FOLHA DE S. PAULO AND THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE 1964 COUP: battles of memories in the multimedia productions

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Abstract

The battles of memories in journalistic productions seek their constitution in history. In times of convergence and digitalization, memory and journalism have new configurations. In this article, we investigated Folha de S. Paulo’s productions about the 50th anniversary of the 1964 coup. Folha is today the most accessed journalistic vehicle of the country and had relevance since before that event. In general, we note that the standard journalistic structure and the personal memories are not used because the vehicle prefers a more didactic information model with historical documents. The individual sources appear to make explicit contrary opinions to the official narrative sustained in the productions of Folha, especially in the military justifications.

Keywords
Battles of memories; Journalism; Folha de S. Paulo; 1964 coup; Military dictatorship.
INTRODUCTION

The formation and the maintenance of memory, individual or collective, don’t constitute static processes. Remembrances, celebrations, forgetfulness and silences are part of a memory structure through disputes and tensions to transmit the desired message in a more or less conscious way. The memory is, therefore, constituted by clashes that aim at stabilizing some unimagined perspective of the past. In this controversial, dynamic and non-spontaneous environment of its formation, the mnemonic conflicts grow up. These battles of memories comprise a normalization that inserts a perspective different from the official version to an opposition with the intention of unmasking it or making it be forgotten.

In the last decades, Brazil has experienced a (re)discussion about its own history, in the academic environment, in the society and in the most varied media products. The fiftieth anniversary of the military coup of 1964, the 30 years of the movement Direct (Elections) Now and the National Truth Commission appear as present-day agents over the past. In 2014, the military dictatorship, the country’s most controversial recent period, is (re)discussed and (re)opened. The processes of recognition, revision and reparation of the history of the coup and the dictatorship exist and are manifested during the period of repression, even though they have intensified in recent years (Martins, 2017).

Since the early 1980s, in the period of political openness, there has been in the country a “memorialistic outbreak” (Cardoso, 2012), with denunciations about the military dictatorship, beginning a memorial victory of the militants. While it’s difficult to pinpoint a historic victory of those who fought against the military in that period, the norm today is to show that there are other perspectives about the coup and the 21 years of the authoritarian military regime. This contemporary phenomenon gives way more and more to conflicts and possibilities of redemption of readings about the past in the present. Nora (1993) believes that this present obsession with the past reflects a society fearful of forgetfulness.

For these memories to crystallize in history, they increasingly need the media because of their fundamental role as places where conflicts can be observed for stabilization purposes. The remembrances and the forgetfulness are catalyzed and engendered by the media for new constitutions. With valorization of the writing of history, journalism emerges in today’s societies as its “first draft” inscribed in a collective memory. The product of journalists also serves as an essential space for historians’ past research, contributing to interpretation and reinterpretation through new (re)constructions.

The journalistic productions comprise an initial record of what is considered socially relevant, from the perspective of an instance of communicative production in specific space and time. The journalists not only made the first draft, but also use the past to interpret a contemporary history, especially in celebrations and ephemeris. The media, with their productions, may appear as engenderers and participants in historical buildings and as catalysts and coadjuvants, with their informative titles and their effects of sense that seek the objectivity (Martins & Moura, 2016). The journalism has contributed, for example, to the creation of an environment appropriate to the deposition of the president in 1964 (Koshiyama, 1988; Ferreira, 2003; Fico, 2004, 2005; Delgado, 2010; Ferreira & Gomes, 2014; Machado, 2014; Reis et al., 2014; Reis, 2014; Ridenti, 2014).

The characteristics of the digital media allow journalistic publications to offer their own treatment of contents destined for historical subjects, through a new memory ecology. The digitization and convergence join the new processes of archiving, indexing and organizing journalistic material, allowing simplified access and increasing storage capacities at low cost. These new properties brought to the scenario of global and digital (globital) communication point to potentialities and ruptures, compared to the uses of memory by previous media. Although the relationship between memory and journalism hasn’t arisen with the creation of the web, or even the internet, it’s in this space that it’s stored and used easier, faster and with fewer costs. The relevance of this characteristic is so marked in the digital medium that Pavlik (2001) called it contextualized journalism at the beginning of the century.
This article discusses the constitution of the history of the military dictatorship from the battles of memories in the productions about the 50 years of the 1964 coup in *Folha de S. Paulo*, since the digitalization of memory and journalism bring new configurations for both, evidenced in periods of commemoration. These possibilities are amplified in multimedia productions, specifics of a digital journalism with greater innovation to conjugate hypermedia, multimedia and interaction. This style of storytelling spread after The New York Times's The special production Snow Fall, with *Folha de S. Paulo* producing these productions in the "All About" series, which includes the special production 50th anniversary of the 1964 coup. The vehicle is the Brazilian newspaper with greater reach currently, being referenced since before 1964, period in which the dictatorship was established with its support. In addition to the ephemeral, the production comprises the period of the National Truth Commission, from 2012 to 2014, a propeller for these mnemonic debates..

BATTLES OF MEMORIES IN MEDIA

The use of the term battles of memories began with the article by Daniel Lindenberg (1994), which refers to battles or controversies of memories in the celebrations about French Revolution, World War I and Post-War – through communist and anti-communist perspectives – of France under the command of the Nazis (“Vichy France”). However, the war for the independence of Algeria is the most evident in these battles of memories, through texts of Benjamin Stora. In the following decade, Stora (2007) began to structure this idea more systematically, followed by Pascal Blanchard and Isabelle Veyrat-Masson (2008b), who further narrowed the relationship between history-media-memory with new approaches and appropriations.

Lindenberg’s ideas (1994) were influenced by the Gayssot Law of 1990 and the French manifestations in 1992 against Christopher Columbus’ “discovery” of America. In Brazil, similar manifestations occurred as a result of the 500th anniversary of the arrival of the Portuguese in Brazilian territory. The texts of Stora (2007) and Blanchard and Veyrat-Masson (2008b) were a direct response to the creation of the “positive colonization law” of February 2005 and the manifestations of French society, in 1998, to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the end of slavery – a stimulus for the creation of the Taubira Law in 2001.

The memory and history refer to distinct aspects, although they are guided by the past. While history has a universal aspect, belonging to no one specifically, memory is multiple, plural, cumulative, collective and individualized, rooted in some concrete materiality in space, image and object. The history is impersonal and doesn’t have, in a broad sense, any group as support and devotes its attention to records and documents. On the other hand, the memory is an element always suspicious to the history, with the aim of destroying and repelling it (NORA, 1993). The history is an erudite construction based on critical discourses from the selection of the facts and a narrative structure, also constituted of memory, while the memory sacralizes remembrances, under the risk of amnesia, oblivion and silencing. In this way, the history must adapt itself, while questioning and considering the movements of memories. In this process, there would be no slave and servant, but a complementarity, without any overlapping the other (Halbwachs, 2006).

The history works as a representation of the past constituted by a confluence of memories that are related to each other and performed by authorized agents, while the memory is a reference and a virtual awareness of the past in the present time, an attempt – not always achieved – of remember something that is absent. The memory doesn’t seek continuity and chronology of the past, since it’s based on the remembrances and forgetfulness of individuals or collectivities, advocating a recordation that is manifested by something lived through some social support, in order to exist collectively.

The concept of battles of memories starts from the idea that there’s no memory without history.
and is aligned by the antagonistic relationship between these two poles, in which memory represents small groups, communities or persons, while history is more universalist and embracing. The two dimensions intersect, nourish themselves and confront each other, but without unbridgeable barriers. With this distinction and relation, the battles always seem imminent, because anyone can claim their memories and their place in the transmitted official history, from which it has been excluded; the memory is a particular way of preserving the past. The history and memory are in constant interaction, with a more direct relationship between the memories and the fabric of history, although it may serve to construct other historical narratives.

The main reasons for the battles of memories are the oblivion and manipulation created and encouraged by the state; in other words, the gap between official history and silenced memories, with impossible dialogue. For Silverstone (1999), the conformation of history contributes to erase some memories, making them redundant with fixed narratives and documentary sources. The mnemonic conflict would be a reaction to the fact that there’s no space and representation in the official narrative of history. It’s a reaction to the frustration of not having their memories, or their version of history, in the official historical narratives (Blanchard & Veyrat-masson, 2008b). There’s a sense of injustice, because what is said (and believed to be real and true) doesn’t coincide with what some groups and individuals remember from that time. Pääbo (2008) defines the battles of memories as an occasion in which groups or individuals have different remembrances about the past in comparison to the official collective memory.

Veyrat-Masson (2008) perceives the battles of memories in a poignant way in French society because some important memory events for leftist groups were absent on television, one of main catalysts and generators media. Some perspectives tend not only to bring a new vision to what is narrated in official history, but to reject an entire tradition. For Merzeau (2010), these battles serve to reveal and bring new alliances and strategies around the conformation of collective and official memory. These conflicts may represent a dangerous conjuncture, with cultural, economic, historical, military, political and social meanderings. They become dangerous when they deny the remembrances of other individuals, especially when they don’t hear, understand, and sympathize with each other’s history, but only record and account for their dead. Stora (2007: 74) believes that we are living in a time when everyone wants to expose their pain and suffering, “tout le monde veut montrer, dévoiler, prouver ses blessures”.

For Stora (2008a, 2008b), we try not to fall into the misunderstanding of putting the memory as a prisoner of the past, repeating the conflicts of another era. The maturity and passage of time make appear more complex and dense on the subject. When any media production is conveyed, others may unmask it or at least throw a particular version of the facts; this “violence of reactions” keeps the battles of memories alive (Veyrat-masson, 2008). The groups and collectives have the desire and the need to rediscover a past that is particular to them and to claim their place in the official historical narrative propagated by the state. However, there’s a danger that these claims will remain restricted and will never be transformed into shared memories. The extensive production of content for the various media makes it difficult for some memory to be completely forgotten and silenced. Even marginalized over a long period, the memory will be able to spread in the public space, to a greater or lesser extent.

Issues debated about the battles of memories occur at world levels. Blanchard and Veyrat-Masson (2008a, 2008b), Ferro (2008) and Stora (2007) point to international phenomena, since public memory policies, that is, the political uses of memory and the past, widespread in all continents, especially in Europe and America, although it has clear expressions in Africa, Asia and Oceania. The main elements emphasized are colonization and slavery, dictatorships and authoritarian regimes, as well as genocide and massacres.

Regarding the laws, we may consider that it’s only recently that a Brazilian law became a real agent of the memory wars (Manceron, 2008): the law for creation of the National Commission of Truth (Law 12.528), though the Law on Access to Public Information (Law 12.527) is relevant to historical and
memorial perspectives. The Brazilian researchers emphasize the period of coup and military dictatorship as propitious times for this discussion. Many authors don’t use the concept of battles of memories *ipsis litteris*, but their prerogatives are in several texts (Cardoso, 2012; Fico, 2004; Martins Filho, 2002; Pereira, 2015; Rollemberg, 2006; Schmidt, 2007; Tedesco, 2012).

Although it isn’t the only space for the conformation of memories, the media is a catalyst and generator of this conflicting process with a view to the constitution of a historical version. Journalism and other media products bring conflicting perspectives on the coup, opposing the government’s view of military agents to those of victims and their families. The role of journalists has become so fundamental that the Elio Gaspari’s books are among the most read in recent years (Schmidt, 2007), reissued in 2014.

The battles of memories are fought around the coup and dictatorship of the military since 1964, although in the last years they have increased, especially with the National Commission of the Truth. The re-openings may not be a therapeutic and reconciling element, but make resentments grow, especially because of the absence of punishment in Brazil. For Ferro (2008), rebuilding silenced and forgotten memories bring the compensations of a past that doesn’t pass. The battles of memories surrounding the coup and dictatorship have five major conflicting discourses, which still contain internal distinctions: government; military; militants and victims; specialists; and media (Pereira, 2015).

Martins Filho (2002) explains that the military believe that after the defeat of the left, the militants struggled to win at least in the field of letters – in the propagation of memories and in the historiographical constitution of the military dictatorship – what they lost in the weapon. The winning memory – of the militants – also has forgotten and silenced memories, even contradictory, although the main memory has already been extracted (Fico, 2004). For Rollemberg (2006), the winners of these battles have a plurality of forgotten and silenced memories, for although published, they weren’t incorporated into the official historical narrative.

The history highlighted the memory of marginalized and minorities, opposing the memory that is usually official, the winners of the battle. Martins Filho (2002) and Rollemberg (2006) agree that losers usually have their history forgotten, while winners perpetuate their perspective; however, in the Brazilian case, the reverse occurred: the winners seek to forget and losers, remember. For Schmidt (2007), the confrontation can be broadly verified in two perspectives: the military seek to forget and silence the facts, “turn the page”; while the militants leave the “scar open”, remembering the events of the past.

The media isn’t a simple sounding board, channel through which memories pass without modifying or creating anything. The media make visible the mnemonic conflicts by staging them, in addition to reflecting these memories, that is, developing and stimulating them (Martins & Moura, 2016; Martins, 2017). The battles of memories consider this centrality in problematizing the relation between history-media-memory, since they aren’t present without the logic of transmission and mediation, or, as Blanchard and Veyrat-Masson (2008a, 2008b) argue, of mediatization, in a broad sense.

The digitization and convergence through which society passes make it difficult not to publish, since each individual, with a computer connected to the Internet, has the ability to divulge the content of his desire, containing fictional or documentary histories, his or others. It’s the new look of the memory ecology, which, not only media, is flowing. For this reason, Blanchard and Veyrat-Masson (2008b) argue that this “realm of instantaneousness” of digital technologies opens a new space for the archiving, diffusion and conservation of these memories, which often had their unprecedented conflicts in the public space. The internet allows the crossing of diverse memories, with each individual or collective being able to expose their vision.

The memory goes through changes and modifications, such as a change from collective to connected memory, according to new memory ecology described by Neiger, Meyers and Zandberg (2011), Hoskins (2011) and Reading (2011). In this new ecosystem, the relationship between media and memory is also transformed, demanding a paradigm shift on what is considered as mediated memory. A change in
the media is also initiated from a change in its infrastructure, caused by changes in the form and potential of the file in its digital version. Hoskins (2009) calls this process of memory on-the-fly, a version of memory that preserves its previous moments, emerging, accumulating, and acquiring new features.

Palacios (2009, 2014) argues that our society has never been preoccupied with remembrance processes as it’s today, because the memory becomes increasingly easier and faster to access, especially in journalistic archives already digitized. The memory has never had such a preponderant and central function as in contemporary, digital, connected and mediatized societies, reflecting in the production of digital journalism. This perspective appears so predominantly that memory is one of the aspects of digital journalism most emphasized, in relation to journalistic productions in other media. It becomes defined as multiple – due to the possibility of access to the various media formats –, instantaneous – because it’s accessible by the producer and the reader quickly through the links – and cumulative – given its ease and low cost of archiving (Palacios, 2002, 2003, 2008, 2014). The journalism works on individual, collective or even media memory in an increasingly strategic way, by bringing information and past documents into a new structure. The memory, for Palacios (2008, 2011, 2014), should be one of the attributes investigated in any evaluation to identify and establish the quality of digital journalistic products.

The special production of Folha de S. Paulo is analyzed from three instances that are based on battles of memories: actors, weapons and battles territories or battlefields. The intention is to describe these three aspects in production about the 50 years of the 1964 coup, aiming at the realization of an investigation that implies in the detailed description of the actors – the people and technologies involved –, of the battle territories – the subjects and the contradictions – and of the weapons – the ways and the strategies how the subjects are presented by the actors, legitimizing or not their speech, contributing or not to the stabilization of the perspectives. The battlefields are the places where these disputes take place, in this text, the Folha Group.

FOLHA DE S. PAULO AS BATTLE TERRITORY

The special production “Everything about the Military Dictatorship” begins with a bold text that describes our recent democracy as “incapable of pacifying the controversies of the period” and with the presentation of former presidents directly involved in the struggle against the dictatorship, such as Fernando Henrique Cardoso, Luís Inácio Lula da Silva and Dilma Rousseff, forgetting José Sarney, first president after the end of the dictatorship with direct relation with the authoritarian regime of the military. With a staff of almost 30 people, the report speaks about the 21 years of repression through a menu with eight sections, plus an expedient and an extensive list of sources and references – with an indication of the books and links to interview audios and transcripts in English. The navigation occurs in two ways: vertically, in which it’s compulsorily carried out by the eight sections, at the end of each one, it must click on an arrow to follow to the subsequent subject; or the menu in the upper right corner, where it can directly access the section, namely: Introduction; The crisis; The dictatorship; The economy; The opening; Settlement of accounts; And if...; Articles.

The construction of narrative is chronological and almost historical and didactic, distinct from the standardized journalistic texts, which prioritize a hierarchical order of importance by the logic of the inverted pyramid. The introduction relates to the period of the coup the then candidates for the presidency in 2014: Dilma Rousseff, Aécio Neves and Eduardo Campos – died in a plane crash before the election. The five subsequent sections begin in the same way, with an animation and collage of historical images. In “The Crisis”, however, the page opens with a Jango speech in the background, like a soundtrack.

The text makes clear, in the following section, “The dictatorship”, the relationship of the right with the military and the left with the armed struggle, culminating in an even stricter repression and in the hardening of the regime. The first sentence, however, places the military practically as innocent who
fought against the evil. “They came to power without knowing what to do”, although they immediately called them “coup agents”, a line that follows the all special production. It’s said that in Recife, “a veteran communist militant, Gregorio Bezerra, was tied by the neck, beaten by an army colonel in a public square and dragged through the streets of the city to jail”, not sparing information about intransigence and crimes committed by the military. The choice of the “moderate” Humberto Castelo Branco as the first president was held with confidence and assurance of “a speedy return of power to civilians” – something that never occurred. This contradiction is soon exposed when it’s revealed that the military defended that “the legitimacy of the new regime depended on maintaining a convincing democratic facade”.

The actions of conservative groups and leftist groups are told in order to explain the justification of the military for the implementation of AI-5, the decade-long act that “inaugurated the most repressive phase of the military dictatorship”. Despite acknowledging the excesses of the military, it’s said that the left, especially people linked to the Popular Action, trained in Cuba, did armed struggle even before hardening with the AI-5, according to information from the historian Jacob Gorender. The justification of the militants who participated in the armed struggle was then brought forward, arguing that it was the only option for demands and combats against the dictatorship, although documents reveal that the idea was to implement a “socialist dictatorship”.

The General and former President Médici was recognized as responsible for the expansion of torture in the Information Operations Deployments and Internal Defense Operations Centers (DOI-CODI), but the General Ernesto Geisel, the successor known to begin the opening, said that “this piece of killing is barbaric, but I think it has to be”. The cruelty in these units is also explained by describing the instrument of torture called “dragon’s chair”, in which prisoners were tied and electrocuted. The General Adyr Fiúza de Castro, head of the CODI of Rio de Janeiro in the 1970s, in a 1993 interview for the Getúlio Vargas Foundation, demonstrated the virulence of military actions: “Obviously, the method kills the fly, pulverizes the fly, it crushes the fly, when, sometimes, it’s only possible with a fan to kill that fly or to frighten it”. There’s also a caveat about the “victims” provided by the “armed left”, who “haven’t by far the size that the murders and torture practiced in the basements”, In addition, “the responsibility of the left is dubious” in many deaths.

In the section “The economy”, the subtitle already shows that “the economic miracle” helped to legitimize the government, even if it created “imbalances that could only be corrected long after, with the return of democracy”. According to production, “the way the military led the economy weakened the country’s finances and undermined its ability to sustain the pace of expansion of the miracle any longer”. The president of the Central Bank at the time, Carlos Langoni, in direct citation, was placed in disbelief of the proposals of the new Planning Minister, Delfim Netto.

“Slow, gradual and secure” is Ernesto Geisel’s famous expression for how the dictatorship would make the transition to democracy, explicit in the section “The opening”. Few people remember, however, of its “threat”: “If opponents of the government tried to accelerate the process, they would lose everything”. Without the armed left and an economy in the process of collapsing, the military once again disagreed internally, and the opposition party, the MDB, was growing, causing Geisel to harden the regime again before promoting the opening. The opposition growth picks up on repression and “economic collapse”.

The Amnesty Law is put in the section titled “Settlement of accounts” as a mechanism to forgive ex-guerrillas and protect torturers, especially because there’s still a lack of clarification of the military’s crimes, increasing the pressure for its revision. In December 2013, for example, the mandate of João Goulart, interrupted on the day of the coup, was symbolically returned, represented by his son, João Vicente Goulart, and delivered by Dilma Rousseff. According to the report, at the time, “almost everyone applauded, except for the three commanders of the Armed Forces who were accompanying the session”. The text, however, accuses the former President Dilma of a lack of harmony with her subordinates, since in Argentina and Chile “the restoration of democracy has encouraged high-ranking officials to apologize
for past mistakes”, allowing “to investigate and punish violations human rights”, unlike our Amnesty Law, broad and unrestricted. To corroborate this idea, they cite directly a passage from the work of Anthony Pereira, an American political scientist who conducted a comparative study in these three countries.

In Spain, according to the text, the process would have been similar to ours, since those who supported and those who fought against the dictator General Francisco Franco went unpunished. When the report says that our law “allowed the release of thousands of political prisoners, the return of exiles and the reintegration into the life of the country of people affected by institutional acts”, it shows also that “it guaranteed the impunity of the agents responsible for deaths and acts of torture by establishing that forgiveness would be extended to ‘related’ crimes”, making clear the error in the case of the release of the military. These concessions were “very important for the right-wing pressures”, especially with Arena with a majority in Congress, although it created “a situation of inequality, by ensuring that the military would never be investigated or prosecuted for their crimes, unlike which had occurred with most of the amnesties, who had already been arrested and prosecuted by the dictatorship”.

The text in this way places our Amnesty Law as unjust in treating the same way both militants and military, guerrillas and torturers and murderers, since the one reacted to a situation dictated by dictators. The militants and victims of the military want to delegitimize the Law, since it was more of a “self-amnesty” of a “dictatorial society”, according to Pedro Serrano, a USP professor mentioned in the production. At the beginning of the decade, in 2010, the Federal Supreme Court rejected, however, the review of this unequal and unjust amnesty process, denied even by the rapporteur Eros Grau, a retired minister who was arrested and tortured during the dictatorship.

Although the military do everything to keep the past from being left behind, for all to “turn the page”, some efforts have sought to re-discuss it and bring up some facts and stories without knowledge. According to the report, “the reparations process was extended in 2002, when the government decided to pay financial compensation to all who had suffered persecution and violence during the military regime”. Recent actions, with requests for revision of the Amnesty Law to the STF, have gained strength since 2010, when the Organization of American States (OAS) “condemned Brazil for the death of the Araguaia guerrillas, determined that the country punishes those responsible and stated that the Amnesty Law can’t be used to prevent this from happening”.

The attorney Marlon Weichert, quoted directly and with appropriate speech by the special production, states: “I am convinced that we will get there and do justice”. The delay causes several military to die “without ever admitting responsibility for the acts of violence committed in the period”, the report said in a tone of almost lamentation. The National Truth Commission, set up in 2012, according to the text, “was celebrated as a historic step to clarify the crimes committed in the dictatorship, but the group found several difficulties to advance”, especially since many involved have died and the Armed Forces don’t contribute, apart from internal differences in priorities and working methods.

The possibilities of some events have been different, from before the coup to crucial moments during the dictatorship, are discussed by Ricardo Mendonça in the section “And if...” in five texts without any multimedia resources. The author denies the possibility of a “left coup” by Jango, because the historians doubt this possibility, since “they have never found any evidence that something like this has been planned”. Mendonça quotes directly the political scientist Marcelo Ridenti, for whom the election would probably take place in 1965, with the possibility of having a “civil authoritarianism” similar to the military dictatorship, if Carlos Lacerda won.

If Costa e Silva had not died in 1969, Carlos Chagas, journalist and president’s press secretary, indirectly cited, believes that the regime would have been milder, even if the president was supported by the “hard line” military. Chagas maintains that the AI-5 would have been extinguished, because “Costa e Silva didn’t want to go down in history as a tyrant”. But even if the institutional act wasn’t enacted, armed struggle would exist, because “the military of the so-called hard line didn’t say that the armed struggle was
very small at the time, far from representing any more serious threat”.

In this way, this act strengthened the armed struggle, by bringing “some leftists more to the armed struggle, people who until then were reluctant to join”. Even without this armed conflict, the dictatorship would have been long because the authoritarian regime didn’t exist to fight it. The main justifications were “to end corruption and extirpate the leftist influence of Jango’s government”. Although there was talk of a presidential election in 1965 in the initial days of the coup, the withdrawal from the election didn’t exist because of the gun battle, “little significant and almost non-existent”. And even with it “completely annihilated” in 1974, the dictatorship continued for more than a decade, hardening again in 1977.

The last section, “Articles”, contains three texts without any multimedia resources. Matias Spektor, Folha de S. Paulo columnist, talks about “The foreign policy of the military regime” and praises the military’s performance in this sector by directly quoting The Times about an “almost unprecedented expansion” that the country could experience, being “Japan of the Third World”. Spektor criticizes the “dictatorship” – no more “regime” – when the military begins to displease US politicians, rather being condescending to even use a direct quotation from Juracy Magalhães, ambassador of the “regime” in Washington: “what is good for the United States is good for Brazil”. However, later on, the US politicians “resented” and the relationship “went astray”. The text concludes that “the Brazil of the dictatorship was richer, no doubt”, but “the military left the country in a weaker international position, dependent and unjust than could be imagined in 1964”.

Marcos Gonçalves columnist wrote on “Culture, from resistance to the spectacle”, to which left-wing artists created a “politicized and didactic” production for “‘awareness’ of society”. In quoted text, put a “cultural left” as defeated even by attempting to “resist” it by allying “the middle class and the people”. The debauched tone of the text goes on to say that “this one, however, didn’t attend”, after all, his productions were for a “savvy public”.

Oscar Pilagallo touches on a delicate point for the media companies, writing about how the “Press supported the dictatorship before helping to overthrow it”. The “enthusiasm” of the newspapers by the new government diminished as the dictatorship hardened, having, in the end, “a relevant role in re-democratization”, says the author in disregarding that the main communication group of the country, Rede Globo, supported until the last moment the military. The justification for initial support to the dictatorship is the same as the previous text: “the radicalism and approach to sectors of the left” by the president. If part of the press was divided in 1961, in 1964 this position wasn’t maintained, after all, the country “would be heading for a left-wing coup or setting up a continuous maneuver”. Jornal do Brasil and Folha de S. Paulo are placed as little influential for the coup, the first for “breaking with Jango” – not for democracy – only in the last moments, and the latter for his “limited editorial weight at the time”, vehemently accusing the main competitors of the vehicle for which he writes: O Estado de S. Paulo and O Globo.

Even if Última hora has been the only newspaper to be “supporting Jango” – not democracy – Correio da Manhã was the first to denounce the torture – even after “violent editorials defending output Jango”. Despite stating that Grupo Folha adhered to the military’s guidelines, covering up torture and murder and lending vehicles to them, the author makes a reservation and even questions the truth of the facts: “If this happened, it’s not possible to say that the practice was authorized by the management of the company”. The text ends with an exaltation to Folha, who “believed in the project of opening up to give voice to civil society”, still in the late 1970s, being “the first great vehicle to contribute to the campaign for Direct (Elections) Now”, still in 1983.

The special production has a variety of media formats, as is the case of multimedia productions. The more than thirty photos, for example, always represent historical situations, such as the possession of military presidents and President Tancredo Neves, but mainly of atrocities and crimes committed by the military, valuing militants in exposing cruelty in persecution, torture and death of Carlos Marighella, Carlos
Lamarca, Vladimir Herzog, guerrillas in Araguaia, among others. Images of relevant events, such as the show’s car bomb in Riocentro, were also published, showing “how far the military right was willing to go to stop the opening process”, because the explosive was “planted by the military”, and the movements such as the Reform Rally, the Family March with God for Freedom, and the Direct (Elections) Now. The photos are generally from Abril, Folha and Globo Group, as well as Jornal do Brasil and Última Hora newspapers. All four audios are historical, from the military campaign on the radio to the speeches and statements of politicians and military at relevant moments, such as Auro de Moura Andrade, senator and president of the Congress, Jarbas Passarinho, Minister of Labor, and Ernesto Geisel, former military president. The special production has almost fifty videos, about ten of historical nature – records and productions of the dictatorship, carried out by the government or the opponents, as well as a video report of TV Cultura on the Direct (Elections) Now – and the rest of current testimonies of intellectuals, journalists, politicians, militants and military, talking about the motives that led Jango to be deposed and the main memories of the military dictatorship.

The extensive use of infographics characterizes the multimedia productions. The special production featured more than 20 productions of this type, of which three focused on Institutional Acts 1, 2 and 5 and almost half on economic issues, in the specific section to talk about the moment that was “From miracle to bankruptcy”. The most complex and interactive dealt with the atrocities and crimes against human rights committed by the military during the dictatorship: “The scale of repression”, “Five shades of gray”, “Terror on the right”, “Hour of the repair”, “Owners of the basement” and “Dead on the counter”, this with information about all 356 officially considered dead and missing. The main sources for these productions were the joint publication of the Chamber of Deputies, the Brazil Project: Nevermore and the Special Secretariat for Human Rights of the Presidency of the Republic, in addition to IBGE, Central Bank, Getúlio Vargas Foundation, IpeaData and the works of Maria Gil Kinzo, the Federal Senate and the Superior Electoral Court.

CONCLUSION

The battles of memories in the Folha de S. Paulo special production occur in an evident way in some moments, however, the vehicle assumes for itself, in almost all the special, the discourse of the militants, except for few parts in the main categories and in the three articles of opinion, more aligned with the perspective of the military. The words “revolution”, “counter-coup” and similar visions in favor of the military are practically nil, appearing basically when they depart from the memories of coup supporters, not being endorsed by the Folha, except for opinion articles. These memories are from productions of the time – on radio and TV shows – and from contemporary testimonies of the military and coup supporters.

The clashes happen mainly in the personal memories of video testimonies, practically unused to effectively corroborate an idea in the text. The almost 40 testimonials are current and are arranged throughout the special, through the vision of intellectuals, journalists, politicians, militants and military, who oppose in an undisputed battle of memories, but practically not incorporated into the main narrative, which doesn’t try to confirm what is said through these individual memories. For these ratifications, historical and official documents are used, as well as books of researchers about the military dictatorship. Even in aspects such as torture, the production seeks a balance in the presentation of personal memories with the historical archives highlighted.

The structure of the special production doesn’t follow the hierarchical journalistic standard. In fact, it is written chronologically, closer to a historical and didactic text, without many direct and indirect citations from sources to ratify what the journalist exposes. The sources appear in the main narrative of the special only for the newspaper to spell out some of the more forceful views and opinions from the interviewee’s speech – usually an expert on military dictatorship – with strategies that produce neutrality.
and impartiality effects.

The only mention of the *Folha*’s Group support for the military dictatorship is in one opinion article, which contains more reservations and exaltation to the group than any recognition and demonstration of repentance of its contribution to the coup and the maintenance of the regime. It’s not mentioned that on 02/17/2009 the vehicle had been criticized for pointing out in one of its texts that the dictatorship established by the military in Brazil was no more than a “ditabranda”, a different position from when it became a protagonist in the investigations of death of the journalist Vladimir Herzog, citing the moments in which the vehicle demanded clarifications in dictatorship about the alleged suicide of Herzog (Dias, 2015, Martins & Moura, 2016). According to Dias (2014), this case reopened the debate over media support for the military dictatorship, when the *Folha* Group served as its spokesperson.

The four audios and more than thirty images have a historical character, having as sources the news agencies and periodicals of the period – not only of the *Folha* Group –, besides the own archive of the government. The countless videos, on the other hand, are practically all testimonials and interviews carried out by the vehicle in which the battles of memories are found more poignantly. The infographics demonstrate a specificity of multimedia and they’re practically destined to criticize aspects of the military dictatorship, with most having sources like books and official documents of the own government or more recent organizations associated to the militants.

References


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