Disputes for the Representation of the Indigenous Body on Twitter

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ABSTRACT – Disputes for the Representation of the Indigenous Body on Twitter – The paper aims to analyze the representations of the indigenous body produced during the 14th edition of the *Acampamento Terra Livre* [*Free Land Occupation*], which happened between April 24th and 28th, 2017, and that were disseminated and debated by means of images and *threads* in the social network *Twitter* from then on. The analyses are situated within the Cultural Studies field and the results point, on one hand, to a representation that considers the generic identity of the *indigenous* as a strategy to confer visibility to their social and political demands and, on the other, for disputes and clashes around these same representations.
Keywords: **Body. Indigenous Peoples. Representations. Cultural studies. Twitter.**

RÉSUMÉ – Débat pour there Représentation du Corps Indigène sur Twitter – Cet article pour objectif of analyser les représentations du corps indigène produites to the woollen l'occasion 14e édition of l'*Free Encampment Land,* réalisé between le 24 et le 28 Avril 2017, qui ont été, dès lors, diffusées et discutées pair DES images et *discussions* sur le réseau social *Twitter*. Les analyses sont situées dans le domaine théorique DES Études Culturelles et les résultats montrent, of joins part, joins représentation qui mise sur l'identité générique of l'*Indien* comme joins stratégie pour to donner joins visibilité to ses exigences sociales et politiques et of autre part, pour débattre autour of ces représentations.
Mots-clés: **Body. Peuples Indigènes. Representations. Études Culturelles.** *Twitter*.

RESUMO – Disputas pela Representação do Corpo Indígena no *Twitter* – O artigo tem como objetivo analisar as representações do corpo indígena produzidas por ocasião da 14ª edição do *Acampamento Terra Livre*, realizado entre os dias 24 e 28 de abril de 2017, as quais foram difundidas e discutidas através de imagens e *threads* na rede social *Twitter* a partir de então. As análises situam-se no campo dos Estudos Culturais e os resultados apontam, de um lado, para uma representação que aposta na identidade genérica do *índio* como estratégia para conferir visibilidade às suas demandas sociais e políticas e, de outro, para disputas e embates em torno dessas mesmas representações.
Palavras-chave: **Corpo. Povos Indígenas. Representações. Estudos Culturais.** *Twitter*.

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First Words

In this paper, we analyze the way how the indigenous body was represented in the social network Twitter by subjects who participated in 14th edition of the *Acampamento Terra Livre* [*Free Land Occupation*], which happened in Brasília between April 24th and 28th, 2017. The theoretical reference grounding the reflections here proposed are linked with the Cultural Studies field, mainly the studies on representations and identities. The posts that form the corpus of our analyses, in turn, were gathered from Twitter's search mechanism, using the keywords "*Índio*" [Indigenous Person], "*Abril Indígena*" [Indigenous April], "*Acampamento Terra Livre*" [Free Land Occupation]", and "*Dia do Índio*" [Indigenous Day].

During the 14th edition of the *Acampamento Terra Livre*, which happened in front of the *Esplanada dos Ministérios* in Brasília, between April 24th and 28th, 2017, spikes and wood supports were fixed to the ground while ropes and pieces of canvas were raised to shape a circus-like building. Around it, a great number of improvised tents was distributed. Every year, in April, this setting is redesigned sheltering the *Acampamento Terra Livre* and, in it, thousands of indigenous bodies – each one with its peculiar marks, ornaments, paintings, artifacts – are mixed, are merged in a movement. Walking through this space, it is possible to see a crowd that circulates, talks, prepares food, and gathers to discuss current topics that will be a motto for the demonstrations, walks and acts that will follow. There are also those who, as foreigners, walk through the temporarily occupied territory to produce news or journalistic articles or just to record the instant in images with propagating potential through cyberspace and to *go viral*.

The *Acampamento Terra Livre* is a particular type of indigenous demonstration, with national scope and annual regularity, which happens since 2003. It is articulated with a wide set of acts, protests, demonstrations that are organized, throughout April, in different Brazilian states with the aim of making visible the fights of the indigenous peoples for the settlement of their lands[1]. Promoted by the *Articulação dos Povos Indígenas do Brasil* (APIB) [Articulation of the Indigenous Peoples of Brazil][2], it aims to

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[…] congregate in a great assembly peoples' leaderships and indigenous organizations from all regions of Brazil to discuss and take a stand on the violation of constitutional rights and those originating from the indigenous peoples and anti-indigenous policies of the Brazilian State (Acampamento…, 2017, online).

According to data from APIB, in the 14th edition the event gathered more than four thousand indigenous people from the five Brazilian regions, representing approximately 200 distinct peoples. This participation is expressive, especially when considering that, according to data from the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE, 2010), there are about 240 indigenous peoples in the national territory.

An intense program of debates was developed during the days of the occupation to make public the claims agreed along the event. An indigenous march was organized - different medias displayed a crowd of ornate bodies, carrying adornments and weapons like headdresses, bows, arrows, spears, but also carrying banners, posters and other objects symbolizing life and death, with which the indigenous covered the *Esplanada dos Ministérios*. At the end of the march, however, they were confronted and dispersed with tear gas bombs and shots with rubber bullets, after depositing almost 200 caskets in the reflecting pool of the National Congress to symbolically mark the murder of indigenous leaderships in land conflicts.

A considerable part of the crowd that followed this march – formed by indigenous people, militants, sympathizers, journalists, among others – used their mobile devices of communication, mainly smartphones, but also photo cameras, to record the events experienced there and to disseminate images through internet social networks like Facebook, WhatsApp, Instagram and Twitter. In contrast with what could be assumed, such images are not objective records of an experienced reality, but rather constructed representations of it. According to the concept called as constructionism by Stuart Hall (1997), things or events only make sense when they are represented through signs. In other words, reality only acquires sense when it is mediated by the signs that we construct to represent it. According to this perspective, the images and comments of what happened during the indigenous march in front of the *Esplanada dos Ministérios*, posted in the social networks, are *representations* that produced and continue producing distinct

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meanings for those events in the minds of the subjects who have contact with them.

In his reflections, Roland Barthes (2009) suggested that, in its literal or denotative level, the image conveys a message that seems (even though it will never be) obvious, which would be in a type of "original adamic state", as it is based on the immediate perception of the discontinuous signs that compose it. On the other hand, in the connotative level, every image can apply different codes of the culture to which it belongs, as well as individual lexis to make sense, what makes it polysemic. As Almeida Júnior clarifies (2009), for Barthes, the polysemy of the image always establishes doubts on its meaning, as its signifiers are immersed in a floating chain of meanings, and the reader, in the act of interpretation, ultimately chooses some in detriment of others. The fixation of the connotative meaning of an image, therefore, is a complex activity, which can be restrained or conducted by means of anchorages made of words, clauses and sentences. As Almeida Júnior claims (2009, p. 138), "[…] polysemy establishes doubts on the meaning of the image, that are applied by means of the oral language".

In Picture 1, for instance, it is possible to easily identify, in the foreground, a semi-naked subject wielding a bow and an arrow against the *Esplanada dos Ministérios*. This denotative or literal meaning is based on a basic perceptive level, it does not need any wide cultural code to be understood and is presented as if it were the *resurrection of the experienced*. However, in the connotative level, the image can be decoded in many ways, what requires, from the reader, the ability to evoke at least some cultural codes – organized from associative fields, recurrences and paradigmatic articulations – to assign meaning to signifiers present there. A possible interpretation is that it is the fight of a solitary indigenous man against the Brazilian house of government. The *Esplanada dos Ministérios* is, first of all, a place of political power, but also it can be read, in the context of the indigenous fights, as a *locus* from which emanate political agendas that have oppressed the different indigenous ethnicities in Brazil. The picture of the subject wielding bow and arrow, in turn, dialogues with the generic and already stereotyped idea of the indigenous that was constructed in the official historiography, according to which they would have perished to the power of the European colonization for not having enough advanced technology

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to oppose their opponents. Connotatively, therefore, the image recollects the imbalance of power between the indigenous people and their oppressor, while it confers a heroic lyrism to their attitude of resistance.

Daniela Abade
@danielaabade

Seguir

Alguém sabe quem tirou essa foto? Queria creditar, porque é a foto do ano.

06:23 - 27 de abr de 2017

Picture 1 – Post of @danielaabade on Twitter. Source: Online access[3].

When posted on a social network like Twitter, the image starts to question a great number of subjects[4], who are challenged to read in a way that slides between denotative and connotative levels. The oral statement *Alguém sabe quem tirou essa foto? Queria creditar, porque é a foto do ano* [Does anybody know who took this picture? I would like to credit it to somebody because it is the picture of the year], which can be read in the post reproduced in Picture 1, works as an anchorage that restrains the polysemy of the image, directing its meaning to a specific cultural code, namely, the code of aesthetics and technique, in detriment of others that could articulate political meanings. Therefore, it is not at stake here the indigenous clashes and fights, neither the violence perpetrated by the established government against the several ethnic minorities of Brazil, but rather the quality of the picture. The anonymity that disturbs the internaut is not, therefore, related to the subject represented in the foreground, as indigenous people are often exposed without naming or mention to the ethnicity in media images, but to the lack of signature of the photographer, of that subject-artist who, articulating aesthetics and technique, captured the instant and made it memorable.

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On Twitter

Twitter is a social network and a server for microblogging that allows the posting of messages with images and texts containing, at the most, 280 characters[5] – the so-called tweets. The name alludes to the tweet of a bird – its logo, as well, corresponds to the drawing of a blue bird – since, given the limit of the use of characters, its users would seem to tweet or to chirp little pieces of information in the network motivated by the following question: *what is happening?*. Created 11 years ago by Jack Dorsey[6], Evan Williams, Biz Stone and Noah Glass, it allows the users (identified by a nickname and a @ followed by the user's name) to follow each other (by means of updates in real time), as well to like tweets and retweets (when a certain message is replicated from one user to the list of followers). Recently, the system started to allow the exchange of private messages between registered users, as well as directed public answers (by means of @user name) (Santos et al., 2010). It is also possible to post images, animated gifs, short videos and surveys or, yet, to live broadcast situations. In the initial page, each user has a list of updates and a link for searches (by hashtag or keyword) that follows the so-called trending topics or trends (most liked subjects by country)[7] and the moments (group of posts organized by a user concerning one same topic accessible to all on Twitter). Also, in the initial page of each user, there are notification icons (activated in case somebody having liked or shared some post) and messages (indicating if any messages, private or not, have been received).

There are studies in the fields of Social Sciences and Humanities analyzing how Twitter works in terms of marketing. In this sense, it is important to notice that promoted tweets (that is, paid by companies to be displayed in this social network) circulate in abundance, but they can be blocked or, still, be rejected by the users in a relatively easy and fast way. Moreover, it is recurrent the interaction of users with the official profiles of companies (especially when they want to complain about some product, service or corporative position), as well as the interaction of fans with the profiles of celebrities - and all these interactions are the aim of recent academic research (Primo, 2009; Santos et al., 2010; Kouloumpis; Wilson; Moore, 2011; Martinez; Romero; Soler, 2014; Muñoz; García-Guardia,

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2016). Another aspect related to Twitter that acquires relevance in recent studies is the prediction of the political feeling of its users, as well as the electoral results in many countries (the study of Tumasjan et al., 2010, for instance, claims that Twitter was an important vehicle of political deliberation in the German parliamentary elections of 2009 and that, although it does not correspond to a representative sample of the German electorate, the analysis of the *Twittersphere* worked as a type of electoral *crystal ball*). Politicians with global reach (like Barack Obama, Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump) are studied by what they write on Twitter, as well as Brazilian politicians - see, for instance, the study of Machado (2017) on a set of posts of ten profiles of Brazilian politicians. In the fields of Education and Teaching, Twitter has been explored as a *support tool* to teaching (Teixeira; Medeiros; Gomes, 2011; Castelano et al., 2012; Netto Costa; Ferreira, 2013).

There are several cases of racism, xenophobia and prejudice on Twitter. In Brazil, specifically, such cases are related to homosexuals, transgenders, women, indigenous people and people from northeastern Brazil - the latter being considered, mistakenly, as responsible for the two elections of Dilma Rousseff (2010 and 2014)[8]. In this sense, Recuero (2015) shows how the social networks strengthen and promote symbolic violence (produced, in accordance with Bourdieu, by the language). For the mentioned author, social medias have given space to the reproduction of all types of discourses, including those inciting hatred and promoting violence. Protected by a screen (sometimes not addressing specifically nobody) and, in a certain way, affected by the collapse of the contextualization (due to the small number of characters allowed in each post), individuals and groups let out animosities and resentment of all kinds.

Specifically concerning the indigenous peoples on Twitter, we highlight the work of Favero (2015), presenting the activist movement *Sou Guarani-Kaiowá* [I am *Guarani-Kaiowá*], that happened on Facebook and Twitter in 2012. The author shows that the situation experienced by the *Guarani-Kaiowá* people in the state of Mato Grosso do Sul (forced by the Federal Justice to leave their lands) gained national visibility by means of the social networks - in Facebook, the users adopted, in their profiles, *Guarani-Kaiowá* as a family name and, on Twitter, all the manifestations were

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made by means of the hashtags #GenocídioGuaraniKaiowa, #SouGuarani-Kaiowa and #SomosTodosGuaraniKaiowa. In a similar direction, Monarcha (2010) shows how much the profiles of both pro-indigenous and indigenous organizations proliferate, like the users from the *Aikewára* ethnicity, from Pará state.

Following these brief considerations on Twitter and the academic studies on it, it is important to emphasize that the posts analyzed in the present research were gathered from the search mechanism of Twitter[9], initially using the keyword "*índio*" [indigenous person] in the period between April 1st and 30th, 2017. The results of this search were too wide and little productive[10]. Therefore, we made a new research using the keywords "*Abril Indígena*" [Indigenous April], "*Acampamento Terra Livre*" [Free Land Occupation] and, finally, "*Dia do Índio*" [Indigenous Day], in order to circumscribe the investigation to the posts that used imagetic and oral texts produced and placed in circulation in April 2017, on the occasion of the march of the indigenous peoples in Brasília (DF). Screen captures of such posts were made, as well as the repercussions through the discussion lines, which called threads. We did not aim to identify the *original* posts – triggering discussions on the indigenous peoples on Twitter -, but we paid attention, as much as possible, to the way the line of conversation was established (who answered to whom, who challenged whom, who agreed with whom, etc.).

On the Body from a Cultural Perspective

While the social networks form a field of research of recent exploration, the topic of the body and its multiple cultural meanings already forms a substantial set of studies and theorization. In the preface to the second edition of *Políticas do Corpo* [Policies of the Body], Denise Sant'Anna (2005, p. 9) emphasizes that, in the 1990s, "[…] the history of the representations and the uses of the body did not have yet the importance nowadays assigned to this subject in the research in Human Sciences developed in Brazil". In fact, even though the approach of the topic by different areas of the Humanities already was quite popular in Europe and in the United States[11], it took a long time to happen in national scope, being restricted to the domains of the Biological and Biomedical Sciences. Considered in these

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areas as a type of substratum "[…] naturally given and unquestionable, on top of which social and cultural systems of meaning are raised in a separate and independent way" (Silva, 2000, p. 31), the topic started to generate academic interest from the finding that the body - and its care, limits, interventions - has acquired, in recent years, an unprecedented cultural centrality. Each aspect related to it seemed to be transformed, contemporaneously, in obsession and, occasionally, in a great business:

> We live in a time when the only flash that seems to remain is from the body itself, a true depositary of the identity of each one and where, simultaneously, the most radical doubts on the knowledge that we have about it are presented. On one hand, we seem to believe on salvation through the body; on the other hand, we dig deep the skepticism on the knowledge and the technological devices that we have at our disposal to control and improve it. Because of the scientific and technological progress developed in spheres so diverse concerning biomedicine, genetic engineering, organs and tissues transplants, reproduction, plastic surgery, implants or physiology of the exercise, the body became a new territory of exercise of individual freedoms. It is not only the genetic engineering that proposes to us a new architecture of the body; the engineers of materials, the physicists and the surgery also are involved in the process of creation of hybrid beings composed of organic and electronic elements. The expression *cyborg* began to name corporal forms that do not integrate the old notion of the body as flesh anymore. The body is not an expression of a fixed data of the nature anymore, but gradually is subject to the dictates of the options and choices of the consumption society (Gomes, 2009, p. 14-15).

In the Education field, the body in its materiality, as substratum (biological, physiological, genetic, psychological) of pedagogical knowledge – on the child established as a student – has always enjoyed of certain centrality[12], but it was only from the 1990s that there was an intense proliferation of studies that began to dislocate the more traditional concepts that predominated in this field of studies. In this same context, it also emerged a special interest for the analysis "of the role and the place of the body in education, curriculum and pedagogy" (Silva, 2000, p. 30-31). Such interest was stimulated by the entrance of the post-modern, post-structuralist and post-critical theorizations in the field of Education - those based on the philosophy of the difference, the feminist and gender studies; in the so-called queer theory; in the multiculturalist studies; in the ethnic-racial theoriza-

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tions; in the post-colonial theorizations; in the cultural studies; in the cultural studies of science; in the Foucauldian studies, etc. All these theoretical sources

> […] accomplish, in the Brazilian educational field, replacements, ruptures and changes of emphases in relation to critical research. Their productions and inventions have thought educational practices, curricula and pedagogies that point to the opening, the transgression, the subversion, the multiplication of meanings and to the difference (Paraíso, 2004, p. 284-285).

Moreover, it is important to mention that such sources have in common the understanding that the linguistic processes of meaning are culturally and historically used by the subjects to build or, yet, *to manufacture* the meanings of the things of the world - and that this manufacturing happens discursively in a precarious, uncertain and unstable way in the daily *game* of the language (Hall, 2016).

The body is seen, in this setting, in different ways: as one of the beings of the biological narrative on the things of the world (and, therefore, it is considered as a *hybrid* of the nature and the culture); as "[…] a book, a surface of inscription; of 'provisional writings' […] or writings that are marked 'forever' producing themselves, through their statements, the bodies" (Santos, 1997, p. 85); as an element that can be molded, disciplined and regulated by the discourses and by the power, as well as handled in a set (in a population) in order to be economically and socially productive (from a Foucauldian perspective); and, also, as a "cultural, social and historical construct" (Silva, 2000, p. 31) – actively and daily produced by several instances of the culture and different oral and imagetic texts (marketing pieces, textbooks, documentary films, articles in newspapers and magazines, social networks posts, etc.) and that serve, quite often, as a type of fuel for the discussions concerning identity and difference. It is of this last perspective – that sees a series of representations of indigenous body being produced, disseminated, reinforced, challenged in the social networks – that we will deal, particularly, in this paper.

Indigenous Bodies Represented on Twitter

When examining the posts made by internauts on Twitter, it immediately calls the attention the predominance of images that reinforce the ge-

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neric identity of an *indigenous person*, through signs like the semi-naked body, corporal paintings, bow, arrow, spear, headdress, being that these signs were mobilized by the indigenous people themselves - who, in this context, are the *referent* (or *reference object*) of the photographic images. As Nöth clarifies (2000, p. 147), the distinction between the concept of *reference object* – assigning something that is beyond the language - in opposition to the concept of *meaning* – assigning the meaning that the language produces on the mind of a subject – originally comes from the German philosopher Friedrich Ludwig Gottlob Frege (1892). In Charles Sanders Peirce's semiotics, this distinction acquires a more sophisticated character, in the extent that the North-American semioticist understands that every process of meaning involves a triad composed of a sign (also called *representamen*), which makes the mediation between an *object* and a mind, called *interpretant* (Peirce, 2014, CP1, P. 480), being each one of the three elements defined by the position that it occupies at the moment of semiosis. Thus, the reference object is not fixed, as it can be read as a sign, if, in another configuration, it is relating to another object of reference. Santaella (2000, p. 159) synthesizes the way how these three elements are related, in the Peircean semiotics, claiming that the sign is something that, "[…] in a certain way and to a certain extent, intends to represent, i.e., to be for, to make present something else, different of it, its object, producing, as a result of this relation of reference, an effect in a potential or real mind".

In semiotic terms, the pictures produced during the event must be understood as *signs*; the indigenous people and all the objects, clothes, paintings and adornments that they were bearing when being photographed are the *object* of the produced images; finally, the meanings that the Twitter internauts had assigned to the images are *interpretants*. When showing themselves to the cameras carrying objects and ornaments like headdresses, bows and arrows – even though such objects also compose a system of stereotyped signs on their identities in the official historiography –, the indigenous people, in the context of the march, invested in the production of a generic representation of their identities as a strategy to confer visibility to their social demands and policies.

During this specific episode, therefore, more than marking the existing cultural diversity among the 240 indigenous ethnicities of Brazil, the inter-

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est of the indigenous people congregated there was to construct an identitarian image easily recognizable by the public to which the manifestations are aimed, so that their voices could be heard as they had emanated from one, common, homogeneous body. After all, the policies of the Brazilian government for the indigenous peoples in general have affected all the ethnicities in a similar way, as often the indigenous people are treated by the governmental instances as if they were one only people. Moreover, in the daily clashes and in the fights for the guarantee of the rights established in the 1988 Federal Constitution, the indigenous collectives adhere to the generic identity of *indigenous*, under which it is sheltered the legal dispositions that assure them the exclusive usufruct of their lands, the use of their languages and the updating of their specific cultural practices and their systems of beliefs (Brasil, 1988, art. 231 and art. 210, II).

However, to be able to identify the mark of the ethnical diversity in these signs, the receptor needs to know and mobilize, at least, some cultural and aesthetic codes of the Brazilian indigenous ethnicities. In case he is not able to put these codes into action – what seems to be the case of great part of the Twitter users who produced, replicated and commented on images linked to the march –, the trend is that they are read from the stereotypes that are usually linked to the generic identity of an indigenous person.

In Picture 2, an internaut questions the ethnical belonging of the male indigenous represented in the photo because, while he recognizes semiotic elements linked to the generic identity of an indigenous person, he also identifies signs that are far from it. When using the specific term *yanomami* (the name of one of the Brazilian indigenous ethnicities often mentioned in news on the Amazon), the internaut refers to an assumed specific ethnic belonging; however, in the sequence, he claims ironically that *yanomami* means *Nike doze mola* [Twelve-spring Nike], challenging, in this way, the authenticity of the subject represented not only concerning his belonging to the specific category *yanomami*, but also the category of *indigenous* itself. The comments from other internauts follow the same line, questioning the indigenous authenticity from supposed privileges like charging tolls in roads that cross indigenous lands or enjoy consumer goods – as in the oral statement *os caras têm Hilux do ano* [the guys have brand new Hilux pickup trucks].

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Picture 2 – Thread from @otmar03 on *Twitter*. Source: Online access[13].

Something similar happens in Picture 3. In the foreground and center of the photo there is a man ornate with necklaces, headdress and corporal paintings that fill all the visible surface of the body. It is this body that is in focus, framed by others, also ornate, wielding bows, arrows and spears. A denotative or literal meaning frames him in the generic category of *indigenous*. The oral statement *dia do índio para quem caralho* [day of the indigenous for whom, fuck] follows the image and establishes a new code, of challenge, from which another meaning is established: the commemorative vision of the date set to mark the formal existence of the Brazilian indigenous people and their supposed contributions to the national culture is questioned. The text, twitted on April 25, 2017, continues informing that the Military Policy repressed the indigenous demonstration in Brasília and that the indigenous people *had invaded the reflecting pool*, suggesting that they should be, therefore, accountable or blamed for the police reaction.

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Picture 3 – Post from @isabeuvis on *Twitter*. Source: Online access[14].

As it can be perceived from the two examples previously presented, what seems to bother a great number of internauts is that the images show bodies that do not fully correspond to what would be recognized as the *authentic indigenous person*. In them, even though there are elements that point to a generic indigenous representation, it is also expressed the cultural transformations processed and the dynamism of the indigenous practices, to which manufactured objects are incorporated - clothes, shoes, cell phones, photograph cameras, video cameras, etc. These signs produce a split or rupture in the representation settled by the stereotypes. In the comments made to the image, the use of Nike tennis shoes and the purchase of Hilux pickup trucks were mentioned as signs that would disclose the lack of cultural *pureness* of the indigenous people, what would place under suspicion the set of specific political-legal actions aimed to the protection of these ethnicities.

The stereotype is an ambivalent way of production of meaning supported on simplification, what assures its repetition. For Homi Bhabha (2005, p. 117), "[…] a stereotype is not a simplification because it is a false representation of a given reality. It is a simplification because it is a bound, fixed form of representation". When reflecting on the role of the stereotype in ethnic-racial discourses and representations, Stuart Hall (1997) claims that the stereotype is a type of representational practice that makes functional a racialized regimen of representation and operates where there are

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inequalities in power relations. For Hall, the representation by stereotypes "[…] reduces, essentializes, naturalizes and establishes the 'difference'. […] Another trace of the stereotype is the practice of 'enclosure' and exclusion. It symbolically establishes limits and excludes everything that does not belong to it" (Hall, 1997, p. 258). Stereotypes on indigenous people are strategies of racialization to the extent that they support inclusion and exclusion criteria based on biotypes, and to the extent that they are associated with a certain space – the forest –, promoting an approximation between the ideas of indigenous and nature associated with the binomial civilization/primitivism. A stereotype that is formed by the simplification of the meanings and their reiteration, but it is important to mark that it is also linked to historical discourses and the ways of seeing that continue operating in our culture. In the textual and iconographic records on the indigenous peoples of Brazil from the 16th century on, it has been produced, reaffirmed or challenged meanings that, in turn, circulate in distinct cultural productions of our time.

The first description of these lands – the letter from the clerk Pero Vaz de Caminha to King D. Manuel, dated from 1500 – elaborates a positive image of the subjects that inhabited here. It is marked, in the mentioned text, the innocence and simplicity, as well as the supposed malleability of the indigenous people both for the enterprises of conversion to the Christian faith and for the work at the service of the Crown: "Our Lord, who gave them good bodies and good faces, just like to good men, certainly brought us here for a cause" (Caminha apud Oliveira; Freire, 2006, p. 26). During the 16th century,

> […] it was up to religious missionaries, travelers and Portuguese, French and Dutch nobles, who had circulated through Brazil or had established here, to act as chroniclers of life in the new world. Their reports were illustrated by several artists who disseminated marking images for the European imagery (Oliveira; Freire, 2006, p. 27)[15].

In the traveling iconography and literature of the 16th and 17th centuries, it is represented, for instance, an exuberant landscape that would justify the investments of the Portuguese Crown in the colonization and, in it, the indigenous people are inserted, described either by pleasant physical traits and useful to the colonial project, either by animalistic traits and bar-

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baric practices. Some of these reports were made by castaways or adventurers who lived among the indigenous people, like Hans Staden, captured by the *Tupinambás* in 1553 and freed around one year later. His work, with descriptive texts of the habits of this indigenous people and 52 original engravings, had more than 60 editions and was responsible for the consolidation of the cannibal indigenous image, recreated in many Brazilian cultural productions.

Bosi (1992) claims that it was produced, along the centuries of the Brazilian colonization, dense descriptions of indigenous rituals, the belief in shamanism, the intake of beverages, the dances and rituals, the adornments, the corporal painting - a set of practices that established oppositions between nature and culture, between civility and primitivism, documents that locate the indigenous peoples in an order and a hierarchy founded on Eurocentric referential. According to Oliveira and Freire (2006), it is especially from the 19th century on that it starts to circulate, in the Brazilian context, a wider set of images on the indigenous peoples, produced by drawers and painters - Jean Baptiste Debret, João Maurício Rugendas, for instance - who were part of scientific missions coming to Brazil to observe, record and classify species. The same authors claim that, "[…] illustrating several travel books, such representations were records that later became object of study by scientists, and at the same time they made it possible to the lay public to strengthen common sense impressions proper to the time of the Romanticism" (Freire, 2006, p. 94). This wide set of images, often present in textbooks of Arts and History of Brazil, collaborates to consolidate a corporal image made of more or less linear traits. These representations are easily apprehended and quickly recognized, conforming the indigenous bodies and practices to a *same*, a generic identity.

Martin-Barbero (1997, p. 260) claims, in this sense, that

> […] for a long time, the indigenous question was kept bound to a populist and romantic thought, that identified the indigenous person as the *same*, and this, in turn, with the *primitive*. And converted into touchstone of the identity, the indigenous person became the only remaining trace of authenticity: this secret place where the pureness of our cultural roots subsists and is kept.

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Taking as a basis pureness and primitivism stereotypes, any change in the indigenous life style is qualified as a *cultural loss*. A supposed indigenous pureness, linked to the condition of always being the same, makes one to think that all mobility would be equivalent, therefore, to the lack of authenticity. However, the indigenous cultures are in constant production and re-elaboration, even when established on solid bases of ancestry, and their dynamism operates through distinct factors. Garcia Canclini (2008) considers thinking the changes in the indigenous cultures from three plans: the first one is related to external pressures that produce the gradual impoverishment, the loss of lands and resources for survival; the second refers to the changes that operate from within, expressed in microphysical transformations in the daily practices, in the ways of organizing the work and in social relations; and, finally, the third plan concerns to the policies of identity, that are expressed in the indigenous movements of fight for land, for the ethnical self-affirmation, for the right of political representation, for instance.

In demonstrations like the *Acampamento Terra Livre* and in marches that congregate distinct ethnicities with a common objective, many signs are used in a strategical way – for instance, the body ornate and bent to the stereotype, carrying weapons immediately associated (in the mainstream culture) to the indigenous way of life. In this sense, Picture 4 looks exemplary and presents, in the foreground, a group of subjects which meaning is easily linked with the indigenous stereotype. Their bodies are partially exposed, they are painted, ornate with headdresses and necklaces made with colorful feathers, seeds and vegetal fibers and they carry bows, arrows and spears. In a connotative sense, though, the image can mobilize distinct cultural codes, mobilizing, for instance, the idea of fight and confrontation – they are in movement, their faces may connote tension, seriousness and concern, they carry spears in vertical position and wield bow and arrow to suggest that they can be used at any time. Among the attack and defense weapons, there is a printed excerpt of the Constitutional text, occupying the top center of the image, highlighted by the shades of blue in the sky.

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Picture 4 – Post from @recigana13 on *Twitter*. Source: Online access[16].

Mobilizing a wider set of images that form our western artistic or aesthetic repertoires, we can remember Eugène Delacroix's popular painting, *La Liberté guidant le peuple*, made in celebration to Revolution of July 1830, in which freedom is portrayed in the allegoric picture of a woman who holds a weapon in the left hand and the flag of France in the right one. In the case of Picture 4, however, the constitutional text functions as an allegory of the freedom that leads the indigenous people, while it evokes a set of rights claimed by the participants of the march. Although the image may also function to align the distinct subjects to a generic indigenous identity, as we have previously claimed, it is part of a wider political strategy, aimed to confer visibility to the fights in common of the indigenous peoples.

We observed, in the set of posts gathered for the research, that the transformations in the indigenous cultures bring expectations of fixed and essential identities, as well as of predictable standards of behavior. Considering the high number of ironic comments concerning the presence of signs, in the pictures, that are not part of the stereotyped identity of the Brazilian indigenous person, it is possible to claim that both the idea of cultural pureness and the racialized regimen of representation still function as very strong interpretive codes in the Brazilian cultural scene. In the comments from the internauts in Pictures 5, 6 and 7 – which are representative of a great number of other ones gathered throughout this research –, what pre-

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dominates are ironic claims concerning the presence of signs that break with the idea of the supposed indigenous cultural pureness, which are divided in two major categories: signs that point what is expected from the indigenous body and signs on what is expected from their belongings.
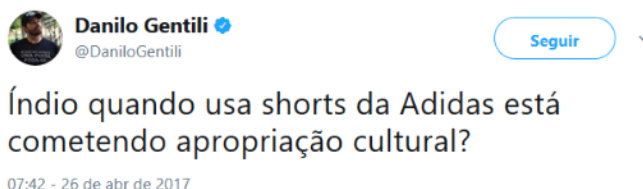
Picture 5 – Post from @DaniloGentili on *Twitter*. Source: Online access[17].

The post from the Brazilian comedian Danilo Gentili (@Danilo Gentili), made on April 26, 2017 had 5,360 likes, was retweeted 1,877 times and gave origin to a series of threads from which we took the following posts (Pictures 6 and 7):

Picture 6 – Thread from @bitNunes on *Twitter*. Source: Online access[18].

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Picture 7 – Posts from @brilhanteRezend and @welingtonmoura on *Twitter*. Source: Online access[19].

In the highlights, the criticism from the internauts is aimed to the fact that the indigenous do not correspond to a certain stereotype on weapons and objects that they should carry, as they use electronic equipment, garments and footwear from a mass culture, besides airline services, for instance, what would convert them into *fake indigenous people*. The arguments of the internauts claim for the accurate fitting of the indigenous people to what is naturalized in the common repertoire of signs of our culture, so that, then, they are recognized as *true* and *authentic* and not as *fake indigenous people*. According to Hall (1997, p. 258), the stereotype organizes the social and "[…] establishes a symbolic border between the 'normal' and the deviation', the 'normal' and the 'pathological', the 'acceptable' and the 'unacceptable'". In the set of images presented previously, the criticism of the internauts is established in an even more blunt way when it is the bodies themselves that express this supposed deviation in relation to a biotype considered proper to the Brazilian indigenous people. In short, when using a racialized regimen of representation of the indigenous as interpretive code, the Twitter internauts recognize, as an authentic indigenous person, only the subject that presents a beardless body and that does not to move away

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from the primitivism assumed by a life lived far from the supposed civilization, from its artifacts and consumer goods. The oral statements are ironic and, at the same time, offer an anchoring to the images, capturing them for the stereotype and, in this way, disqualifying the indigenous people who are portrayed in them.

Final Words

Our purpose, in this paper, was to analyze the representations of the indigenous body produced on Twitter, and, for such, we chose an annual event that happens in the Federal Capital and gathers distinct peoples. In the focus of our attention were some posts referring to the indigenous march, developed in the 14th edition of the *Acampamento Terra Livre*, in April 2017. We highlight, when we resume the course of analysis, the pedagogical character of social networks like Twitter. The representations produced in the internauts' posts – reaffirming or challenging meanings on the indigenous bodies – are not expressions of a reality, but instead producers of this reality. As we claim, the signification processes are used by the subjects to construct discursively the things of the world, but such constitution happens in a provisory and unstable way, always subject to challenge.

Our analysis showed that the body emerges, in twitted and retweeted images, as a cultural construct, as a depositary of the identity and, in the case of the indigenous people, as a visible space in which it would be inscribed traits of authenticity or marks of deviation. The body is, at the same time, biological and cultural, but in this study, we were attentive to how a type of culture translation is accomplished, to the extent that it is inscribed, in the body, ways of being that would express what we are and what the others are or can be. We agree with Santos (1997, p. 86), when he claims that the marks that are printed in the bodies "[…] can constrain, amaze, capture or cause grief to those who look - they are expressed as engendering of a culture; ways of life/practices that are printed/fold/bend in the body".

In the analyzed images, the indigenous body is, among other things, a space in which stereotypes of primitivism, pureness and authenticity are affirmed and challenged. The indigenous people themselves use a generic identity as strategy to confer visibility to their social and political demands and as tool of fight, being formed a *collective body* and in movement. How-

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ever, doing so, they activate codes that later are tested in the transit and exchanges of messages among Twitter users.

Finally, we emphasize that Twitter is a productive space for future research and that, in the case of this study, it made possible to examine some forms of image production in the present, their diffusion in social networks, their potential to produce contemporary representations – based on historically engendered images – related to the indigenous body. In this complex, agile and versatile network of cultural production, some forms of activism are reinforced, and symbolic violence is fostered and potentialized, expressed especially, in the examined posts, in statements that disqualify the forms of life and expression of the political will of the indigenous peoples.

Notes

1   The 1988 Federal Constitution, in the Art. 231, makes the Government accountable for the demarcation and protection of indigenous lands (that are heritage of the Union, for exclusive usufruct of the indigenous peoples). Already in the transitory constitutional dispositions, it is established, in the Art. 67, that "[…] the Union will conclude the demarcation of indigenous lands in the period of five years from the promulgation of the Constitution". According to data from FUNAI (http://www.funai.gov.br/index.php/indios-no-brasil/terras-indigenas), currently 435 indigenous lands are regularized, corresponding to half of the total existing land in the country. The slowness in the administrative procedures and the used strategies, in the Legislative and the Judiciary, to hinder the demarcation are among the major motivations of the indigenous for the demonstrations developed along April.

2   The Articulation of the Indigenous Peoples of Brazil (APIB) is an instance of agglutination and national reference of the indigenous movement in Brazil, created in the 2005 edition of the *Acampamento Terra Livre* (ATL).

3   Available in: <https://twitter.com/danielaabade/status/857585992831815680>. Access in: April 30, 2017.

4   The post was made on April 27th, 2017 and received more than 40 thousand likes. In comments from internauts, the authenticity of the photograph is put under suspicion, what also motivates a debate on the legitimacy of the demonstration and, ultimately, on the *authenticity* of the indigenous people themselves. The picture's credits are inserted by a user, who locates it in the

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Instagram of André Coelho, from the newspaper *O Globo*, an aspect that seems to certify its *truthfulness*.

5   In November 2017, the number of characters of the messages exchanged by Twitter users increased from 140 to 280.

6   Jack Dorsey claims that the initial idea of Twitter emerged from his experience with a blogging platform - the *LiveJournal*, a type of virtual journal that still exists nowadays (https://www.livejournal.com/). He and his friends wanted a platform more dynamic than *LiveJournal* to share short updates and information in real time, thus emerging Twitter (see https://www.flickr.com/photos/jackdorsey/182613360/in/photostream/ to have access to the rough draft, in paper, of the initial idea of Twitter - accessed on August 29, 2017).

7   There are lists of the most popular publications in the whole Twitter, but there is also the possibility of filtering the most liked posts by country.

8   The Silva's MSc thesis (2016) analyzes the hatred discourses against people from northeastern Brazil in the social networks on occasion of the 2014 Brazilian presidential elections.

9   Available in: <https://twitter.com/search-advanced>. Access in: August 30, 2017.

10   To give an idea of the extent, in eight hours of analysis of the results it was not even possible to reach the end of the mentions to the word *índio* made by Twitter users in the first day chosen as the time cut.

11   Michel Foucault had already been producing, since the 1960s, writings that questioned the socially established standards concerning body and sexuality. Besides Foucault (and, in a certain way, inspired by him), sociologists like Alan Petersen, Deborah Lupton, Mike Featherstone, Bryan Turner and David Le Breton, for instance, started to develop studies between the 1980s and the 1990s on the cultural and social production of the body. Historians like Alain Corbain, Jean-Jacques Courtine and Georges Vigarello focus their studies on the displacement of the meanings produced on the body along the time.

12   According to Nóbrega (2005), Renaissance pedagogical manuals (for instance, *On civility in children* by Erasmus of Rotterdam, published in 1530) already emphasized the importance of the education of the gestures, the behaviors, the hygiene, the corporal *decorum*, as it was understood that the external manifestations of the body had to do with the internal dispositions of the individual.

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The author provides a series of other examples - amongst them, *Emile* by Rousseau (1762) - to claim that, historically, education has been concerned with the body for correlating it to the mind and to the soul. Several other authors could be listed here (Freud, Piaget, Lacan, etc.), however, this discussion will not be made in this paper.

[13] Available in: <https://twitter.com/otmar03/status/857239514829524992>. Access in: April 30, 2017.

[14] Available in: <https://twitter.com/isabeuvis/status/857018026411134976>. Access in: April 30, 2017.

[15] Some works from the 16th century that associated text and images (woodcuts) and that collaborated to establish representations on the Brazilian indigenous people were: the general chronicles by the Portuguese Pero de Magalhães Gandavo (1980), compiled in *Tratado da terra do Brasil - História da província de Santa Cruz* [The histories of Brazil], from 1576; the historical chronicles by the French Jean de Léry (1961), *Viagem à terra do Brasil* [History of a Voyage to the Land of Brazil, Also Called America], from 1578, and André Thevet (1978), *As singularidades da França Antártica* [The New Found World, or Antarctike], from 1556, as well as the ethnographic descriptions made by the German Hans Staden (1974), compiled in the work *Duas viagens ao Brasil* [Hans Staden's True History: An Account of Cannibal Captivity in Brazil], from 1557 (illustrated in later editions by Theodore de Bry).

[16] Available in: <https://twitter.com/recigana13/status/857217845586952193>. Access in: April 30, 2017.

[17] Available in: <https://twitter.com/danielaabade/status/857585992831815680>. Access in: April 30, 2017.

[18] Available in: <https://twitter.com/BitNunes/status/857630372594450432>. Access in: April 30, 2017.

[19] Available in: <https://twitter.com/wellingtonmoura/status/857654745007353857>. Access in: April 30, 2017.

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