most frequently used in the headlines to refer to indigenous peoples;
- Authors: those who sign the content;
- *Section*: thematic sections in which the content is published;
- *Place of authorship*: countries/states in which the newspaper articles were produced, since the place interferes with the investigation of information and the journalist's view of the fact;
- *Types of sources*: the credibility of the journalist is based on the relationship between source, journalist and vehicles (BERGER, 2003), according to the classification of sources by Schmitz (2011);
- *Positive and negative aspects*: points highlighted in the articles on the benefits and hazards caused by the Belo Monte dam.

Results and Discussion

From January 2005 to December 2017, 1,188 newspaper articles about the Belo Monte plant were identified, 245 from international and 943 from national newspapers. However, only 54 addressed indigenous peoples; 49 of them were news reports and five were feature articles.

In 12 years of publications on Belo Monte, only 4.6% of the 1,188 articles included indigenous peoples in the discussion. A minimum percentage compared to the proportion of materials about the plant.

The invisibility of indigenous peoples in the press reflects historical suppression. In 2007, the *Tempo* magazine published a dossier on indigenous peoples, written by historian Maria Regina Celestino. She said "where are the Indians in the history of Brazil?" (ALMEIDA, 2007, p. 1). When studying the history of indigenous people, Monteiro (1995, p. 221) concluded that "for the Indians, there is no history; there is only ethnography".

Another notable difference was observed between the amount of news reports and feature articles. The disparity between these types of articles likely indicates changes in the trends of the production of newspaper articles.

Fifty-four articles about indigenous peoples and the Belo Monte dam were published on 15 journalistic websites. They were: *El Espectador* and *El Tiempo* (Colombia); *El Mundo* and *El País* (Spain); *Folha de S.Paulo* and *O Globo* (Brazil); *Jornal de Notícias* (Portugal); *La Nación* (Argentina); *Le Figaro* and *Le Monde* (France); People's Daily (China); *Süddeutsche Zeitung* (Germany); The Guardian and The Sunday Times (United Kingdom); and The New York Times (United States).

In the first sample of 1,188 articles, there was three times more content published on national than on international websites. However, in the second sampling of 54 publications about Belo Monte and indigenous peoples, the majority of articles were from the international press, which produced over twice as much content as the national press. There were 38 foreign and 16 national productions.

The result corroborates with what Nunes (2015, p. 270) emphasizes on themes directly linked to the Amazon region and that kindle international interest "due to the possibility of the region to present population surpluses from other parts of the world, being a food producer, and a territory with large reserves of strategic resources (water, oil, gas, iron, manganese, bauxite, uranium, biodiversity)".

Frequent terms

Twelve terms referring to indigenous peoples were identified during the reading of the titles of international and national articles. Figure 1 shows that indigenous peoples are more frequently called "Indians", followed by "Indigenous people" and, thirdly, "tribe".

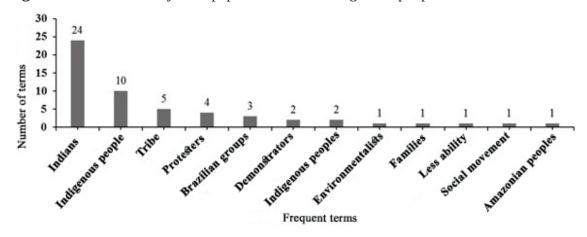


Figure 1 – Terms used by newspapers to refer to indigenous peoples

Source: field search, 2018.

The authors Grupioni, Vidal and Fischmann (2001) emphasize that reading or hearing the name "tribe" exchanged, spelled or pronounced at random to refer to indigenous peoples in the press is commonplace. They point out that this behavior of the press reduces indigenous peoples in the newsrooms of the newspapers "to a set of clippings and photographs generically classified as 'Indians'" (p. 65).

Collet, Paladino and Russo (2014) reinforce that it is more correct to use the word "ethnicity" or "indigenous people" to refer to these peoples, because the concept of "Indian" is mistakenly applied in the present case¹.

Another term that drew attention, although it was not the most frequent, is in the article published on October 11, 2017, in the newspaper *El País*, with the following title: "I fight for those who are less able to defend themselves". The title is between quotation marks because it refers to the speech of the environmentalist and founder of the Xingu movement *Vivo Para Sempre*, Antonia Melo da Silva².

Antonia belongs to a family of farmers and since the 1980s started to fight for indigenous causes and against Belo Monte. The article focuses on Antonia's role in the defense of indigenous peoples and, secondarily, on indigenous peoples who were displaced from their homes on behalf of the plant.

Antonia is described by the author of the text as someone who is "on the front lines of a battle". The author also attributes characteristics such as "tenacity and courage" to the

¹ The concept of "Indian" emerged when Europeans arrived in America and believed they were in India and the expression "indigenous people" was brought by the colonizers, because before the arrival of Europeans, there was not a word used by the native population to collectively designate themselves.

In the article, Antonia is interviewed for having won an award on social justice, fighting for more than two decades against the Belo Monte dam, as well as defending the indigenous peoples of Belo Monte. Available at: https://elpais.com/elpais/2017/10/09/planeta_futuro/1507550012_733072.html. Accessed on: Sep. 9, 2018.

environmentalist and calls her "warrior of the Amazon", qualities of someone who stands ready to defend a group of vulnerable people, in this case, indigenous peoples.

One of Antonia's lines is quoted in the article. "I know that I am doing the right thing; I fight in defense of those who are less able to defend themselves, for human rights, for life. It is a commitment that is within me and that moves me not to give up".

By emphasizing that indigenous peoples are those who "are less able to defend themselves", the autonomy and representativeness of these peoples, who know how to fight in an organized manner, is suppressed. Danner (2018) emphasizes that indigenous societies combine the transmission of traditional knowledge with the technologies available to fight against segregation, the right to demarcate lands, as well as the right to health, schools and beliefs.

Lima and Gadelha (2015, p. 83) reinforce that "this process of inferiorization and subjugation of the 'traditional Amazonian people' continued even after Brazil's independence, not only in an international but also in a national perspective".

According to Loureiro (2002), this is explained by the fact that large urban centers have become models of formal culture, and urban populations in the Amazon, aiming to look like "development", abandoned the customs of the indigenous culture and started to see them in a pejorative and static way.

In a survey on "The dehumanization present in stereotypes of Indians and Gypsies", Lima, Faro and Santos (2016) analyzed the personal and collective beliefs of 378 people about the image of indigenous peoples and found that 19.6% of the respondents believed that indigenous peoples are discriminated/excluded; 11.1% saw them as savages; 10.6% as opportunist/lazy people; 6.9% as different; and 6.6% as inferior/incapable/ignorant.

Authors

As for those responsible for investigating and writing the articles, Figure 2 divides the authors of the content into three categories: "agency" (articles produced by news agencies and acquired by the newspapers for reproduction only), "journalist" (articles produced by reporters of the vehicle of communication itself); and "not informed" (no specification of who produced the article).

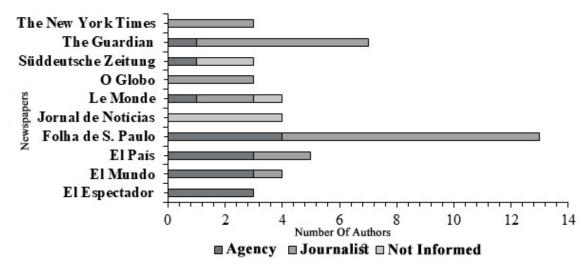


Figure 2 – Authors of the newspaper articles

Source: field research, 2018.

Although most of the articles were signed by journalists from the mainstream media (26), 16 were from communication agencies. News agencies have become major media outlets, with correspondents and an extent of coverage that is, in many cases, out of the reach of the hegemonic press, thus creating the need to buy information.

For Marques (2005, p. 40), the articles produced by agencies are not sent to the newsrooms as raw material. They are refined, written and delivered ready to the newspapers. He also points out that these contents "are essential to newspapers for economic reasons, but on the other hand, they end up generating the homogenization of news in all publications".

It is worth mentioning that the articles from agencies feed the media, national or foreign, public or corporate. That is, the same product for a series of vehicles. Consequently, a single speech is multiplied in the newspapers. According to Aguiar (2016, p. 37), agencies "have the potential to multiply content, disseminating information and speeches that can obey planning for development".

Of the 13 publications, four from *Folha de S.Paulo*, one from Reuters - the largest international news agency, based in London -, and three from *Agência Espanhola de Notícias* (EFE) were from agencies. The Guardian had seven publications, six from journalists and only one from an agency. *O Globo* did not opt for news from agencies when publishing three articles signed by journalists. On the other hand, *El Espectador* published stories only from agencies.

Assis (2017, p. 48) considers the contents of agencies as "second-hand" information, as they are collected, in general, by telephone or via the internet. For this author, good journalistic work is able to emphasize the actors and the environment with complete and non-fragmented stories, and this "cannot be done by phone or e-mail. It is not done in a rush".

Sections

The newspapers are divided by thematic sections in which common subjects are grouped. Figure 3 identifies in which central themes the articles about the Belo Monte dam and the indigenous peoples were placed.

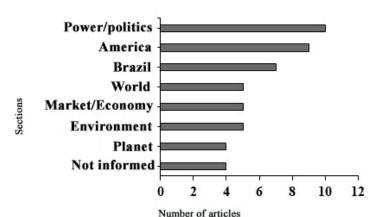


Figure 3 – Sections of publication of the newspaper articles

Source: field research, 2018.

The "Power/Politics" section presented the largest number of publications (10), seven from *Folha de S.Paulo* and three from *Süddeutsche Zeitung*. In second place, there was the "America" section of People's Daily, *El Mundo*, The New York Times, *El Espectador* and The Guardian, which together had nine publications.

There were five articles classified within the "Environment" section, published in *Folha de S.Paulo* (2), The Guardian (2) and *El Espectador* (1). They had the same number of articles as the "Market" section, in some newspapers also identified as the "Economy" section. Only two Brazilian newspapers appear in the Market/Economy section: *Folha de S.Paulo* (3) and *Globo* (2).

Seligman and Furtado (2011, p. 402-403) explain that the "Politics" section received more publications and the theme also appeared in Economy for "being considered a fundamental theme of a newspaper". According to them, articles in these sections are

not intended to the general public, but rather to the more educated readers, with language appropriate to class A and B, known as drivers of public opinion.

Another author reinforces this thinking. "Geared towards the elite, these newspapers compensate for the low penetration in the popular strata with a great capacity to produce agendas, shape issues, and influence perceptions and behaviors (...)" (AZEVEDO, 2006, p. 95).

Data also revealed that the struggle of indigenous peoples against the construction of the Belo Monte dam received low attention in sections focused on environmental and social themes. Since the Belo Monte dam involves socio-environmental issues, Teixeira (2014) reinforces that, unlike the "Environment" section, the "economy, politics, sport and culture sections are already internalized in society's agenda, and are well supplied of journalists to produce information on the respective topics. The environment does not receive the same importance and the aforementioned sections".

It is a fact that environmental journalism is interdisciplinary and does not act in an isolated manner. Rocha (2018) states that environmental journalism is present in the economic, political, biological, sociological and cultural fields. Despite this, the didactic approach, which clarifies the environmental agenda to a non-specialized audience, cannot be ignored.

Place of authorship

Figure 4 shows the places where the articles were produced. Of the 11 locations identified, only three are outside of Brazil.

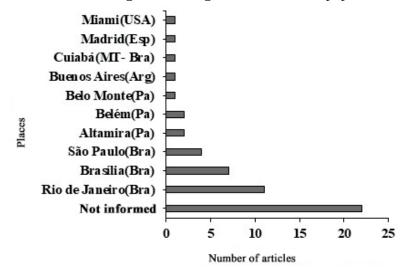


Figure 4 – Places of the investigations that generated the newspaper articles

Source: field research, 2018.

Of the articles that did not inform the location (22), 88% (19) were from international vehicles and 12% (3) from national vehicles. Rio de Janeiro was the place with the highest incidence of articles produced (11), equivalent to 20% of the contents. Brasília was second, with seven articles (13%). One article was produced in Belo Monte (PA) by the newspaper The Guardian, and two in Altamira (PA), one from The New York Times and another from *Folha de S.Paulo*.

Six international newspapers chose to portray newspaper articles from Brazil. The Guardian, with five stories, followed by *El País*, with four; *El Mundo*, with three; *Le Monde*, with two; *El Espectador* and The New York Times, with one each. Only three articles from *Folha de S.Paulo* did not specify in which part of Brazil the content was generated.

The newspapers had professionals to report on the conflicts in the surroundings of the Belo Monte dam, but they did it from large urban centers. This way of working can lead to a distance between journalists and sources - in this case, the indigenous peoples who are far from cities – and, at the same time, generates a proximity with business and government sources which, most of the times, are in large cities.

There is the presence of foreign news outlets with correspondents in Brazil. According to Dalmolin and Silveira (2016, p. 2) "even though these professionals live in the country, they write about the Amazon without going to the Amazon. These professionals live mainly in the Southeast region of Brazil, where the so-called 'mainstream press' of the country is based".

All of this contributes for the portraying of the Amazon and the peoples that inhabit it in the media as what it is seen in foreign movies and European stories: exotic scenarios, natural beauty, poverty, isolation.

In his studies, Costa (2011) points out that, when compared to the civilized and developed image of the South and Southeast of Brazil or the countries classified as first world, the Amazon and its inhabitants are portrayed by the media as an Amazon of savage, anachronistic, miserable, subordinate and archaic peoples, as shown in the figure below.

Figure 5 - Image of a newspaper article about indigenous peoples in The Guardian, April 22, 2016.



▲ Munduruku people from the Amazon basin protest against construction of river dams near their land, including the controversial Belo Monte power plant that began operating this week. Photograph: Lunae Parracho/Reuters

Source: https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/apr/22/brazil-amazon-dam-project-suspended-indigenous-munduruku-sao-luiz-do-tapajos. Accessed on: Sep. 9, 2018.

This image corroborates those analyzed by Costa (2011) when studying the Amazonian peoples, stereotypes, invisibility and coloniality. Through images, Costa shows that events around the Amazon involving indigenous peoples look like action movies, as techniques and camera positions that suggest an imminent indigenous confrontation are used.

Sources

Tables 1 and 2 show the sources and the number of times they were heard in the articles. Thirteen different sources were identified, classified into five categories: official, someone in a public role or position who speaks for the institution maintained by the State; managerial, representatives of industry, commerce, services or agribusiness; institutional, non-profit organization or social group; notable, those who stand out for their fame; and specialized, in the case of a person with specific knowledge (scientist, expert) (SCHMITZ, 2011).

Table 1 – Sources present in the articles of the 15 newspapers analyzed

EL: El Espectador; EM: El Mundo; EP: El País; ET: El Tiempo; FSP - Folha de S.Paulo; JN: Jornal de Notícias; LN: La Nación; LF: Le Figaro; LeM: Le Monde; OG: O Globo; PD: People's Daily; S.Z - Süddeutsche Zeitung; T.N.Y.T - The New York Times; T.S.T - The Sunday Times (Part 1).

Sources	EL	EM	EP	ET	FSP	JN
Indigenous peoples	2	5	2	1	9	0
Social movements	3	6	6	0	6	0
Government	3	3	4	0	3	0
Judicial Branch	0	0	3	0	1	4
Norte Energia	0	0	4	0	0	0
Scientists	0	2	0	0	1	0
Eletronorte/eletrobrás	0	0	0	0	3	0
American celebrities	0	2	0	0	1	0
Funai	0	0	0	0	0	1
Riverside people	1	0	0	0	0	0
Public security	0	0	0	0	2	0
Brazilian press	0	0	0	0	0	1
Ibama	0	0	0	0	0	0
Individual Total	9	18	19	1	24	6

Source: field research, 2018.

Note: Government*: Ministry of Mines and Energy, Ministry of the Environment, National Telecommunications Agency (Anatel), Dilma and Lula; Social Movements**: NGOs, activists, organized civil societies, environmentalists; American celebrities***: James Cameron and English singer Sting; Public security****: Federal Highway Police, Federal Police; Scientists*****: researchers, teachers, specialists; Judicial Branch*****: Court of Justice of the State of Pará (TJE/Pa), Federal Justice, Federal Public Ministry (FPM).

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EL: *El Espectador*; EM: *El Mundo*; EP: *El País*; ET: *El Tiempo*; FSP - *Folha de S.Paulo*; JN: *Jornal de Notícias*; LN: *La Nación*; LF: *Le Figaro*; LeM: *Le Monde*; OG: *O Globo*; PD: People's Daily; S.Z - *Süddeutsche Zeitung*; T.N.Y.T - The New York Times; T.S.T - The Sunday Times (Part 2).

Sources	LN	LF	LM	OG	PD	S.Z	TG	T.N.Y.T	T.S.T
Indigenous peoples	0	1	3	0	1	3	8	2	0
Social movements	1	0	3	0	0	0	7	4	0
Government	0	0	2	1	1	2	5	3	0
Judicial Branch	0	0	1	0	0	0	5	4	1
Norte Energia	0	0	2	2	0	1	3	1	0
Scientists	0	1	0	0	0	0	2	0	0
Eletronorte/eletrobrás	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0
American celebrities	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
Funai	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0
Riverside people	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0
Public security	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Brazilian press	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Ibama	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
Individual Total	1	2	11	5	3	6	33	17	1

Source: field research, 2018.

Note: Government*: Ministry of Mines and Energy, Ministry of the Environment, National Telecommunications Agency (Anatel), Dilma and Lula; Social Movements**: NGOs, activists, organized civil societies, environmentalists; American celebrities***: James Cameron and English singer Sting; Public security****: Federal Highway Police, Federal Police; Scientists*****: researchers, teachers, specialists; Judicial Branch*****: Court of Justice of the State of Pará (TJE/Pa), Federal Justice, Federal Public Ministry (FPM).

The data show that social movements (36), indigenous peoples (35), the government (27), the Judicial Branch (19), and Norte Energia (13), in this order, were the five most listened subjects. Although there is a greater number of "Social movements" and "indigenous peoples", they all spoke from the same place of speech. Starting with the Government, Judicial Branch, Funai, public security, Ibama, Norte Energia, Eletronorte/Eletrobrás, and the Brazilian Press, all agreed on the articles with the same speech in favor of building the plant.

The article in *El Mundo*, published on April 26, 2010, was entitled "Lula guarantees that the future hydroelectric plant 'will improve the quality of life of the Indians'". The content dedicated all the 12 paragraphs to emphasize Lula's speech in favor of the construction of the dam, being a model project and a way of generating cheap energy³.

117

 $^{3\}quad El \ Mundo\ article\ link:\ https://www.elmundo.es/america/2010/04/26/brasil/1272289485.html.\ Accessed\ on:\ Sep.\ 9,\ 2018.$

In Folha de S.Paulo, the title of the March 23, 2011, article informs: "Social movement 'threatens' companies interested in Belo Monte". The article does not contain any documents or messages of the possible threat and has only business representatives as sources⁴.

In a research on the presence of indigenous people in the media, Corradi *et al.* (2017) pointed out that the press is established based on power relations, which are historically constructed from the facts and discourses that shape the identities of these peoples.

The Guardian and Folha de S.Paulo were the ones that sought a more diverse number of actors. The newspapers interviewed eight different subjects. O Globo heard only official sources such as the government, Norte Energia and Funai. This shows that the official sources dominated the production of the news in O Globo. Schmitz (2011) says that official sources are preferred by the media; however, they can falsify information to preserve their interests and political groups.

Wolf (2003) emphasizes that the framework of the news is given by the source who speaks in the article. That is, by hearing only official sources, the journalistic discourse is reduced to a single point of view. Traquina (2001) points out that, by accepting what official sources say, journalism does not change the scenario that is being built; consequently, it ends up perpetuating the same point of view.

The Sunday Times from UK and La Nación from Argentina used a single source: the "Social movements" and the "Federal Public Ministry", respectively. The vehicle that most gave space to the stories of indigenous peoples was Folha de S.Paulo, followed by The Guardian.

However, the space given in Folha de S.Paulo is questionable, as it occurred in an indirect and consequently silent way. It was noted that Folha de S.Paulo reproduced fragmented opinions and exposed information said by indigenous people from reading indirect documents, reports or statements. Observe the news published on November 4, 2020, in Folha de S.Paulo.

Article link https://m.folha.uol.com.br/mercado/2011/03/892930-movimento-social-ameaca-empresas-interessadas-em-belomonte.shtml?origin=folha. Accessed on: Sep. 9, 2018.

Figure 6 - Image of a newspaper article about indigenous peoples in *Folha de S.Paulo*.



Source: https://www1.folha.uol.com.br/mercado/2010/04/7/722632-indios-preparam-invasao-de-area-da-usina-de-belomonte.shtml. . Accessed on: Sep. 9, 2018.

Starting with the title and the word used for the protest act, "invasion". This term conveys the idea that indigenous peoples are where they should not be, that the space in which the hydroelectric plant is to be built is not originally theirs. Thus, the same tone of centuries ago is replicated, when the colonizers arrived and called themselves discoverers and explorers of an already populated land.

This thought is in line with that of Guimarães (2018), who emphasizes that the term "invasion" is employed to manipulate and invert the roles of who in fact is the invader. "Remembering the caravels and saying that this is a concept developed and implemented in the context of European territorial invasions and conquests in the Americas. This concept

continues to be manipulated through representations of indigenous peoples" (GUIMARÃES, 2018, p. 61).

Identifying the indigenous peoples as responsible for an act of invasion is one way of representing the "Indian as the disturber, the troublemaker, the dirt, the strange and the impure of the city. The Indian is the one who always brings some kind of disorder, doubt and uncertainty to those who dominate and hold the power" (VIEIRA, 2015, p. 175).

With the phrase "According to verified by *Folha*", the source with whom the investigation was carried out and where the information came from regarding the decisions of indigenous peoples is kept unidentified. No direct speech of any indigenous person is mentioned in the article. In this regard, Spivak (2010) says that the discourse remains in the tactic of neutralizing the other, making him subordinate - invisible, denying him the right to self-representation, relegating him to silence.

In the excerpt "The indigenous decision (...) was taken at a meeting" exemplifies another way of passing on information from the indigenous source, without expressing it directly in the text. What guarantees to the reader that, in fact, the information was obtained from a representative of the indigenous peoples?

The article even opens a poll to find out if people are for or against the construction of the hydroelectric plant, thus demonstrating a discursive practice of interference in decisions by the western population about the future of the indigenous peoples (NEVES, 2009).

Below the poll, there is a call for two other stories. The first links Lula's name to the plant's tests. The second, on the other hand, has the expression "new milestone in the Amazon", referring to the plant as something innovative for the Amazon.

The article ends by informing that the indigenous decision to "invade" is a "challenging act against the government" and was taken during a meeting in which "whites" were unable to participate. It is clear that the construction of relations between government, "white" men and indigenous peoples is clearly exposed as conflicting and, therefore, pre-established. This evident hierarchy of power is noted by Conrradi *et al.* (2017). In his studies, he found that the press puts indigenous peoples in the position of "complainers" and not of peoples who struggle to reaffirm the rights to which they are entitled but are not conferred upon them.

The lack of protagonism of indigenous peoples is revealed as a form of physical and verbal violence and submission (ORLANDI, 1990). "By excluding indigenous peoples as a source of information, non-Indians and institutions are given the power to create and give meaning to discursive construction (...) What is not silenced on the subject is spoken through political, social and economic representations of the non-Indian" (FIGUEIREDO; MOURA, 2013, p. 79).

Positive and negative aspects

In order to identify, in the articles, the way in which the journalists presented the impacts and benefits of the Belo Monte dam, Tables 3 and 4 show the positive and negative

aspects associated with the construction of the plant, mentioned in the content. The articles pointed to 17 negative points and seven positive points (See p. 18 and 19).

In the materials analyzed, "Power generation" and "Construction of a hospital, houses and schools" were the most frequently mentioned positive points. *El País* and *El Mundo* were the two newspapers that most highlighted the benefits. In turn, *Folha de S.Paulo* and The Guardian highlighted the positive aspects of the plant two and three times, respectively.

Regarding the negative aspects, the most mentioned were "Population displacement" (18), when addressing the removal of the indigenous population from their homes; "Floods" (17), when presenting the flooding caused by the damming of the Xingu River; and "Disappearance of species from rivers" (8), when showing the death of fish and animals in flooded forests.

El Mundo stressed 18 times the abovementioned negative aspects and others in addition to them. Thus, *El Mundo*, The Guardian (18), *El Espectador* (16), and *El País* (11) were the ones that most highlighted the negative aspects in the texts.

Folha de S.Paulo presented seven problems arising from the construction of the hydroelectric plant in Xingu, making references to the "Social impact" or "Environmental impact". These two negative categories were presented but the articles did not specify which impacts would be caused by the hydroelectric plant. As a consequence, the problems end up becoming generalized and diffuse, limited in the possible discussions on the subject. O Globo mentioned only one negative point, "Population displacement".

The newspapers *El Tiempo*, *La Nación* and *Jornal de Notícias* did not report any positive or negative points about the Belo Monte dam. *O Globo* and People's Daily did not mention any positive points. "Absence of sanitation", "Temperature rise", "Unemployment" and "Changes in the Xingu River" were the only negative points highlighted by *El Mundo*, *El País*, *Folha de S.Paulo* and *Le Figaro*.

As Costa (2018) had already noted, the press coverage of environmental aspects, from 1990 to the present, is not characterized by articles that show the causes and consequences of the phenomena. He concludes that such coverage causes misinformation rather than information among citizens concerned with the environmental issue or with public policies related to the theme, especially in the Amazon.

The articles should be sources of updated and contextualized information for the indigenous peoples, but they fall short in fulfilling this role. Bueno (2007) reinforces that the essence of environmental journalism must include not only an informative and didactic approach, but also convey the theme of protecting nature and those around it. However, information is affected by poor interdisciplinarity, linkage of elites, exclusion of social segments, and predominance of official government sources.

Table 3 – Positive aspects of the Belo Monte dam presented in the analyzed newspapers

EE: *El Espectador*; EM: *El Mundo*; EP: *El País*; FSP: *Folha de S.Paulo*; LeF: *Le Figaro*; LeM: *Le Monde*; SZ: *Süddeutsche Zeitung*; TG: The Guardian; TNYT: The New York Times; TST: The Sunday Times (Part 1).

Positive aspects	EE	EM	EP	FSP	LeF
Power generation	2	1	1	1	1
Construction of a hospital/houses/schools	0	0	5	0	0
Energy project of Brazil	1	1	0	0	0
Employment	0	1	0	1	0
Quality of life	0	2	0	0	0
Cheap energy	0	1	0	0	0
Preservation of indigenous areas	0	1	0	0	0
Individual total	3	7	6	2	1

Source: field research, 2018.

Table 3.1 – Positive aspects of the Belo Monte dam presented in the analyzed newspapers.

EE: *El Espectador*; EM: *El Mundo*; EP: *El País*; FSP: *Folha de S.Paulo*; LeF: *Le Figaro*; LeM: *Le Monde*; SZ: *Süddeutsche Zeitung*; TG: The Guardian; TNYT: The New York Times; TST: The Sunday Times (Part 2).

Positive aspects	LeM	SZ	TG	TNYT	TST
Power generation	1	1	1	1	1
Construction of a hospital/houses/schools	1	0	0	1	0
Energy project of Brazil	0	0	2	0	0
Employment	0	0	0	1	0
Quality of life	1	0	0	0	0
Cheap energy	0	0	0	0	0
Preservation of indigenous areas	0	0	0	0	0
Individual total	3	1	3	3	1

Source: field research, 2018. (Note: Construction*: houses, hospital, schools).

Table 4 – Negative aspects of the Belo Monte dam presented in the analyzed newspapers

EE: *El Espectador*; EM: *El Mundo*; EP: *El País*; FSP: *Folha de S.Paulo*; LeF: *Le Figaro*; LeM: *Le Monde*; OG: *O Globo*; PD: People's Daily; SZ: *Süddeutsche Zeitung*; TG: The Guardian; TNYT: The New York Times; TST: The Sunday Times (Part 1).

Negative aspects	EE	EM	EP	FSP	LeF	LeM
Displacement*	4	4	2	0	0	2
Flooding	4	3	4	2	0	1
Disappearance of species from rivers	0	1	0	2	0	0
Deforestation	0	1	1	1	1	0
Lack of dialogue	3	0	0	0	0	0
Environmental impacts**	2	2	0	1	0	0
Murders/violence	0	3	1	0	0	0
Social Impacts***	0	2	0	1	0	1
Diseases	0	0	1	0	0	0
Population swelling	0	0	1	0	0	0
Labor abuses	2	0	0	0	0	0
Sacred customs	1	1	0	0	0	0
Psychological disorders	0	0	1	0	0	0
Absence of sanitation	0	0	1	0	0	0
Unemployment	0	0	0	0	1	0
Temperature rise	0	0	0	1	0	0
Changes in the Xingu River	0	1	0	0	0	0
Individual total	16	18	12	8	1	4

Source: field research, 2018.

(Note: Displacement* refers relocation of people from their homes due to floods. Environmental impacts** and social impacts*** are environmental and social problems arising from the Belo Monte dam but which are not specified. These two categories refer to a generalized approach of the problems).

Table 4.1 - Negative aspects of the Belo Monte dam presented in the analyzed newspapers.

EE: *El Espectador*; EM: *El Mundo*; EP: *El País*; FSP: *Folha de S.Paulo*; LeF: *Le Figaro*; LeM: *Le Monde*; OG: *O Globo*; PD: People's Daily; SZ: *Süddeutsche Zeitung*; TG: The Guardian; TNYT: The New York Times; TST: The Sunday Times (Part 2).

Negative aspects	OG	PD	SZ	TĞ	TNYT	TST
Displacement*	1	0	0	3	1	1
Flooding	0	1	2	0	0	0
Disappearance of species from rivers	0	0	1	2	2	0
Deforestation	0	0	0	2	0	0
Lack of dialogue	0	0	1	2	0	0
Environmental impacts**	0	0	0	1	0	0
Murders/violence	0	0	0	1	0	0
Social Impacts***	0	0	0	1	0	0
Diseases	0	0	0	2	0	0
Population swelling	0	0	0	2	0	0
Labor abuses	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sacred customs	0	0	0	0	0	0
Psychological disorders	0	0	0	1	0	0
Absence of sanitation	0	0	0	0	0	0
Unemployment	0	0	0	0	0	0
Temperature rise	0	0	0	0	0	0
Changes in the Xingu River	0	0	0	0	0	0
Individual total	1	1	4	17	3	1

Source: field research, 2018.

(Note: Displacement* refers relocation of people from their homes due to floods. Environmental impacts** and social impacts*** are environmental and social problems arising from the Belo Monte dam but which are not specified. These two categories refer to a generalized approach of the problems).

Final Considerations

It was found that the most influential newspapers in the world have an outdated and distorted view of indigenous peoples, starting with the way of identifying them, as "Indians", "tribes", "invaders".

It is notable that the national press has chosen to make indigenous peoples invisible. In some cases, they are not even identified by their names or surnames, reflecting generations of invisibility. Business and official sources are still considered the holders of the information that prevails. Although the national newspapers - *Folha de S.Paulo* and *O Globo* - are the most widely circulated in Brazil and are closer to the Belo Monte dam in relation to other countries, these advantages did not make them more present in Belo Monte, or led them to produce more in-depth reports and articles. And although most of the

international stories were produced in Brazil, this did not guarantee that journalists were at the scenario of the events.

The research also leaded us to reflect that the struggle of indigenous peoples against the Belo Monte dam was seen by national and international newspapers from the political and economic point of view, reflecting how the Amazon region is observed outside and even inside Brazil.

The Guardian tried, albeit timidly, to expose the opinions of indigenous peoples to the public. The other foreign websites are still moving towards that direction.

Although the impacts of the Belo Monte dam have directly affected indigenous peoples and nature, only an insignificant amount of newspaper articles are found in the "Environment" section, which should provide a more in-depth examination, robustly backed up by technical data, and conveyed in a way that it can be understood by audiences of all profiles. After all, the environmental impacts generated in the Amazon bring consequences to the region and beyond.

There is still a long way to go in terms of environmental journalism in the major newspapers circulating in the world, at least as it was observed in the news about the Belo Monte dam.

This research not only showed a low representativeness of indigenous peoples in journalistic texts, but also the extent to which the socio-environmental agenda is influenced by political and economic interests in communication vehicles, as well as by the writers, because journalistic perspective that prevails in the representations of these peoples is that of the colonizers. Journalism has changed and so has the ways of reporting the news; however, colonizing discourses are perpetuated throughout generations among Brazilians and foreigners.

Every text is the product of a subject loaded with accumulated knowledge. Therefore, it is believed that those who write must deconstruct everything they once learned in textbooks or films about indigenous peoples, so that these texts become effective and gain the expected meaning.

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ANALYSIS OF SOUTH AMERICAN, EUROPEAN AND ASIAN ONLINE NEWS MEDIA COVERAGE OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES AFFECTED BY THE BELO MONTE DAM

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