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CRITIQUE-FORM, FORMS OF CRITIQUE: THE DIFFERENT DIMENSIONS OF THE DISCOURSE OF DISCONTENT[1]

Avenida Paulista, São Paulo, 20/06/2013
Photo: Caio Kenji/G1

Rua São Clemente, Botafogo, Rio de Janeiro, 25/03/2014
Photo: Tandy Firmino

These two images show situations of popular mobilization. In both examples, people display signs (in one, a poster; in the other, a banner) protesting against a situation causing them some kind of displeasure. The first was taken on one of the various protests making up the series that became known as *Jornadas de Junho*, the June Uprising – when, in 2013, thousands of people took to Brazil's streets for all kinds of reasons, initially to protest against a price hike in bus fares, but, as events unfolded, more especially to demonstrate their dissatisfaction with politics in the country (in its various dimensions, from government to the electoral system, from parliament to local authorities).[2] The second image shows a protest deployed by residents of the Santa Marta favela in Botafogo, a district in the South Zone (*Zona Sul*) of Rio de Janeiro, on March 25th, 2014, to complain about the high electricity rates charged by Light, the company responsible for providing the service in the city.[3]

On the poster we can see the former soccer player Pelé, wearing regal attire, being ironized. On June 19th, 2013, he had recorded a video in the middle of the FIFA Confederations Cup being hosted in the country, asking Brazilians to forget the demonstrations and support the Brazilian team in the competition, during which, moreover, many protests occurred throughout the country. The phrase on the cardboard reproduces a famous quip made by another former player, Romário, on January 15th, 2005: "Pelé, when quiet, is a poet. When he opens his mouth, he just talks shit." The rebuke was in response to the sugges-

tion of the 'King of Football' that Romário should end his career (which would happen only in 2009) – and it was used in the protests to criticize the former star player for his inopportune and unwarranted remarks.[4] The banner, for its part, spells out a more direct message, accusing the public service provider of charging abusive electricity rates. After the implantation of a new public security policy, the Police Pacification Units (*Unidades de Polícia Pacificadora*: UPPs),[5] in 2008, Light began to regularize its grid infrastructure starting out from the favelas with UPPs. According to the power company, the grid was compromised by electricity theft – a practice known as installing a *gato* ('cat') or clandestine connection. At that moment, the company was billing residents of Santa Marta for amounts that had leaped from just a few reais to hundreds.[6]

Distinct situations, but both images make explicit a fundamental operation: critique, the communication to another person or other people one's discontent with some situation. This comprises an imperative action of social life (Hirschman, 1973; Boltanski, 2015; Boltanski & Thévenot, 1999; Chateauraynaud, 1991, 2004) traversed all the time by the mutual valuation of actions by actors (Weber, 1947; Scott & Lyman, 2008). Simultaneously, placed side-by-side, the two cases call attention to a fundamental element of this activity: it depends on it formalization as a device or *dispositif* (Boltanski & Thévenot, 1991; Peeters & Charlier, 1999) – that is, on its composition as a construct of elements (objects) capable of operationalizing something. Critique can thus be understood as a tool, formed by pieces. In this way, it becomes clear that the formation process of this device is one of the fundamental elements of its realization (Werneck, 2012) – or, in other words, of the definition of a situation (Thomas, 1966) as one 'of critique.'

This article aims to analyse critique from the viewpoint of the role performed by its formal dimensions in its realization. To do so, we turn to a set of research studies conducted separately, each with its own peculiarities and its own empirical and theoretical framings,[7] but here placed in dialogue based on their main point in common: the manner in which actors operate the formal dimension of critique in order to construct it. On one hand, Alexandre Werneck analyses, through a series of empirical fronts, how critique operates in two different registers: in some situations, in a modulated form, that is, adjusted continuously to avoid the formation of fully critical moments (Boltanski & Thévenot, 1991), which is observed by him in playful everyday practices known as *zoações*, 'teasings' (Werneck, 2015, 2016); in others, accusatory in form, it is explored especially in the observation of banners from the 2013 demonstrations throughout Brazil, which used humour to criticize the political situation of the country[8] (Werneck, 2018). On the other hand, Pricila Loretti (2016) explores the conflicts that she observed ethnographically from 2011 to 2015 among the residents of the aforementioned Rio favela and electricity company, which began to act more intensively in the area after the implantation of the UPP. In her research, critics

from both sides are presented, especially on the question of electricity prices, which became a polemical issue after the installation of electronic meters, when the cost of bills rose hugely.

The convergence of these two works allowed us to observe critique as a device dissectible into its various elements, components of a "formal form" (Werneck, 2012, p. 40) – which Werneck (2015; 2016) calls a critique-form – and into its various actantional dimensions, which allowed us to comprehend the relevant axes to realizing a critique and mapping a general matrix of its construction.[9] We present below a *formalization* of this matrix, resulting from the analysis of these materials.

The study of critique in its formal dimension aligns with the efforts to model this object of study made by the pragmatic sociology of critique (Boltanski, 2015; 2009) and calls attention to its role in a comprehensive sociology of morality (Werneck, 2014) – that is, to the understanding of how critique is a fundamental device of social accountability (Wright Mills, 1940; Scott & Lyman, 2008) and, therefore, of the operationalization of the moral life of social actors. Here, therefore, we explore and analytically formalize the operation of formalization already pragmatically implemented by social actors by placing themselves in the position of critics. Through this analysis, we can see how they show themselves to be generatively competent (Boltanski, 1990) in the construction and operationalization of a matrix of elements characteristic of the definition of a critique.

CRITIQUE AND ITS DIFFERENT FORMAL DIMENSIONS

As Boltanski & Thévenot (1999: 359-360) describe it:

> The starting situation [of a critical moment] is something like the following: People, involved in ordinary relationships, who are doing things together – let us say, in politics, work, unionism – and who have to coordinate their actions, realize that something is wrong; that they cannot get along anymore; that something has to change. [...] The person who realizes that something does not work rarely remains silent. He (or she) does not keep his feelings to himself. [...] The person must [...] express discontent to the other persons with whom he is performing, until then, a joint action.

One of us (Werneck, 2015: 194-195) has described a protocol for this phenomenon, the critique-form, based on a situation type involving two actants, A and B:

> 1) A, who is in the same situation as B, feels uncomfortable with the status (worth) occupied by B, which proves that A possesses a moral capacity, that is, a faculty to decide what he thinks is right and wrong, what is good or bad for him; 2) A, who also possesses a critical capacity, "perceives that he is unable to stand this state of affairs any longer" and feels compelled to express his dissatisfaction – he could perfectly well remain silent, but instead "does not keep his feelings to himself"; 3) A constructs an assertion – that is, a linguistic expression with the pretence of truth – through which he attempts to demonstrate the problematic nature of the other's status in the situation, calling attention to its lack of legitimacy and thus highlighting the responsibility of the other and holding him to account (Scott &

Lyman, 2008); 4) As Boltanski & Thévenot (1999: 360) show, this attempt to demonstrate the problematic nature cannot be articulated in just any manner; it has a protocol, centred on an inescapable component of critique, its need for proof: in these situations, "persons involved are subjected to an imperative of justification. The one who criticizes other persons must produce justifications in order to support their criticisms just as the person who is the target of the criticisms must justify his or her actions in order to defend his or her own cause."

For this protocol to be fulfilled, we were able to observe in our works and in the dialogue with other works, critique depends on an operation of mutual recognition of its criticality – that is, on a *mise-en-forme*, a shaping or formatting, that permits all those involved to operate their different *actancies* (A and B need to know that the situation in which they find themselves is defined as a critique). The joint observations of our field material allowed us to outline the schema or blueprint of this composition. Boltanski (1990), presenting his study on public denunciation, proposes an actantial system of denunciation that contributes to this configuration. As we shall see here and as Misse & Werneck (2012) demonstrate, denunciation is a type of critique and, although in the case studied by Boltanski it is presented in a visual form aimed at the public, this does not make it any less synthetic of the critique-form – which can be operationalized between any two poles of dispute, public or otherwise. In other words, the research showed that is possible to assert that, as Boltanski (1990: 266-279) proposes with regard to denunciation, any critique is fundamentally a situation constituted by four actants: the one who criticizes (denunciation, in the author's schema), or the *critic* (the denouncer, also in his schema); the one on whose behalf the critique is made, or the *victim*; the one in detriment to whom the critique is made, the *criticized* (the persecutor); and the one before whom the critique is realized, the *judge*. Each actant is taken to be qualified to assume a position and perform their assigned role, and the system will function better the greater the 'worth' (Boltanski & Thévenot, 1991) demonstrated by each actant in their actantial performance. Away from a public level, the system generally reduces down to a dichotomy, such that usually the denunciator or critic is the victim him or herself. In other words, the critique is made in their own favour – although it may also be made in favour of a third party. In a simple dichotomy of this kind, the judge, the moral spectator who will evaluate the question and for whom the critique is performed, is substituted by an operation central to social life: negotiation (Thuderoz, 2010), based on the premise described by Boltanski & Thévenot (1991) of a disposition towards agreement.

From the outset, this introduces a formal dimension that needs to be considered when constructing a critical discourse and their possible types: a critique can occupy two environmental spheres, private or public. According to Cefaï (2002), a public arena – a configuration of actors and/or devices (actants) in which a public mobilizes around a public issue (Gusfield, 1981) – can always be formed around a *publicized* critique. Consequently, highlighting this first axis fundamentally involves understanding how a transition is made between

private and singular critiques and those with a pretence to generality and recognition as a public issue (Boltanski, 1990; Cefaï, 2002). This immediately determines the connection with various axes described below.

This said, what close observation of our two fields made clear is that a critique takes shape in the world through a specific composition of formal dimensions in its realization as critique.[10] In short, then, through this collaborative effort, we were able to observe and conceptualize the construction of formalized critique regarding three types of dimensions:

Metamoral dimensions, those that concern the abstract and metaphysical nature of critique: as well as the already cited environmental setting, there is the need for a break from routine, distance from the group, the competences involved, the regimes of good in question and moral complexity.

Aesthetic dimensions, those that concern the form in which the critique is presented: form of manifestation, the material substance of the display, explicitness, radicality, aggressiveness and presentation of the imagined utopia.

Logical dimensions, those that concern the logical-formal-cognitive nature of critique: degree of objectivity, intelligibility, and tangibility of proofs.

METAMORAL DIMENSIONS
Disruption of routine
In their article on the critical capacity, Boltanski & Thévenot (1999) describe the standard situation of the phenomenon, naming it a critical moment. According to the authors, the expression "which makes reference, at the same time, to the critical activity of the persons and to the unusualness of a moment of crisis" (Boltanski & Thévenot, 1999: 359). A key element for the definition is made explicit: critique involves a rare, non-everyday moment that breaks with routine. Therefore, every actor setting out to make a critique will be faced with the option of causing a rupture in time and space in order to expose their dissatisfaction, defining a critical moment – and, with it, an entire protocol of justification/proof (Boltanski & Thévenot, 1991) – or not. This phenomenology, however, proved even more complex at an empirical level: in his field observations of the playful approach taken to defining a situation, Werneck (2015; 2016) perceived a series of moments in which critique can be operationalized without routine being entirely disrupted, thus producing a modulation of the critique-form. As the author proposes:

> The idea of *modulation* concerns the movement of constant *adjustment* of situated actions [...], varying intensities of *investment* responding to grammatical challenges as they emerge [...]. To modulate means to incorporate a logic of care over the consequences [...], it means advancing in careful doses to produce the realization without a conflict that would threaten the situation. In the case of the investment of moral energy in the form of critique, this involves giving vent to the desire to manifest displeasure but, at the same time, measuring the potential for the interaction [...] to generate problems (Werneck, 2016: 6).

The actor's option to not refrain from expressing displeasure has as its countereffect, therefore, a rupture with the possibility of doing so in a modulated form. A protest march is such a moment of rupture. Indeed the critiques made by residents against Light – such as the banner featured at the beginning of this text – very often follow this same protocol. However, various cases observed ethnographically in the favela and in situations such as those described by Werneck (2015), reveal modulations of critique, concealed through forms of 'teasing,' for instance, a playful discourse in which the critique-form is used as an aesthetic of humorous speech. When, for example, one friend says to another, who is arriving late, that he "arrived early for tomorrow," he is making a critique presented as a joke, which can be read as though it was not a critique, but succeeds in presenting its message of dissatisfaction, thus configuring a modulated critique.

Distance from the group

Another trait revealed by the field observations is that the mobilization of critique is marked by a competent distinction between an *us* and a *them*: internal critique is distinct from external critique; the former is made with an emphasis on group recognition and on how the critical discourse can be made internally or externally to it. When we criticize people with whom we act together but include ourselves in the self-critique, we pursue a different path to when we highlight the errors of others in spheres distinct to our own. This is the difference marked by the expression "washing your dirty laundry in public" (Hutchinson, 1999): from inside, we discuss our issues, however conflictual they may be, with a certain tendency towards loyalty (Hirschman, 1973), aiming to adjust the route of our shared course, rather than expose our differences to outsiders, who might see them as a weakness to be exploited as a weapon to attack us critically. This creates a ritualistic action – a protocol – of the interiority of critique that modulates several of the factors that would be released in its external version. Radicality (which we discuss later) is avoided, for example, in order to avoid the occurrence of a rupture, which would make the critique external.[11]

In Cantão, for instance, a public space of common and collective use in the Santa Marta favela with the format literally of a 'public arena,' residents assembled to debate the proposal for a 'social tariff' formulated by local leaders to be presented the following day to Light, during a visit of a small group of emissaries to the power company. After explaining the idea, which involved establishing a fixed billing amount, the same for all residents, the leader who orchestrated the assembly requested those in agreement to raise their arm. The majority of those present did so. However, one resident asked to speak and said that she was not in agreement because the sharing of the cost did not seem 'fair' to her, given that indiscriminate use of electricity by some residents would cause the average consumption paid by her to rise, and she was not willing to "pay other people's bill." What was fair, in her view, would be for each person to pay for their con-

sumption individually. She was booed by those present and her criticism reject-ed. However, the point that interests us here were the asides: to summarize them, thank goodness that she made the critique there, in their assembly, and not dur-ing the meeting with the company on the following day. Her arguments were considered a threat to the unity of the collective action being taken. Especially, as people said, because she was in tune with the view of the electricity company. If a critique like this had to be made, then it would be much better to express the criticism internally, 'among us' (Boltanski & Thévenot, 1991: 410). 'Among us,' self-critique can be 'more sincere,' containing elements that would not be ex-posed were they to potentially undermine unity through an outside gaze – some-thing that would be considered "friendly fire" (Hutchinson, 1999).

Competences and regimes of good
Since the 1980s, the pragmatic sociology of critique has produced a dense mass of knowledge and reflection around its central category.[12] In this item, we high-light two dimensions – fairly well-established and, for this reason, merely re-called here and framed within this more general panorama. They have become fundamental to the discussion on the dimensions of critique.

The first of these is the model of regimes of competence, which high-lights the evaluative parameter of actors involved in critical situations. As Bol-tanski & Thévenot (1991: 183) define the concept, a competence is "a capacity to recognize the nature of a situation and put into action the principle […] to which it corresponds." This type of framing, notably based on Boltanski's work on regimes of action (1990) and on suffering (1993) and Thévenot's work on regimes of engagement (2006), allows the mapping of two competences privi-leged in critiques: justice and piety. The routing of questions in one of these two grammars determines the route taken by the critiques themselves.

The other point is the pair of axioms of good privileged by the model: on one hand the axiom of common good that governs, for Boltanski & Thévenot (1991; 1999; Thévenot, 2006), regimes of justice; and, on the other hand, the axiom of ágape, which governs the practices of piety (Boltanski, 1990; 1993). Werneck (2012: 300-313) has shown the need to broaden this framework to include a greater complexity of regimes of good, each with different evaluative perceptions of the actors concerning the direction of the good: self good; good of the other; common good; universal good.

As we could observe in our research, each of these two points – justice and piety – establishes particular ways of formalizing a critique. In our field observations, these were manifested in various forms and could be analysed regarding to how this variation played out. Owing to the limits of this text, we shall not explore these two dimensions at length, especially since they have already been described extensively in the cited literature. The critical point to note here is that their allocation at the starting point of the set of dimensions

involved in the realization of critiques – that is, the fact that a critique usually alternates between demanding justice or appealing for piety in the face of suffering – always divides investment of the good in two different directions. In other words, the allocation of the good to some pole of the situation, as well as those involved, and the applicability – or meaningfulness (Weber, 1947) – of this allocation for those involved, are always an issue.

Moral complexity
As Boltanski & Thévenot (1991) also show, when people find themselves involved in a conflictual situation, not only are they subjected to critiques, they are also submitted to an imperative of justification. Inspired by an axis of a sociology of meanings and motives of social actions based on Weber (1947) and its pragmatic apprehension through Wright Mills (1940), we wish to expand this imperative to a more fundamental dimension, accountability (Scott & Lyman, 2008). Hence, someone who makes a critique needs to present accounts in order to support his argument against another person; and the person who receives it needs to respond with an adequate account – which may be a justification of an apology (Scott & Lyman, 2008; Werneck, 2012). This imperative, however, comes across a limit: the fact that it depends on the disposition of the actors to contemplate a plurality of moral frames of reference used to sustain the actions/situations. Hence the dimension in play in this topic is the amplitude of the moral complexity contemplable (Werneck, 2012: 62-64; Misse & Werneck, 2012) – that is, how much the critique opens up to contemplate the moral of the other side. As a consequence, the critique can be classified as an accountable type (when an account is expected that confers meaning to the criticized action) or an accusatorial type (when a culprit is sought, simplifying the moral complexity of the world in favour of a single morality, devising the necessary punishment).

Hence, in the case of the accountable critique, we are faced with situations in which those involved potentially try to encounter a solution that contemplates the interests of both sides of the conflict. In the case of the quarrel between residents and Light, for example, representatives of the company appeared on a live episode of the Association Information Program on the Santa Marta Community Radio[13] in order to provide clarifications to the residents about the electricity model adopted in the community. At one particular moment, a female listener called in to say:

> – First, Light arrived in the community saying that it was going to charge a flat rate of R$ 15. Afterwards, it billed people for absurd amounts. I wanted to see if the government came here to help things get better or worse, because there are people here who are unable to pay these absurd bills, which reach R$ 500. Some people pay even more. I want you to explain this.

Having heard the criticism, the company representative was given the chance to provide an explanation:

– What's your address? I want to leave here and check everything you're saying and take the necessary measures. [...] I still need some information that you didn't give me. [...] [At] the two events [explanatory public meetings held by the power company in the favela], we made it clear that it's not a flat rate, it's a tiered consumption. We explained this to the community. [...] And, in this interim, in this meantime, we have begun to run educational programs in people's homes: we've undertaken electrical reforms, we swapped bulbs, fridges and [we distributed] information leaflets to people to help them adapt gradually. Can mistakes occur? We're here to clear up this doubt and explain calmly.

The path taken here is very different to the one observed in most of the critiques presented during the June Uprising. The discursive form of protests is generally accusatorial, following a logic of denunciation (Boltanski, 1990): people go into the streets to say that the powerful have done something unacceptable and to monologue against them, not for them to reply in order to justify themselves.[14] This poster, for example, which coincidentally unites our fields made, in the streets in 2013, an explicit accusation concerning electricity prices:

Belo Horizonte
"The price of electricity is a robbery. Campaign
against high electricity rates"
Photo: Raquel Freitas/G1

AESTHETIC DIMENSIONS

Form of manifestation

One day, the president of the Santa Marta Residents Association (AMSM) jokingly presented to the researcher his take on resident dissatisfaction with the progressive increases in electricity bills by means of an anecdote: a regular drinker, unhappy with the bar where he usually consumes his rum, could cross the street and drink in the establishment on the corner. This should be a resource available to any consumer. In the case of Light, however, everything is more complex given the lack of competition.

This informal schema served us as a heuristic tool, since it allowed us to comprehend the negotiation between two forms of critical manifestation from the viewpoint of the actors themselves. This native dichotomy reflects the two types of critique proposed by Albert O. Hirschman (1973) in his work on forms of consumer manifestation of dissatisfactions with the quality of products or services: the critical voice consists of complaints, displays, made by people generally implicated in situations of market monopoly or imperfect competition in which the critic communicates to the criticized side the motives for his or her dissatisfaction, seeking an improvement in the quality of the provider's product; in the critical *exit*, the critic abandons the unsatisfactory relationship, looking for a competing provider. As we have seen in the history of the favela activist, though, a full exit is only possible when a plausible situation of competition exists.

Initially, it was imagined that this model applied only to economic principles. As various authors have shown (Femia, 2001; Boltanski & Chiapello, 2009; Werneck, 2015), however, it can be used to explore any relations that involve one side that is expected to do something for another and the other side potentially dissatisfied with the former – such as, for instance, the relation between voters and parties, or between the partners in a couple. Setting out from an emotion – dissatisfaction – Hirschman's analysis examines the possibilities for adjustment or rupture of the unsatisfactory relation. This type of approach is premised on the analysis of the behaviour of a social actor and the accountability of the other. It thus allows us to think about the critiques of both sides of a dispute and their developments.

Loretti's fieldwork thus enabled the observation of a limiting example of the exit critique, which reveals how the search for alternatives via the dissatisfaction/critique pairing is much dynamic than the formal dimension allows us to discern: the *gato*, the practice of diverting electricity from the grid or another resident so that it is not counted as consumption and not paid for by the user, comprises a discrete and partial exit. Although it is identified by those involved as an informal practice, while simultaneously considered a crime (electricity theft) under Brazil's Penal Code, this social practice can be interpreted – and is read by residents – as a solution to the problem of the power

supplier monopoly.[15] It is, therefore, one of the forms of rupture with the criticized entity: if the price charged for an essential service is expensive, as residents complain, an excuse for the 'improper' appropriation (from the legal viewpoint) of a common good is presented through the mobilization a logic of piety for needy populations, with the high fees being criticized for themselves being 'improper' (from the viewpoint of the residents).

By way of contrast, we can turn now to the case of demonstrators and their posters. For example:

São Paulo Photo: Internet image

In this case, the demonstrator uses the critical voice to threaten the criticized person, then president Dilma Rousseff, that "your time is coming." The phrase in English echoes the title of the first episode *Game of Thrones* – a medieval fantasy series launched in 2011 and one of the biggest global TV successes of recent years – and became a kind of catchphrase to refer to the program, announcing a period of great impending peril. The idea is that conflict is looming and, indeed, at the time of the protests, the prospect of impeachment was already being cogitated – leading eventually to the ousting of Dilma Rousseff from the presidency in 2016. In other words, the threat presented by the voice is that of an exit. Indeed, it is a recurrent procedure in demonstrations to threaten some kind of rupture.

Material substance of display[16]

Although our conceptual construct works with the symmetrisation of multiple material substances of critique, our observations of this same corpus demonstrate that actors use the semiotics of this materiality in distinct ways. Depending on whether the critique is constructed by oral, written, visual or actantial means, therefore, different developments are determined. Examples of the three first types appear throughout the article, as well as mixed displays (posters combining text and image, for example). A semiotic distinction is necessary, however: here it is a question of characterizing the main form of critique itself. Oral, written, visual and actantial resources can be used 'in' critique without 'being' the critique: they appear as proof, devices for its realization, without thereby comprising the underlying critique. For example, in the poster shown earlier asserting that "the price of electricity is a robbery," the bulb design is an extra element of intensification, but not 'the' critique – which is fully presented in the written text. The image is there to construct a semiotic environment capable of potentializing the idea expressed in the phrase. We can look at two cases of images taken from t-shirts widely used in more recent demonstrations – which have sometimes also taken the form of posters. In the first example, text and image complement each other in the construction of the sign used for the critique – in this case, the assertion that Michel Temer, the figure depicted in the stylized photo, took over the presidency illegitimately through a coup (*golpe*). In the second, a single image composes the entire negative message concerning the target:

In the case of the actantial form of display, the examples can be encountered in few posters[17] but were present in the demonstrations in both our fieldwork settings: we are talking about critiques expressed through actantial performances. When, for example, a demonstrator breaks a street sign or even when a resident makes a clandestine electricity connection (a *gato*), it is a question of acting, an action that manifests and expresses the critical content. Here the critique is presented through a *performance* that metaphorizes or simply acts aggressively on the object of the critique, declaring its negativity, the need for change and so on.

Explicitness

It became evident, notably in the exchanges of critiques between residents and the electricity supplier and in the observations of 'teasings,' that critique could be presented in an insinuated form – subjacent to an ambiguous assertion concerning the character of the criticized, an implicit form in which the latter, in the lack of concrete proof on the part of the critic, may or may not 'take the blame.' In such circumstances, the criticized entity, group or person may or may not feel compelled to account for their actions. This form is clearly differentiated from a more explicit version in which what was done and who did what are identified without subterfuge. Thus we need to take into account the explicitness involved in a critique's realization.

In the case of the dispute over the power supply, therefore, one of the changes introduced by the supplier after the implantation of the UPPs (Police Pacification Units) was an electronic metering system, which, according to the company, was more efficient and would reduce the possibility of electricity theft. The alleged frauds in the system, however, continued even after implementation of this device. Consequently, the accusation that its clients have reverted to siphoning off electricity is sometimes veiled, at other times explicit. At one pole, Light does not openly accuse the client of incompetence or not telling the truth about the power expenditure. Instead, it insinuates this idea by using, for example, the expression 'smart neighbour' to suggest the use of *gatos* among residents, or as found in the following remark by the company's community manager at a public meeting in June 2011:

> – We have to verify case by case to know what is happening. Our technical team goes to the house of each resident to discover whether they are making good use of their domestic appliances.

In the same way, the company did not formally accuse users of irregularities or penalize those who made clandestine connections. The company's most common insinuation concerning the reason behind the increase in electricity bills was that clandestine connections had started to be made again. It was because of the *gatos*, therefore, not the electronic meters or the readjustment in the tariffs authorized by the National Electricity Agency (ANEEL), that

higher prices had been passed onto the clients. Hence some neighbours were explicitly accused of stealing electricity from other clients:

> – It's also possible that some neighbour might be diverting electricity from a person's home, and this ends up pushing up their bill. If the resident says that despite all their savings, despite doing everything to economize, their bill is still sky high, we have to see what is happening. Using our telemetering system, we can locate electricity thefts.

On their side, the residents question the reliability of the digital metering system, suggesting a cause and effect correlation that cannot be easily explained away:

> – After Light swapped the meters and placed this chip in the favela, I now receive bills of R$ 400, R$ 500. And if you don't pay, they cut your power. (Santa Marta resident, 2011)

In this resident's view, the company is not concerned about the lack of financial means of its clients, as it had claimed when it first arrived in the favela, saying that it wanted to regularize its relationship with consumers living in the communities. Instead, its only interest is profit, forcing people to act dishonestly, altering the measurements. Despite the distrust over the installation of the new electronic meters, residents lacked the technical competence or the help of specialists to prove their claims concerning the technological device, their only recourse left, therefore, being insinuation.

According to Boltanski & Thévenot (2006 [1991]: 338):

> During a dispute, when one of the parties accuses the other of making insinuations and thus attaches a negative value to that operation (this is not the only form intimation can take, of course), the accuser is seeking to unveil hidden secrets. The adversary is accused of making, in the secrecy of his own heart, unacceptable associations that are betrayed-without his knowledge or, worse still, intentionally-by the ambiguity of his utterances. Intimation is a form of concealment that by definition cannot be presented as such by the speaker when it is identified in a polemical figure. Consequently, to bring intimation into play in a test, one must offer an interpretation whose validity can in turn be challenged. Pointing out an insinuation is thus a form of unveiling. The accuser, seizing on an utterance judged ambiguous in order to allege the presence of an implication, challenges the adversary to make his intentions explicit. The accusation of insinuation presupposes in fact that the ambiguity cannot be lifted, because clarification would entail explicit reference to unjustifiable forms of equivalence. In this process, the demand for clarification may be sustained. The person challenged then recognizes that there is indeed a subtext, but she defends herself by claiming that she did not want to make matters worse.

A critique will unfold very differently, therefore, according to whether it is made more or less explicit. An insinuated critique, for instance, will establish a protocol of incertitude that will require an unveiling of hidden intentions, meaning that every critique made in such fashion is, deep down, double since

it attributes two negative operations to the other: the action forming the content of the critique and, in addition, the practice of concealment.

By contrast, in the more traditional version, the explicit critique, a path is established that is concentrated precisely on the realization of the elements made explicit – they will have to be proven and legitimized as the critique evolves without depending on the revelation of a subjacent concealment. As an example we can take another poster, entirely explicit about the problem (the lack of healthcare and education) and its culprits (the promoters of mega soccer events that compete for resources with these social goods):

Rio de Janeiro
"While the ball is rolling, healthcare
and school are missing"
Photo: Renato Bacon

Radicality

Critique also contains a crucial interactional dimension: since it concerns what the critic deems to be wrong about what others do, it becomes a discourse on a situated action and simultaneously a discourse on an identity that practices it (Becker, 2008; Werneck, 2014b). Another dimension integral to the realization of critique, therefore, concerns its radicality. This involves a scale between, at one extreme, identifying an action as negative to a small extent, not enough to qualify the situation as irrecoverable, and another extreme where there is no possibility of resolving the situation at all. In this type of scale, the most radical modality will simultaneously treat the criticized person as evil, criminal, a deviant, and so on, which will also imply a radical rejection of the moral recuperation of the other. The mildest critique acts on potentially excusable actions; the most radical on probably unforgivable actions. Thus the critical discourse can vary on a scale ranging from a mild rebuke to more radical expressions.

At one extreme, as we have seen, a favela resident can insinuate that the electricity company that supplies the service is unconcerned with the lack of financial means of the vast majority of local inhabitants to pay debts and/or that the company is unable to produce an effective metering system – a critique of its insensitivity and/or its incompetence. At the other extreme, the client may also claim that Light wants to expel them from the favela – a critique of its intentions and its underlying moral stance. On another front, many of the humorous posters and banners used on the demonstrations could be classified in a category termed nihilistic by Werneck (2018). Here the messages revolve around the idea that there is no hope left in politics (invariably seen as inefficient or corrupt): the country has reached a point of radical impossibility, and the only solution is to restart everything 'from scratch.' Thus we saw *radical* images like the following without any need for explanation:

Rio de Janeiro
"System error.
Do you wish to format
Brazil? YES"
Photo: Internet image

Aggressiveness

The situation of critique is one of potential conflict. After all, it often involves a (very often strong) difference of positions (Misse & Werneck, 2012). The investment of energy in this difference orients the aesthetic of a critique towards the measurement of the elements of a performance to be used in criticizing the criticized entity or person and convince the judge (Boltanski, 1990) that the victim's situation must change. Here the possible actantial elements certainly include the recourse to imposition (Werneck, 2012: 312), whether on a more abstract plane – through symbolic threats, for instance – or on a clearly palpable plane involving the potential use of physical force. What we wish to emphasize here, therefore, is the performative dimension of this possibility, such that it becomes a device in the orienting of the critique. This comprises, therefore, taking seriously the display of aesthetic elements indicative of aggressiveness – conceived here as any recourse that can be understood to indicate a movement imposed by disproportional use of force – in the presentation of the critique. Hence, a critique proves to be aggressive when it is expressed energetically – for example, with shouting, displays of physical power and other forms that pass the message of a threat (whether calm or agitated). A resident of Santa Marta, for example, on a public demonstration, declared into the microphone:

> – What does Light prefer, to charge a social rate, charge a fair bill, or the return of the guns?

In other examples, the young people participating in a demonstration during the June Uprising in Rio de Janeiro do not mince their words. They performed their demonstrations aggressively, showing their opponents that their position is energetic. In the first example below, the object of the critique is disqualified; in the second, the interlocutor (in this case, newspaper and TV journalist Arnaldo Jabor – called 'Jabour' on the banner – who criticized the demonstrations):

Rio de Janeiro
"Fuck the cup"
Photo: Renato Bacon

Rio de Janeiro
"Shut your mouth
Jabour [sic]"
Photo: Renato Bacon

Presentation of the imagined utopia

A critique is always linked to a comparison between how the world is (problematic) and how it should be. The construction of an alternative and realizable utopia (Boltanski, 1990: 150-151) is not always mobilized by critics, though – in other words, a critique is not always propositional, presenting an alternative. It may be purely negative, rejecting the undesired situation through the mere assertion of its negativity. As an example of the former, we have:

Rio de Janeiro
"Lower the fare and put it
on FIFA's bill!"
Photo: Renato Bacon

In this poster, the author suggests, albeit imprecisely, that instead of the current reality in which transport fares were raised by R$ 0.20, this cost could be subsidized by the public funds spent on the World Cup, leaving the organisation promoting the soccer World Cup, FIFA, to fund the costs involved in staging the competition. The protestor does not limit herself to saying that the increase is wrong, she proposes an alternative.

Along the same lines as this critique of public transport fares, various speeches made during the protests made by residents of the Santa Marta favela are paradigmatic examples of negative critique:

> – It's been five years, and people are still playing abusive prices. It's gone too far. (Community leader.)

> – Three people live at home, we share an apartment, and we pay less than R$ 100 a month; less than R$ 100! That's the price of electricity in the street. The cost of electricity isn't what you're receiving in your home. I don't need to tell you this, because the amounts are absurd. (Resident of the regularly urbanized 'asphalt' zone of Botafogo, the same neighbourhood in which Santa Marta is located.)

LOGICAL DIMENSIONS
Objectivity

Another characteristic of a critique is the degree of detail with which the problem is presented. Critiques are manifested in a vague form – for example, making use of the idea of the critic being 'against everything' – as often as they are made through a precise and objective definition of the criticized elements. The former include vague critiques like this:
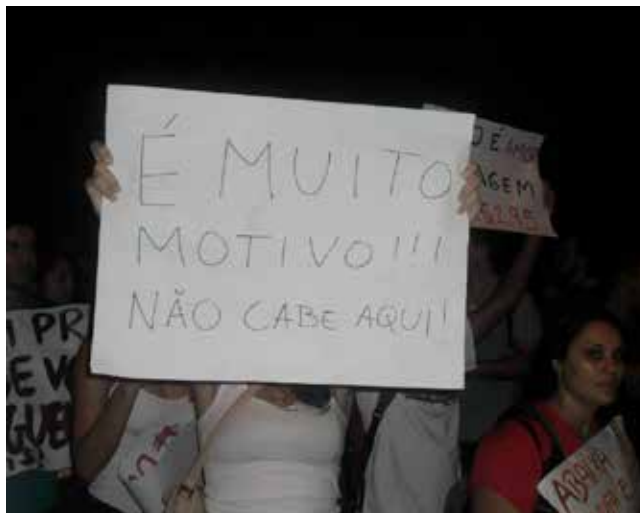
Rio de Janeiro
"So many reasons!!!
 They don't fit on here!"
Photo: Renato Bacon

Another, very different, kind of critique is found in the comments of a resident of Santa Marta favela, when he compared his utility bill to that of a neighbour from the regular urbanized zone, who pays between R$50 and R$ 60 monthly, plus R$ 5 street lighting fees:

> – The resident [of the favela] is paying more for electricity than someone living in Botafogo. There are bills here of R$ 300, R$ 400, R$ 500. Our Street Lighting Levy is more expensive. This bill here [he shows it] of R$ 279 and a bit from February... Here, it's R$ 20 for street lighting. We don't know why. Many of the street lights remain dark at night.

The first case is a typically nihilistic poster in which the critique is as generic as it is vague. This does not make it an ineffective option; the vagueness performs a strategic role precisely by circumventing the mechanics of having to prove specific moments[18] and, at the same time, conferring legitimacy to the extremism sometimes desired in certain critiques. In the second case, the elements of the critique-form are presented with some precision: we clearly see the victim/critic (the resident) and the criticized (the power company Light, implicit in the above comments, but present in the situation, since they were made in front of a company customer support trailer, installed in the square at the entry to the favela); we see persecution, that is, the identified problem (a scandalous difference in charges between residents with similar levels of consumption); we see the elements of proof (the billing amounts, presented alongside the bills paid by the resident from another area, showing the huge difference; the difference in the price of the Street Lighting Levy, despite the latter service being identified as weak in the favela).

Intelligibility

One of the lines of research explored concerning the posters involved focus groups to discuss the use of humour in political demonstrations. The specific details of this study have been analysed elsewhere (Werneck, 2016). The relevant aspect of this analysis here is that it revealed the need for those involved to comprehend the elements of the critique in order for it to be viable. In other words, its expressive components must be intelligible to those involved. This becomes fairly clear in the case of the utilization of humour in the demonstrations (Hart & Bos, 2008; Beckman, 2014). After all, a critique needs to be comprehended, not only from a cognitive point of view, but also in a contextual and moral sense (Werneck, 2016). As an example, we can take the following banner:

São Paulo
Source: Internet

This may appear incomprehensible to someone, for example, unfamiliar with the governor of São Paulo at the time of the June Uprising, Geraldo Alckmin, one of the 'villains' of the quarrel over public transport fares and over police suppression of the protests – though most people will have been aware of the target. Its comprehension could also be difficult, though, for someone who does not speak English, leaving them unaware that the politician's death was being suggested. But possibly the most challenging element to translate is the TV program whose title is used as a pun: *The Walking Dead*, an American series, first aired in October 2010, that achieved enormous worldwide success and whose plot involves a post-apocalyptic future in which the world is taken over by zombies – conjuring a dystopic image associated here with the figure of the politician. Mostly composed of young people (Saraiva, 2014; Tavares dos Santos & Niche Teixeira, 2014), the protests were filled with elements taken from TV series, video games and internet memes inhabiting the universe of this gen-

eration. Understanding this metaphor is undoubtedly essential to perceiving the critique *as* a critique.[19] The question of intelligibility, however, extends further: it also concerns values, data, elements of proof, everything that makes it possible to know what the critique is talking about, how it works and on what moral bases it relies – all of which also needs to be made meaningful for the other side. Hence, a critique may have a consistently different realization depending on whether it is more comprehensible – with a clear message using more universal signs – or more incomprehensible.

Tangibility of proof

Since normal situations of critique are governed by an imperative of proof on the part of those who formulate it (Boltanski & Thévenot, 1991, Chateauraynaud, 2004), the latter ends up determining different kinds of critical behaviour: it is possible to perceive different degrees of formalization of proof, based on the rigour of the demands for evidence. Proof is the justification of the critique, and every justified critique relies on proof. In this case, however, we do not have just two discrete points, but a continuous scale. Chateauraynaud (2004) demonstrates how the tangibility of evidence is gradual – varying from 'looser,' more fluid or informal evidence and/or justifications, attributed generally to common sense perceptions, to a more solid and formal state – 'tangible proof' made possible through defined methods that ensure its low degree of subjectivity and, consequently, its legitimacy as proof, its justness (Boltanski & Thévenot, 1991), including scientific and legal methods, for example. If the accusatorial critique is also made explicit, the demands – and, as a consequence, the chances – of formalizing proof, that is, of making it highly tangible (or demanding that it be so), increase, as in the case of legal trials where parties face an imperative of proof. If the critique, on the other hand, has a tone of insinuation, for example, or is humorous, the demand for proof (*épreuve*) may be much lower or not required at all.

As an example, on a February morning in 2016, a team of researchers visited the Morro Chapéu Mangueira in Leme, a district neighbouring Copacabana, located in the South Zone of Rio de Janeiro. Adeliana, a long-term resident, a prominent figure in the favela, wife of a former president of the residents association, told the assembled academics that her electricity bill had been around R$ 900 the previous month. Though it had been a hot spell, she assured them that she had not made constant use of air conditioning: she lived high up on the hillside and facing the sea, a cooler location. In summer, it suffices to open the window, she said. Adeliana recounted that she had queried the bill with the power company, pointing to the irregularity in the charges. She also told the team that she had received a visit from a technician from Light, accompanied by the company's community manager, and that after the former verified the quality of the installations, the metering of consumption at the

time of the inspection and the average monthly consumption by consulting previous electricity bills, they ended up agreeing that the price charged failed to match her use of household appliances.

How the situation unfolded is somewhat unusual (Loretti, 2016), though: Adeliana recounted that next, as a solution to the issue, the company representative called her aside and advised her to make a clandestine connection – given that it was so inexplicable, the problem could not be resolved officially. What matters here is that the resident had persuaded a technician to visit her home in order to produce tangible proof of her critique of the bills charged by the company. She mobilized highly tangible elements, therefore – measurements from the official metering device, her history of consumption, even the logic of her argument that it made no sense to use air conditioning in a cool environment – rather than merely informal elements such as unprovable assertions of the kind "my bill doesn't make sense" or "everyone knows" that Light cheats the consumer.

On the other hand, political demonstrations, in the synthetic form of the banner, tend to show a very low level of tangibility. Accusatorial, they feature a monologue of slogans without any need for proof of what is claimed, at least within the bounds of the street protest. For example:

Belo Horizonte
"Either stop the thieving or we stop $ Brazil"
Photo: Raquel Freitas/G1

The term 'thieving' (*roubalheira*) is generic and nonspecific enough and, in this case, does not even identify the culprit. Newspaper reports may offer more tangible proof for the claim, but the form of critique employed in such cases does not allow – very often strategically – for use of this resource to be made: there is no and could be no proof attached to the presented critique.

CONCLUSION: CRITIQUE AS A DIMENSIONAL MATRIX

The observation of situations involving the mobilization of critique in the symmetrisation of our field research enabled a comprehensive exploration of how this phenomenon functions. Notably, a transversal analysis of the research allowed us to make explicit various formal dimensions crucial to the definition of the situation (Thomas, 1966 [1923]) in which the critique is inserted and the definition of the critique itself. It therefore consists of a typical situation (the manifestation of a questioning) in which an image is presented concerning another (criticized) situation – an image distinct from the way in which the criticized situation was defined by the actors that established it, thus competing with it. There are three definitions of the situation in play here, one of them metalinguistic: in it, the actors are dissatisfied with the way in which the situation in which they find themselves is defined and wish it to be defined otherwise – in other words, they want there to be other consequences (Peirce, 1977 [1893]). In order for this to be possible, they present, through and in accordance with their own formal-form, the characteristics of the framework in question, its problematic elements and, perhaps, some prospect of an alternative definition.

Critique is inserted in the world, we observed, through a formal dimensional matrix, a set of coordinated dimensions, that defines the variables necessary for its realization as a device. As we have also seen here, the operationalization of a critical capacity obeys not only the imperative of accountability, but also an imperative to define formal dimensional coordinates, thereby composing an ordered series. It is like a Cartesian product in which values are defined through options available to each element of a set of variables relevant to the path taken by a critique. Ultimately this generates a matrix that, as we were able to observe empirically, presents fifteen different axes. Critique, in sum, involves a fairly complex range of factors.

These various dimensions are imposed on the critique-form, therefore, as a metalinguistic competence, a formal requirement for its definition. A critique, to continue with the mathematical metaphor, corresponds to a graph, composed by the interconnection of the different points produced by the intersecting of these various axes. It functions like the combination to a lock that, composed point-to-point, assembles a code capable of 'opening up' the critical situation.[20] Making a critique, therefore, becomes a process of *comprehension*, an *inquiry* undertaken by the actors involved, as a means to define two situa-

tions: the first *indeterminate*, which becomes *problematic* (Dewey, 1938), and the second *virtual*, imagined as an alternative to the first. In mobilizing their critical capacity, actors do not need to reflexively operate this comprehension, resulting from an inquiry, but they must demonstrate competence in doing so, showing that they comprehend the most convenient (Thévenot, 1990), competent (Boltanski, 1990) and *effective* (Werneck, 2012) options available for the situation and for its moral context.

The idea of a matrix also enables us to discern the more abstract dimension of critique and glimpse its operationality within the most varied empirical settings. The discursive nature of critique allows us to conceive a way to study these discourses and comprehend through the complex composition of small logical and meaningful units the way in which social actors relate to each other via the mobilization of their moral and critical capacities (Boltanski & Thévenot, 1991; 1999) and their capacity to project realizable utopias (Boltanski, 1990) in order to guide their movements in a social life, marked by the mutual evaluations of their positions within the situations in which they are embedded.

The table below (p. 997) provides a typological summary of the formal dimensions defining the critique.

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Matrix of Formal Dimensions of the Critique

	Apropos	Types
Metamoral dimensions	Need for disruption of the routine	a) With critical moment b) Modulated
	Environmental setting	a) Private b) Public
	Distance from the group	a) Internal b) External
	Problematized competence	a) Justice b) Piety
	Regime of good mobilized	a) Self good b) Other good c) Common good d) Universal good
	Amplitude of the moral complexity contemplatable	a) Accountable b) Accusatorial
Aesthetic dimensions	Form of manifestations	a) Voice b) Exit
	Material substance of display	a) Oral b) Written c) Visual d) Actantial
	Explicitness	a) Explicit b) Insinuation
	Degree of radicality	a) Mild b) Radical
	Degree of aggressiveness	a) Aggressive b) Peaceful
	Presentation of the imagined utopia	a) Propositional b) Negative
Logical dimensions	Degree of objectivity	a) Vague/generic b) Direct/objective
	Intelligibility	a) Comprehensible b) Incomprehensible
	Degree of tangibility of proof	a) Tangible (formal) b) Intangible (informal)

NOTES

1   This article contains the results from the research project Modulated Violence: Grammars and Devices of Critique and Negotiation in Urban Conflicts in Rio de Janeiro, co-ordinated by Alexandre Werneck and funded by the Carlos Chagas Filho Foundation for Research Support of the State of Rio de Janeiro (FAPERJ) through its Basic Research Funding (Process E26/110.327/2014).

2   For a description and history of the demonstrations, see Cattani (2014). For a summary of the same by international correpondents, see Romero (17/06/2013) and Watts (21/06/2013).

3   In Brazil, various public services are provided through public sector contracts. These involve a contract agreed between the public administration and a private company following a call for tender, allowing the company to provide one of the State's obligatory services – such as public transport, water supply, sewage treatment or electricity supply – and allowing it to profit from this service economically through fees paid by users, whether as a local monopoly or not.

4   It is important to emphasize that the citation of this phrase on the poster did not represent a resurrection of the row between the two players – too distant in time to resurface. The phrase of Romário, one of the greatest strikers in soccer history, winner of the FIFA Golden Ball award in 1994, the year when he was a world champion playing for Brazil, became incorporated in the popular imagination and was frequently used independently against Pelé, seen by the majority of experts as the greatest player in the history of the sport, a triple world champion with Brazil, but who was a football commentator very often criticized for pronouncing the obvious or nonsense.

5   The program basically involves the implantation of military police units (UPPs) in favelas. In Brazil, the military police (PM) force is responsible for ostensive policing at state level, while the civil police, also operating at state level, are responsible for investigations. The federal police operates at national level. In the UPP case, a 'proximity police force' provided by the PM has been established to provide a local presence, supposedly in close coordination

with the needs of favela residents, as a form of avoiding the confrontations expressed in shoot outs with drug traffickers and the resulting fatalities. The implantation of the UPPs was made after a military occupation that supposedly expelled drug traffickers from the communities and made room for the presence of the State and economic agents – like Light. The first experience of this polemical model was precisely in the Santa Marta favela in 2008, constructing the idea of 'pacifying favelas' in congruence with representations of the same as territories of violence and conflicts between traffickers and the military police. A total of 38 UPPs were implanted. At the time of the publication of this text, the project is entering decline with the closure of 12 of them and a redirecting of security policy in Rio de Janeiro. For a mapping of the implications of the program and the uses of these categories in practice, see the dossier on the UPPs published by the journal *Dilemas*, available on-line at: https://revistas.ufrj.br/index.php/dilemas/issue/view/579 and https://revistas.ufrj.br/index.php/dilemas/issue/view/580. For a survey of the academic analyses on the topic, see Felix da Silva (2018). For a summary of the program made by an international correspondent, see Nolen (12/11/2017).

6   As a benchmark, in September 2018 R$ 1.00 was equivalent to around US$ 0.25. Electricity bills were reported to have jumped from R$ 30.00 to R$ 500.00. The minimum wage in Brazil at this time is R$ 954.00.

7   We shall not, therefore, present details of the specific discussions contained in each work, focusing solely on the contribution of each one to the present analysis.

8   In all, 347 posters considered humorous were analysed from a total sample of 550, collected from the demonstrations by various means, ranging from direct observation to research on the internet. This analysis resulted in a table of the types of humorous discourse found on the posters and the typical demands presented by them at the demonstrations. For more details on the research and the types of posters, see Werneck (2018).

9   We realize that we are touching on some areas of study for which the topics observed here are central, especially studies of social movements and those of urban sociology/

anthropology. However, we have maintained a certain distance from these literature in order to concentrate on a sociology of critique (Boltanski, 2015; 2009) of a pragmatic kind. This reduction and the emphasis on a situationist approach (Thomas, 1966, Cicourel, 1964; Joseph, 1984) allowed us to isolate the elements of our object of study in a concentrated form and to understand its grammar transversally to its various uses.

10 The effectuation to which we refer relates to the effectiveness of the critical positioning, the possibility to present a critical discourse. Thus we do not look to evaluate either the efficiency of the critiques or the role of these dimensions in this efficiency. Due to its situated nature, we did not consider it possible to undertake an analysis of this kind with the material available. For a discussion of this critical efficacy, see Boltanski (1990) and Hirschman (1973; 1991).

11 Most of the situations that we observed involved external critiques. The ethnographic situations of internal critique, however, were heavily marked by this dichotomy and showed a strong dialogue with examples encountered by other researchers (Hooks, 1994; Hutchinson, 1999; 2004).

12 For a more recent survey of this state of the art, see Boltanski (2009).

13 An informal broadcaster, transmitting via radio and internet, run by community agents, with a content relating to the favela and that can be received in various parts of Botafogo – as well as possessing a system of loudspeakers for communication of the president and members of the Santa Marta Residents Association (AMSM) with the residents. The radio station was closed in 2011, due to being considered illegal, and only the information from the AMSM continues to be broadcasted via the loudspeakers.

14 A demonstration can seek to give voice to the criticized party too – for example, when the presence of a representative of the bosses or the government is demanded at a demonstration in front of one of the buildings. However, this case ends up having a double status: on the one hand, a performance of exposition of the opponent; on the other, an additional critique: of the fact that the interlocutor does not want to dialogue.

15 For a debate on two different solutions historically constituted by the *gato*, one in response to the official power supply and the other in the period before the UPP, see Loretti (2016: 7).

16 We thank the student Igor Perrut, scholarship holder and supervisee of one of the authors at UFRJ, for his suggestion that led to the construction of this topic.

17 For details on actantial demonstrations, see Werneck (2018), Hart & Bos (2008) and King (2016).

18 As one of us has shown (Werneck, 2018), this is a fundamental characteristic of humorous critique: it involves leaving the circle of rationality characteristic of justification.

19 A critique can be produced deliberately to be incomprehensible to the other side. But this technique itself functions as a critique, one of obsolescence, segregation, elitism and so on. This is a somewhat rarer case, however, dependent on a reflexivity and a strategic approach that are not always present.

20 The number of combinations between these dimensions is very high: 131,072 possibilities. Obviously, it was not possible to test all these matrix alternatives, nor would it make sense. Indeed, various of these combinations would seldom if ever occur in practical life – for example, it is extremely difficult to imagine a mild and aggressive critique. The verification of these cases and their potential analytic developments thus comprises the topic for a new research agenda opened up by this first joint work.

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FORMA-CRÍTICA, FORMAS DA CRÍTICA: AS DIFERENTES DIMENSÕES DO DISCURSO DE DESCONTENTAMENTO

Resumo

O objetivo deste artigo é analisar o papel desempenhado pelas várias dimensões formais de uma crítica em sua efetivação. Para fazê-lo, recorremos a um conjunto de pesquisas, coordenadas a partir de um quadro de tipologias dessas dimensões. De um lado, exploramos as críticas de lado a lado entre moradores de uma favela carioca e a concessionária de energia que nela passa a atuar mais intensivamente após a implantação de uma UPP. De outro, analisamos como a crítica é operada de forma jocosa, tanto modulada, isto é, constantemente ajustada para evitar a formação de momentos críticos, quanto acusatorial, observada notadamente em cartazes das manifestações de 2013 e 2014 que usaram o humor para ironizar a situação política do país. Com isso, foi possível entender os elementos constitutivos da forma-crítica, o que permitiu mapear uma galeria de 15 dimensões relevantes para sua efetivação, divididas em metamorais, estéticas e lógicas.

CRITIQUE-FORM, FORMS OF CRITIQUE: THE DIFFERENT DIMENSIONS OF THE DISCOURSE OF DISCONTENT

Abstract

This paper seeks to analyse the role played by the various formal dimensions of a critique in its effectuation. In order to do so, we draw on a set of different fieldwork studies, coordinated by a framework of typologies of these dimensions. On the one hand, we explore the critiques made by residents of a Rio de Janeiro favela concerning the power company that began to operate more intensively in the local area after installation of a Police Pacification Unit (UPP). On the other hand, we analyse how critiques can be operated in a joking way, both modulated – that is, continuously adjusted to avoid critical moments – and accusatory, as observed primarily in posters from the 2013 and 2014 political demonstrations that employed humour to mock the political situation of the country. This approach allowed us to understand the key elements of the critique-form, which in turn enabled us to design a typology of 15 relevant dimensions for the critique to be realized,– distributed between metamoral, aesthetic and logical dimensions.