

JOURNALISM DISCOURSE AND NARRATIVES OF RESISTANCE

Necessary reinvention of the past

Copyright © 2005
SBP_{Jor} / Associação
Brasileira de Pesquisadores
em Jornalismo

FERNANDO RESENDE

Pontifícia Universidade Católica do Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

ABSTRACT This paper aims at reflecting upon journalistic narratives. The text is intended to carry out the task of reinventing the past, for the purpose of enlarging the notion one has concerning the narrative possibilities in the journalistic field. The relation between the process of cultural modernization and the history of formation of the journalistic discourse in Brazil somehow makes explicit the predominance of a journalistic way of narrating that has been regulated almost exclusively at a technical level. In this particular matter, learning about the journalistic discourse in its historical perspective and attempting to analyze the so-called “narratives of resistance” complement the purpose, since that aims at the identification and acknowledgement of the co-existence and intertwinement of narrative diversity in the contemporary journalistic discourse.

KEY-WORDS Journalism narratives, cultural modernization, history of the journalism discourse

An astonished angel, wide open wings, gazes at a bunch of ruins at the same that it is swept away by a storm that takes him backwards, to the unknown. According to Walter Benjamin, this image taken from Paul Klee's painting *Angelus Novus* is an allegory of the angel of modern history. The ruins, representing the past gazed at by the angel, are left behind to the detriment of the future, the unknown heaven. That will be reached, according to the allegorical perspective developed by Benjamin, if we follow the winds that sweep away everything and everybody.

For Boaventura de Souza Santos, this image reflects, in modern times, our powerlessness to act in face of what is promised by the idea of progress. Modernity, among other aspects, imposes upon us the need to leave the past behind, a past that is presented to us as unuseful and irrelevant. This is a common feature in the modern theories of history, “the depreciation of the past and the hypostatization of the future”

(SANTOS, 1997:104). It is important to highlight as fundamental, in the specific case of the reflection proposed here, the confirmation that we fail to recognize the past as constitutive of our history and that we are taken to a future that, although unknown, has been assured to us as promising.

Therefore, the perspective of a paradigmatic transition, which is extensively discussed by Santos, may be conducive to a reevaluation and thus, a reflection that will bring forward, as the crux of the matter, the conception of a crisis that originates from the destruction of the idea of progress as the guarantee of a better future. In the face of what current times present to us, such as the relativization of the truth previously supported by the modern project, we feel compelled to reorganize and reformulate our thoughts, and reflect upon the underlying social processes and practices. For this task, according to Santos, it becomes necessary to reinvent the past since we no longer consider it as empowering.

In this paper, the very image that progress erases the past and sweeps us away towards an imagined heaven is appropriated, and we are prompted to think about how we abandon and fail to know the historical process in which the constitution and construction of the journalistic discourse is engendered. The main goal here is to propose a reflection upon journalistic writing, bearing in mind other possible trajectories, and hence, enlarging the focus on what we refer as “journalistic writing”. Nevertheless, we have to point out that there is no chance of enlarging this focus if we do not acknowledge and reinvent the past. From this viewpoint, one can stress out that the well-known technique of journalistic writing that has been imposed, mainly from the 1950's, is, among other aspects, rather an option than a foundation (a root) for the journalistic way of thinking and doing. Again, Boaventura de Souza Santos enlightens us with the idea that the modern theories of history, by imposing the erasing of the past, have made us believe that the roots of all questions would lie in what is ahead of the modern. The confusion we make in relation to the norms that must or must not precede the journalistic writing, when we consider the technique as prevailing and hegemonic, derives, as Santos would believe, from the same historical-social conditions presented as absolute by the project of modernity.

As far as social inclusion and occupation in the constitution of the public space are concerned, this reflection, therefore, leads us to the idea that written journalism (despite the fact it has been greatly improved over the past 50 years), endures the pain of having to make an effort to get established as a non-subjectivized discourse – originated from

a process of socio-cultural modernization that prompted homogenizing and totalizing theories. Even more, it works as a kind of discourse that, in practice, has generated atrophied narratives¹ – for they are pieces of news devoid of any relation with polyphonic and/or dialogic aspects of the discourse – and worked to feed images, representations and thoughts concerning society that are, likewise, atrophied. In line with Boaventura de Souza Santos,

“The hegemonic powers that command the consumer society and the information society have promoted theories and images that appeal to a totality be that of the species, world or same universe, which exists over the borderlines between its composing parts. We know that it concerns manipulative theories and images that ignore the different circumstances and aspirations of peoples, classes, genders, regions, etc. as well as unequal relations, of exploitation and victimization, which have joined the parts that compose that pseudo-totality. But the grain of credibility of those theories and images consists in appealing, yet in a manipulative manner, to an imagined community of humankind as a whole. (...) the CNN has discovered a hindmost universalism, at the same time universal and individual, the universality and individuality of suffering: suffering takes place everywhere; individuals, and not societies, are the ones who suffer” (1997:118).

The process of cultural modernization and the non-subjectivized discourse

A brief incursion in the history of the constitution of the modern thought and formation of the journalistic thought in Brazil, allows us to evaluate and reflect upon the process we are alluding; a trajectory that intends, in the light of the proposal by Boaventura de Sousa Santos, open up to the perspective of a reinvented past. We are talking about a society, in global terms, traced under the shield of a modern project, in which a “development-oriented” paradigm has been established and consolidated, and whose only goal was progress, at any cost.

In this paradigm, the belief that we could achieve a better world (more equalitarian, fraternal and dignified) is postulated, with no need to articulate the processes of constructions of this world. The constitution of a new order was predicted, but, at the same time, there was an attempt to erase the exercise of subjectivity. The exact, natural, and social sciences, and the humanities as a whole, have suffered severe consequences in this process. The way through which the world is read and thought is definitely hinges upon the belief one has concerning this imagery.

It is in this location, in which one realizes that such a project cannot be legitimated, that it becomes possible to re-elaborate and re-think our ways of seeing and reading the world. The maladjustments and faults that current times offer to us bring about the reflection upon what the contemporariness indicates as a possibility of life. For instance, the ways in which survivals are developed, inappropriate and inadequate for the constitution and the exercise of citizenship (if we speak of issues more pertinent to our ever developing world), the outburst of ethnic and religious wars, the increase in and somehow the lack of control of diseases, both those repeatedly investigated by the medical and scientific community and those relatively new, such as AIDS, are factors imposed on us to consider the modern project as an enterprise that has failed. It has failed mainly because the development that was meant was an end in this enterprise, an ending-development, with no other goals, if we quote the French philosopher Edgar Morin (1995), and never a means to reach a truly better life.

As far as the formation of the journalistic discourse in Brazil is concerned, the construction of these images has a fundamental role. Journalism, more solidly in the 20th century, has incorporated the modernist ideal: to construct progress, at any cost, by means of order. This order, when referring to the journalistic production, has meant the standardization and compacting of texts. There is a common belief that newspapers would offer readers – it is important to remember that the idea of “mass” started to make sense at that time – the necessary information to follow the evolving of the world: it was the informative feature that would adapt to the frenetic race against time and not only imposed, but also legitimized, the discourse that was intended as non-subjectivized. It is important to highlight that all this imagery interfered – and it is still remarkable today – in the establishment of the journalistic *praxis*, i.e., of what is said about journalism (in the process of construction of knowledge concerning this field) and the way journalism is made (in practice).

The contemporary context points at the need to create and establish new ways to understand and read the world. The notion of public space as a symbolic space where relationships are built helps reconstitute our position in face of journalism as a field of knowledge and practice. We have as a reference here the author Bernard Miège (1992), for whom the public space originates from the relationship between the State and other forms of power that are exerted in society. According to Miège, the contemporary space is asymmetric and fragmented; asymmetric, since new technologies and different means of communication achieve relevance

and become its channel; fragmented, since the increasing number of social agents that participate and appropriate the new communication techniques promote the widening of this space, turning it into a playing field for the “new” subject-citizen. The contemporary public space, under this perspective, means the way through which knowledge and power are negotiated, or yet, the way forces and interests play themselves out in a world ruled by the means of communication; it is, thus, the space in which the new norm is the conflict.

Bearing that in mind, we can think that it is possible to consider a perspective different from that given as a condition to the modern images. The journalism that is thought in the light of the space configured in the present requires new postures. Impartiality, now more than ever, is put into question (the North-American Invasion of Iraq is an emblematic case); reporting, rather than transmitting the factual, can be an act of telling stories of everyday life. Thinking about exchange and collectivity (what we should consider as fundamental when we talk about *social communication*), in a space where conflict is the norm, means to allude to the possibility of *dialoguing*, even if that means only better living together. For that matter, it seems extremely necessary to work on the reflection upon the constitution of a subjectivized journalistic narrative. And for that matter, reinventing the past is fundamental.

The journalistic discourse, and then its narrative, has not arisen with the so-called “lead” or even with the concepts of objectivity and impartiality. It was, as matter of fact, originated under the brand of censorship. For 300 years, since our country was “discovered”, we have been restrained from narrating – the Portuguese court did not allow us to tell stories we lived. It was only after 1808, after experiencing a long period of external censorship, that Hipólito da Costa and his newspaper *Correio Braziliense* would risk speaking about Brazil. However, it is important to stress that this Portuguese man, willing to represent current facts then, not only produced his newspaper from London, but also practiced self-censorship by intending to be “armed with sound criticism and adequate censorship”². In other words, in the genesis of the journalistic discourse in Brazil, the censorship conditions the tracing of limits. This aspect seems to be relevant not only because the problematic of the truth is present in itself, but mainly because it reveals a problem of construction of identity in Brazilian journalism. That is to say that they have spoken about us and for us, or still, that we have suffered censorship even without being able to constitute ourselves as subjects who narrated our own history.

We have gone through a long period of several frustrated attempts – a few successful ones, for which the *Pasquins* are exemplary – up to the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century (and this is extremely recent in historical terms), with a journalistic discourse – maybe more genuinely Brazilian – that possessed a clear literary inclination. At that moment, by re-reading and re-inventing the past, we could realize that there was a great freedom in the narrative. Fundamental requirements for the constitution of any discourse (who speaks, and to whom and how) were in the core of the narratives that configured and started to be constitutive of a journalism deprived of any theoretical reflection (there were no schools of journalism) and of practical and social determination that would make the newspaper a properly industrialized vehicle. The world, at least as seen by the eyes of Brazil in the 20th century, still seemed small.

Nevertheless, what seemed to be peculiar, in the case of the formation of the Brazilian journalistic discourse, was the fact that it was constituted and instituted in a colony and, very much due to that, it became hasty and sloppy – like in some other manners and kinds of knowledge in Brazil – because of so many radically imposing external historical conditions. This aspect made the journalistic discourse a relatively fragile field, easily influencing and influenced by foreign conceptual rigor and standardizing determinations.

In the 1950's, for example, the Brazilian journalism discarded the discourse that was constituted in the previous period. In those years, there was the creation of several newspapers “which introduced new techniques of graphic presentation and innovations in the journalistic covering, renovating the Press language” (ABREU, 1996:15). In the second half of the 20th century – also extremely fast, since capitalistic industrial development and technology were being consolidated – the market (and, in default of it, the technique) could definitely settle down rather as a prerogative than a determiner, of Brazilian journalism. Thus, the structural variations of the discourse are practically substituted by an agent that defines how one should speak in the newspapers: the market. The opinion journalism is gradually substituted by the North-American model: a journalism that gives privilege to information and news and draws a clear line between a personal comment and the objective and impersonal transmission of information (ABREU, 1996).

The market, the future to which we were swept away backwards, became the regulating agent in the journalistic discourse. And there were many historical-conjectural factors that contributed to this fact. In the

socio-economic context, for example, mainly in the early decades of the second half of the 20th century, our country experienced a gradual and meaningful increase in the industrial production of consumer goods: economic development was the great goal to be achieved.

There was, in certain aspects, an affective development – the beginning and implementation of industrial complexes could be witnessed and those would determined the new directions for the country – and this subject became a central item in the agendas of all political parties, and also an engine of a society going through an intensive process of structuring; which was partly as if the climax of the modern were being lived in “developing-oriented” sense that its project enforced.

In this context, the market becomes a censor and a fundamental agent, since it comes from a logic that aims at understating the power of consumption as a symbol of its own development. That is the time when the television and the theater arrive at the country and when the cinema and the radio get structured as mass media. Furthermore, the 1950's witness the early investments in Advertising that triggered the establishment of big national and international advertising agencies in the country.

Brazil, apparently, moved then towards the future and the JK years³ are very representative of this moment, being the construction of the capital Brasilia – its modernist and functional architecture is emblematic – a contributor for legitimating a functionalist logic for the understanding of many activities and fields of knowledge. Journalism, a vehicle for the brand-new field of Social Communications, could not be untouched. From the symbolic point of view, this historical path points at a fundamental issue: the Brazilian journalistic discourses, which had hardly been structured, completely lost their relationship with their structural varieties (*who* speaks, *to whom* and *how*), and started to be ruled by conceptual determinations, for example, by objectivity and impartiality. A reinvented past, in this case, shows us how much precarious our maturing process concerning the *praxis* was, and how much we were subjected to foreign determinations. This appears to be crucial in the understanding of the appropriation of the norms as defining rules of the journalistic knowledge and its practice (and not the standardization of the discourse as a problem, being this aspect inherent to any discursive formation).

According to Boaventura de Sousa Santos, the modern logic aims at a balance between the past and the future (what is a false pretence since the former is erased and the latter unknown), imposing on us the experience of the present as mere repetition. This location where we are placed, for

the author, being vertiginous and stagnant, entails the end of questioning and causes intellectual appeasement. In relation to the reflection upon journalism, this is clear. As far as language is concerned, a number of academic reflections conformed to the imposed norms removed the symbolic dimensions from the practice, and started to evaluate language from an exclusively technical perspective. And those who practice journalism, apparently appeased, often let themselves be swept by the storm and moved towards a future that promises them glory and power and that is reconfigured and embodied in the notorious “market”. Involved by an everlasting present, they find no other option but doing and doing it, obeying the logic appointed as true by the unknown.

For Santos, “we should re-acquire our capacity of getting outraged, and construct it in a way that it can be easily translated into non-conformism and rebellion” (1997: 116). In our case, it is apt to mention that the outrage should be caused by the fact that we know that the usual conception of journalism, and from which comes its way of doing and thinking, is insufficient for the symbolic dimensions that permanently involve it. That makes it necessary to enlarge our frame of mind, thus amplifying the practice of and the learning about journalism, otherwise we may risk proceeding subject to the norms without even getting to know about the many existing possibilities we can use to tell the stories of everyday life.

We know very little about our history of journalistic discourse and practice. What we gaze at (again the image of the angel comes forward, astonished and powerless, observing the past) is not acknowledged as journalism yet (it is truly thought that written journalism rises after the 1950's). Therefore, reinventing this past may contribute for the construction and understanding of the subjectivized narratives, because it removes the market from its position of the subject in history; by performing this exercise, we may find out, for instance, that the existence and the conception of journalism very much depend on our initiatives.

We have been insisting upon the notion that the process of reinventing the past implies reconstructing the history of the formation of the journalistic discourse in Brazil, and furthermore, we have found out that inquiring the present should be a task to be carried out in parallel to the former, being both equally important, since we also find, in the present, vestiges from a past intended to have been erased. Hence, identifying and acknowledging what we have been calling “narratives of resistance” – those that indicate other elements than the ones solely focused on the technical demands of journalism – sound to us as an interesting direction.

These narratives are present both in daily newspapers and magazines, and possibly in the words of those individuals who have built their lives on the margins of the society as we know it. And they are called “narratives of resistance” because they arise in a place where the roughness of the report predominates, in resistance to the technical imperative that tries to standardize the journalistic narration.

In this location where those narratives are found, one can notice the richness of situations of report that the daily facts offer and, invariably, one can feel the contrast to the roughness found in the “official” journalistic discourse. Such narratives, for becoming present and being acknowledged in current times, are evidence of the little space allowed to the admittedly journalistic forms, besides prompting us to understand that also in the tapestry of the newspaper life overcomes form. Identifying those narratives, however, requires availability of analytical and theoretical approaches that are still incipiently exploited in such field, distinct from those that have served to explain the concept of journalism⁴.

The analysis and the encounter with the narratives of resistance

When Roland Barthes defines some general principles and dispositions for the analysis of the narrative, he tries to elucidate what that work of investigation means: “the structural analysis of the narrative is fundamentally, constitutively comparative: it searches forms and not a content” (2001:259). According to the author, the main point is not explaining a text but rather having a position about it.

It seems relevant, in this paper, to draw attention to the fact that the idea of looking at the journalistic texts in the light of the *logic of the text* implies, necessarily, a certain level of comparison between the narrative named as atrophied and the one of resistance; therefore this case is in accordance to the analysis proposed by Barthes. It is apt to mention that, despite this fact, that investigation does not have the purpose of coming to define a *corpus* of narrative for the journalistic practice, but rather intends to know about possible structures concerning a practice that has been revealing itself as atrophied.

If beyond the phrase is the location one wishes to reach, it seems relevant to highlight that the *logic of the text* – as also proposed by Barthes on what concerns the structural analysis – implies relativizing the location of history – in opposition to the *text of the logics* – for the benefit of how a narrative is built. From this viewpoint, one can name as atrophied those

traditional narratives, determined by a blind text and whose principles are based on the logics that precede it. And those of resistance, generated by blatant texts, are the ones that under the perspective of this paper warrant journalism other possible points of view. We will carry out the analysis of some of those narratives in order to make the purpose of this paper clearer. It is important to stress that the encounter with the narratives of resistance prompts a re-reading of notions very closely attached to the journalistic discourse. Our approach will concern the reevaluation of the notions of everyday life and the truth.

A Reconstitution of the everyday life

He is tiny, a few inches shorter than other kids about to turn 12. In his olive-skinned face, a few whitish spots reveal his mal-nutrition. He was a street boy in São Paulo, Jandira and Campinas. He robbed and became a beggar to get money to sniff glue.

He has become news on the crime pages of newspapers after confessing the murder, in the woods of São Roque County, of a 9-year-old girl and her 8-year-old brother.

Snotty – his nickname then – currently denies having committed the double homicide. He claims that he was pressed into confess by an older boy, 16 years old, who is alleged to be the real murderer; he claims this boy threatened to beat his head with a stick until he cracked it open if he did not assume responsibility for the crime. It was when they were found, accompanied by a third child, and inquired by the police.⁵

The newspaper, as the location for reporting the everyday life, daily presents facts that reinforce concepts and values mostly based on the dominant “logics”. The everyday characters are invariably the same presented in the newspapers, although they may never be seen, most of the times. Yet they are the same because they are part of a network in which the life of each of us is woven. They are part of it not because we established with them a daily physical contact, but because they imbricate in our world, in our imagery, in the same fashion we do in theirs. For Agnes Heller, “the everyday scope of a king is not his kingdom, but his court”⁶, i.e., what is around him, under a much larger perspective than simply this or that datum mentioned in daily life. In this sense, again referring to Heller’s ideas, the human beings are revealed in full in the contact they establish with their everyday practice.

Snotty’s story is narrative of resistance that offers us the possibility of getting to know a boy, an average, everyday character, with whom we inevitably come across in our daily lives. The text prompts us to relate with the character in a way that escapes the rules imposed by our immediate everyday lives. It invites us to look at the other in order to deprive him or her of his or her characteristics, and make him or her different from what

the ordinary offers as an instrument of understanding. Everyday life goes through a change in perspective when, for instance, one tells:

But his story, which is no fairy tale, has a satisfactory ending for a while. He went back home and to his mother, stepfather and his six younger siblings.

"I'm happy because my life has changed", he says. "I didn't use my mind before. I started using my mind when I stopped doing drugs."

Snotty enjoys studying. He is in the third grade of a public junior school in the west side of São Paulo. He lives in a very humble, small house (only a room and a kitchen), whose gate opens to a narrow dirt road, parallel to a lot of bushes and to something between a stream and running sewage...⁷

We leave the familiar, what is offered to us by the dominant social and cultural values and demand a two-folded relationship with the world, towards the unknown, because it is presented in opposition to what we have learned. The functions that the *text of the logics* imposes to the journalistic discourse most of the times reinforce the common order. *Showing* the daily facts with the aim of *informing* often means, in short, the reiteration of what has been seen before – because that is real – and forcibly learned that the evil is evil, and the good is good.

In the narrative about Snotty, on the other hand, besides being presented the data that the official journalistic discourse acknowledges as values of journalism, we are taken to a day-by-day dimension that transcends common life. It does not withdraw from the factual. The references about the reality, like the place where he lives and where he was arrested, dates and time when the events happened, are markers that refer to immediate reality. An analysis, through the logic of the text, that determined as its perspective acknowledging such data would have them as journalistic evidence.

According to the judiciary, on March 15th of the past year, the child was taken to an institution in the district of Vila Clarisse, in the north side of São Paulo, from where he ran away two weeks later.

But Snotty tells us another trajectory. He says he was taken to Campinas and that he was in a home for children and started to go to school again. He managed to run away a few times.⁸

But the narrative offers even more, for allowing the acknowledgment of other data concerning an everyday life less determined by the norms.

In the beginning of January, Snotty was run over by a motorcycle in the surroundings of Anhangabaú. He was taken to a hospital. A social assistant inquired him about his family. He, who had been silent for two or three days, told her where his mother and stepfather lived.

On the following day his mother was there to see him. The boy, jealous of his stepfather, hardly spoke to her. But both made peace about previous quarrels, not always explicit. He was discharged from hospital and so far, has not run away again⁹.

In this narrative, for example, the contact with the time of the history is established in an even closer manner to the real. The character has a life time, a time that both precedes and comes after the fact. There is not, in the perspective of this narrative of resistance, any requirement concerning the fact as a complete datum, defined and pre-established by one logic, because there are lives under construction. The main point, in this aspect, is not asking whether Snotty is telling or not the truth when he claims he was not the murderer; what is interesting to note in the narrative is that behind the fact “the boy had been arrested several times accused of murder” there are other facts, other “truths”.

It is important to highlight that there should be no judgment in this analysis referring to the naïve belief that every quotidian character should be treated like Snotty; there are certainly other facts related to other “snotties” who determine textual structures that can be made diverse. What really matters, thus, is re-thinking the order of the text, seeing in it the possible connections with other locations inserted in our everyday lives. The analysis, therefore, leads to a heterogeneous and plural location, where, today, we learn as constitutive of the conflictive space in which the identities manifest themselves.

It is necessary, in the same process, to acknowledge in the narratives of resistance the location given to the new social and cultural fragmentation, treated by Martín-Barbero as one the first fundamental mediations. Through the *logic of the text*, thus, there is the possibility of an approach that acknowledges, in the space of the newspaper, places other than those that restrict the individual – character of the everyday life – in the dimension that is imposed upon him. The construction of meaning that works in this order is connected to the possibility of reconfiguration of identities, which, in this case, may take place if the process in the construction of the text is identified.

“Truths”

Let us read another narrative, also acknowledged here as a narrative of resistance:

“I am a fundamentalist [...] If Osama Bin Laden is involved in the attacks against America, he has my support. Osama must have had a reasonable reason to kill those people.

Osama is a hero for the real muslims.[...]We must kill Americans because they are enemies of the Islam. Americans provide political, financial, and military support to Israel so it can steal the land of the Palestine [...]If you are an enemy of the Islam, I feel urged to kill you".

These are the words of Salahuddeen Khalid, a 27-year-old Pakistani kept in the prison of Doo-Ab, in the Panshir valley, captured with other 379 prisoners arrested by the North Alliance in the battles against the Taleban soldiers. What is even more interesting: he claims to belong to Al Qaeda, the terrorist organization commanded by Bin Laden. In the imagery of the western world, Khalid is the perfect embodiment of a radical. Besides his statements that would make mula Omar proud, the leader of the Taleban has the appearance of a fundamentalist. He has a long beard, with curly hairs in its end. A professor of Muslim history, he wears black glasses, with a thick and large frame. He speaks in a calm and confident manner, which reminds us of the rare interviews with Bin Laden shown on TV.

Nevertheless, this ideal character, in the journalistic point of view, is probably a sham.

"It is wrong."

At the end of the interview, when the journalist of the Folha de São Paulo is alone with Khalid for less than ten seconds, he says something that makes everything he said before sound dubious and that shows that he may have been used as an instrument of propaganda by the North Alliance to demonize the Taleban: "The interview is wrong."¹⁰

Who is the author of this newspaper article? There is no doubt that a few codes are offered to the readers, such as, "this is a newspaper and the name of the reporter is presented in the beginning of the text", that immediately make us have the journalist as reference of authorship. Kennedy Alencar, who was then a special newspaper correspondent in Islamabad, is the writer of the article. Besides a thorough description of the scene of the interview, the narrative of this journalist makes explicit the unexpected. The interview he has just done might be a "sham".

The trajectory presented in this text as a possibility of reading is invariably another, different from the one that operates in the dimension of an insensible search for the truth. One can even consider that the atrophied narrative would present one frame of reality, and work the interview from the point when the sham is detected. The procedure might have been "let us begin the interview again", or "the source is not reliable, not good to be interviewed". From the viewpoint of the *text of the logics*, an interview-article like this may confuse the reader, not corresponding, it is said, to the main task of informing with accuracy.

Leading the reader to the dimension of the sham certainly demands courage from the journalist. Not because he, as the author of the article, might be considered a liar, but exactly because he removes from himself his own condition of deified subject. He loses the position given by a conductive epistemological order of being the one who will transmit the absolute knowledge to the other, to find himself in an ordinary condition,

i.e., of the individual, as it is pertinent to him. It is interesting that we are not stricken by a single doubt concerning the fact – Khalid is Pakistani, 27 years old, a Taleban militant and was arrested by the North Alliance. What occurs, in this aspect, is a deconstruction of the location of the truth. The truth, we should say, if it is in a location, it is never in the fact but rather in *who* sees it as the truth. This way of seeing things is made possible by the *logic of the text*, for it aims at understanding how this process takes place in the text.

In semantic terms, the journalist-author plays with the journalistic dogmas when he allows his text to make reference to “an ideal character” – the one who is revealed as the informer of one truth, the truth reported by the one who writes the interview. Moreover, the character is ideal because he confirms a logic that focus on reflecting upon the effects or that previously believes that the message will inevitably contain the evil or the good. He is ideal because he avoids prolonging the understanding of the circumstances concerning the fact – and this responds to the time factor because its processing is faster. He is ideal because the entire ideal is given to immediate understanding – which “cooperates” with the supposed incapacity of readers to make sense of facts.

Still, at the semantic level, the journalist-author offers the reader the possibility of asking, “Is there an imagery of the western world?” The affirmation of the existence of ideals and imageries in the text constructed by this journalist is supported as truth in his own text. “See that we are before someone”, as the text says, “who could support our convictions, but who invariably does not do that!” The fatal/factual sentence that introduces the doubt in the one who writes the text is shared by the one who reads it. This is a fundamental item that makes this text, blatant, aware that every narration implies the existence of a listener/reader.

Also, at syntactic levels, this is a curious text. The writer states that Khalid “claims” to belong to the Taleban and that the prison director “claimed” having prisoners of the Al Qaeda under his lash – what would sound different if the journalist had written “Khalid stated that” or “according to the prison director”, commonplace, as we know, in the atrophied narratives. Such codes are fundamental, in the *logic of the text*, in the exercise of understanding *who* narrates and *how* to narrate a story. Regarding the *how*, since it points the order in the construction of meaning, a given writing carries one meaning or another, depending on the way it is treated, and on the *who*, since it reconstitutes the location of the writer, because this one, by bringing up the elements that point out doubt in the voice of the other, shares his uncertainties with those he

will dialogue with when the writing turns into a text. In this analysis, far beyond the sentence, it also moves far beyond the fact. In a reconstituted everyday life, which the truth unfolds in other “truths”, the meanings are in permanent construction.

Enlarged and revised journalism

Those are important aspects when we reflect upon the complex dimension in which the journalistic act is inserted. The journalist, as one of the protagonists of the act, when repositioned in the human location, creates possibilities of becoming part of the tapestry of life. Through the text, he abandons the position of a law-giver to become an observer, as much as it is the one whom he writes to, in spite of the undeniable privilege of writing being given to the former. The journalist neither makes his own the voice of the other nor proposes to solely paraphrase his sources like in the atrophied narratives that insist on the omnipresence of the author-journalist who, by quite often limiting himself to say “according to” and/or “As reported by the source”, is made both monophonic, legitimizing one voice only, and monologic, very little attentive to the intricacy that frames the discourses.

The narrative of resistance, on the other hand, may be present in the subject we try to define as a “negotiator of meaning” or “social mediator”, quoting Cremilda Medina, the one who “in the extensive and pluralist social transit he performs, deals with a choir of voices, with the polyphony” (1996:232). In this aspect, if the one who writes allows others’ words to become constitutive of his text, there is not only the possibility of demystifying the journalist-deity, but also of producing a text that can be acknowledged as dialogic. So, in the case of this analysis, the foci of attention are the “plurals” presented by the organization of the narratives.

That means a different attitude that prompts us to ask such questions like: am I a journalist, am I a novelist? Do I have to tell the truth or I may create? (Always as if the former action were so absolutely different and distant from the latter). To these second questions precede the rules and the determinations imposed by the discourse, which forego even the fact itself. From the viewpoint of the *logic of the text*, it is apt to mention that one does not think of only one kind of discourse adequate to any fact, but on the contrary, how can the fact be better narrated. Or still, in the subtlety of the report, questions may be inferred, such as: where am I, what fact is being presented to me, how can I narrate the scene?

The order of the production of the discourse alternates, and it can be constructed in the perspective of the event.

This exploration invades the universe of the text – this is the way that the *logic of the text* presents – in order to prompt the understanding that it is in itself that the relationships are established. That means a winding road at times, since it does deal with the real as a referential, but rather with the real in the text, which is constructed because (and when) the text is framed. This opposite point of view invariably leads to that other location, the location where ambivalences are. According to Julia Kristeva,

“For Bakhtin [...] the dialogue is not only the language assumed by the subject, it is also the writing in which we read the other (with no allusions to Freud). Thus, the bakhtinian dialogism marks the writing both as subjectivity and communicability. In face of this dialogism, the notion of ‘person-subject of the writing’ starts to dilute and gives space to another: the ambivalence of writing”(1984:95).

Hence, it is important to emphasize that, in the *logic of the text*, one does not directly work with the empiric dimension. One evaluates the journalist’s willingness to be open or not to the dialogue through the writing coming from him, as a result of his work, by means of what he converts into text. Thus, his practice is re-evaluated, though, by other means than those proposed by the *text of the logics*. This is one of the ways one thinks it is possible to enlarge the theoretical and practical universe where the journalistic discourse and its narratives are inscribed.

| NOTES

- 1 This term is used to refer to journalistic narratives more commonly found in newspapers, mainly the ones of great circulation. They concern pieces of news that are structured from technical procedures of the journalistic writing. In this paper, this term will be more carefully discussed and always contrasted to the so-called “Narratives of Resistance”. Besides, a more thorough counterpart between these two categories of narrative can be found in RESENDE, Fernando. “O olhar às avessas – a lógica do texto jornalístico”. São Paulo: ECA/USP, 2002 (P.H.D. Thesis)
- 2 COSTA *apud* RESENDE, 2002:53.

- 3 JK years: period from 1956 to 1961, when Juscelino Kubitschek de Oliveira was the Brazilian President. He is the one responsible for the foundation of the city of Brasília.

- 4 In the field of written journalism, this proposition is developed in RESENDE (2002-p.h.d.thesis). In this paper, an approach through the *logic of the text* is proposed, which aims at an analysis of journalistic approaches under the perspective of literary studies. This proposition comes forward to oppose the *text of logics*, whose approach, departing from aspects of the functionalism and critical theory, has arisen as dominant in the field of the studies of journalism. In the work cited above, the direction taken by the *logic of the text* has made the constitution of the journalistic narrative universe possible, and in it, other kinds of narrative have become present. These are the so-called “narratives of resistance”, which in opposition to the “atrophied”- woven by the *text of logics* - send us to a more subjective and complex dimension concerning the journalistic practice as well as values and practices this field has worked with. For the perspective of the *logic of the text*, it is fundamental to reflect upon the narratives that have been developed in the field of literary studies, mainly the works by BAKHTIN, Mikhail (1995, 1997 and 1998), and BARTHES, Roland (1971 and 2001).

- 5 NATALI. “Catarrento troca as ruas pela escola”. *Folha de S.Paulo*, São Paulo, 02 mar. 2002. *Caderno Cotidiano*. p.C4. My translation from the original.

- 6 HELLER, 1987. p.25. (My translation from the original: “El ámbito cotidiano de un rey no es el reino sino la corte”).

- 7 NATALI. Catarrento troca as ruas pela escola. *Folha de S.Paulo*, São Paulo, 02 mar. 2002. *Caderno Cotidiano*. p.C4..My translation from the original.

- 8 NATALI. Catarrento troca as ruas pela escola. *Folha de S.Paulo*, São Paulo, 02 mar. 2002. *Caderno Cotidiano*. p.C4. My translation from the original.

- 9 NATALI. Catarrento troca as ruas pela escola. *Folha de S.Paulo*, São Paulo, 02 mar. 2002. *Caderno Cotidiano*. p.C4. My translation from the original.

- 10 ALENCAR. Talebans presos viram propaganda. *Folha de S.Paulo, São Paulo*, 17 out. 2001. *Caderno Mundo*, p.A12. My translation from the original.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- ABREU, Alzira Alves de et al. (Org.) (1996). *A imprensa em transição: o jornalismo brasileiro nos anos 50*. Rio de Janeiro: FGV.
- BAKHTIN, Mikhail (1998). *Questões de literatura e estética: a teoria do romance*. São Paulo: Unesp.
- BAKHTIN, Mikhail (1997). *Estética da criação verbal*. São Paulo: Martins Fontes.
- BAKHTIN, Mikhail (1995). *Marxismo e filosofia da linguagem*. São Paulo: Hucitec.
- BARTHES, Roland (2001). *A aventura semiológica*. São Paulo: Martins Fontes.
- BARTHES, Roland (1971). *Análise estrutural da narrativa*. Petrópolis: Vozes.
- HELLER, Agnes (1987). *Sociologia de la vida cotidiana*. Barcelona: Península.
- KRISTEVA, Julia (1984). *O texto do romance*. Lisboa: Horizonte Universitário.
- MARTÍN-BARBERO, Jesús (1997). *Dos meios às mediações – comunicação, cultura e hegemonia*. Rio de Janeiro, UFRJ.
- MEDINA, Cremilda (1996). *Povo e personagem*. Canoas: Ulbra.
- MIÈGE, Bernard (1992). 'El espacio público visitado de nuevo (I) e (II)'. In: MIÈGE. *La sociedad conquistada por la comunicación*. Barcelona: ESRP/PPU.
- MORIN, Edgar (1995). *Terra-pátria*. Porto Alegre: Sulina.
- RESENDE, Fernando (2002). *Textuações: ficção e fato no Novo Jornalismo de Tom Wolfe*. São Paulo: Annablume/Fapesp.
- RESENDE, Fernando (2002). 'O olhar às avessas – a lógica do texto jornalístico'. São Paulo: ECA/USP (tese de doutoramento).
- SANTOS, Boaventura de Sousa (1997). 'A queda do Ângelus Novus – para além da equação moderna entre raízes e opções'. *Revista Novos Estudos Cebrap*, n.47, março.
- SANTOS, Boaventura de Sousa (1989). *Introdução a uma ciência pós-moderna*. Porto: Afrontamento.
- SODRÉ, Nelson Werneck (1999). *A história da imprensa no Brasil*. 4.ed. Rio de Janeiro: Mauad.

Fernando Resende is M.A. in Literature (UFMG), P.H.D in Communications (USP, Brazil). Professor in the post-graduation program in Social Communications at the Pontifícia Universidade Católica do Rio de Janeiro (PUC-RJ)