

Volume 37
issue 3 / 2018

Contracampo e-ISSN 2238-2577
Niterói (RJ), 37 (3)
dec/2018-mar/2019

Contracampo – Brazilian Journal of Communication is a quarterly publication of the Graduate Programme in Communication Studies (PPGCOM) at Fluminense Federal University (UFF). It aims to contribute to critical reflection within the field of Media Studies, being a space for dissemination of research and scientific thought.

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

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TO REFERENCE THIS ARTICLE, PLEASE USE THE FOLLOWING CITATION:

Sacramento, I.; Machado, I.B.; Negrini, M. (2018). The death of Dona Marisa Letícia: the biographical and the works of the memorial in the Jornal Nacional. Niterói, 37(3).

Submitted on: 03/27/2018 / Accepted on: 11/13/2018

DOI – <http://dx.doi.org/10.22409/contracampo.v37i3.19451>

Abstract

This article analyzes the coverage of the hospitalization and death of Dona Marisa Letícia in the Brazilian TV news Jornal Nacional between January 24 and February 4, 2017. We understand that the death of public figures is a moment to observe the ways in which journalism fits the memory collective in narrating life from death. The way in which the news story narrates her life demonstrates her position in the context of Brazil's political crisis, especially the accusations directed at her husband and her, but it also reveals a certain maintenance in her mode of media representation.

Keywords

Memory; framing; biography; death; Marisa Letícia.

Introduction

Public personalities' deaths are often an opportunity for journalism to produce biographical narratives. In our times, this practice is linked to the following social changes: the media as mediating sphere in the production of historical meaning and in the framing of the memory on events (Ribeiro, 2003; 2010; 2012) and also the overvaluing of the biographic in the blurring of borders between the public and the private through various media products and processes (Arfuch, 2010; Sibilía, 2008).

In journalism, obituary writing is quite a recurrent activity. It differs from death notices, which are paid and briefly state about the deceased's life, usually informing on the place of the funeral and burial. Obituaries seek, in a brief narrative, to detail the life of a recently deceased person, be them famous or unknown (Marocco, 2013). These journalistic obituaries go back to the millenary practice of producing narratives on the life of monarchs, rulers, bourgeois, important religious figures and the military. In addition, they seek to celebrate a notorious life so that it can continue to be remembered in the future (Vovelle, 1997). On the other hand, it is not merely about a continuous line between Lives — an ancient biographic genre that had Plutarch as its main producer and diffuser — and contemporary obituaries, especially as regards exemplarity. For François Dosse (2009), lives had a social value of moral pedagogy. This is clear in the *Life of Cato*, by Plutarch, a profile of the Roman military and politician's performance, highlighting values such as parsimony, frugality, hard work and love for Rome. Those are values and practices that should be characteristic not only of a Roman, but of any Roman citizen.

Presently, we experience an intense production and consumption of biographical products (books, films, TV shows, online social networks). Such products seek to build up heroes that "are presented as exemplary references in the construction of other lives that seem not so heroic and not as worthy of serving as examples as they occur" (Hershmann & Rondeli, 2003, p. 74). In journalism, biographical narratives that are elaborated after famous peoples' deaths usually lead to the construction of individual paths where exemplarity is not perceived like it was in the past: a particular life trajectory is inserted in the collective memory to reconstruct some moments of the personal history, in a sentimentalist way, to try to snatch the public interest and to make an emotional impact on the death of a public personality (Hershmann & Rondeli, 2003).

For Bruno Souza Leal (2012), journalism does not deal with the particular death itself, but with the episodes related to it, as a means to ensure an impression of truth in its discourse. Death coverage is recurring in journalism. Mostly, they become relevant for the circumstances in which it happened (attack, urban violence, natural disaster). In the case of famous people's deaths, to some extent, this relation is transformed, as the interest lies in the famous person's life. Often, it accompanies the process of sickening and the passing of a celebrity (Fausto Neto, 1991).

Death of famous people presents an opportunity to analyse the frameworks of collective memory in the narrative about an individual trajectory. After all, "the media appropriates biographical narratives and builds statements that frame a collective memory referred to in an individual trajectory" (Hershmann & Rondeli, 2003, p.77). In this case, the media often uses its archive to tell the dead person's life, by engaging images, videos, interviews and all the documented material that both exemplifies the meaning attributed to the life of such personality and inscribes the media itself on that life history and on history itself, legitimizing itself as an authorized standpoint.

Contradicting analysis that highlight only the positive functions performed by collective memory, in which numerous points of reference such as landscapes, dates, and historical figures are treated as empirical indicators of collective memory to define what is common to a group and what differentiates it from others, on which it supports and strengthens the feelings of belonging and the sociocultural borders, Pollak (1989) points to the charge of symbolic violence spent on such memory framing procedures, one that is quite appropriate for the analysis of how different processes and actors participate in the

formalization of information that will become a source for the construction of an official memory. From the analysis of the excluded, the marginalized and minority groups, the author highlights the existence of subterranean memories opposing the official memory, stressing “the destructive, standardizing and oppressive character of the national collective memory” (Pollak, 1989, p. 4).

Pollak (1989) also explains that there are degrees in the dialectic between remembering and forgetting. After all, a remembrance is always framed by the communicative situation in which it is given, by the collective values that conform it, by the social determinations and by the demands of the present. Yet silence is associated with the unsaid, to what is remembered in a certain way in relation to what is left to be narrated, while silencing relates to deliberate power practices that do not allow us to see, hear, understand certain groups, questions and social events from the past. Erasure happens when such practices of power and control are so intense that they erase traces of a disturbing past. Forgetfulness, in turn, can be characteristic of the mnemonic activity (we are not able to remember everything we have lived and done), but it can also be set up by political processes of memory management, which have specific interests. As an enunciative activity, the work of memory, as Maurice Halbwachs (2006) defined, not only meets the demands of the present, but is a construct situated at the time of its enunciation.

Pollak's concept of framework (1989) is in debt to Halbwachs' concept of negotiation (2006), considering that for a collective memory to exist, with sufficient *points of contact* between the individual memory and the memory of others, it is necessary that “the memory that others bring us can be rebuilt on a common basis” (Halbwachs, 2006, p. 12). From this perspective, Pollak proposes that, rather than dealing with social facts as things, we should analyse “how social facts become things, how and by whom they are solidified and endowed with duration and stability” (Pollak, 1989, p. 3-15), understanding then that all collective memory is a framed memory.

There are many studies that expand this perspective to observe the logics and enunciative operations of framing carried out by the media in general (cf., for example, Ribeiro; Ferreira, 2007; Niser; Meyres; Zandberg, 2011) and by journalism, in particular (see, for example, Zelizes; Tenenboim-Weinblatt, 2014; Zelizer, 1992). At great length considered as the first draft of history, journalism has been typically reticent about going beyond what is topical, instantaneous and timely. Sustaining the sense of itself by which journalism remained distinguished, the game for the proximal time remained the defining attribute of journalism for a long time. But in an era when performative fields are increasingly mixed, an era of narratives, images and recycled impulses of information (Zelizer; Tenenboim-Weinblatt, 2014), of enormous appreciation of the past in contemporary culture (Zelizer; 2003), journalism regulates and systematically participates in the production of historical meaning for certain events, in the writing of the history of facts and in the framework of collective memory. It is important not only to understand the complex temporal nuances by which news work, but also to understand the central role of journalism as part of the process of building collective memory in all societies in which it participates. Finally, journalism is definitely involved in the building of a framed memory.

This article's main goal is to analyse the framing of collective memory in the coverage on the agony and death of Dona Marisa Letícia Lula da Silva by *Jornal Nacional*. We are interested in demonstrating how this TV newscast frames collective memory while writing the country's history as from the narrative of Dona Marisa Letícia's life, in a context marked by the political crisis and the impeachment of Dilma Rousseff. In other words, we understand that in this case the biographical narrative is both an opportunity to analyse how media writes a story as well as to show how the media takes part in history.

The text is divided in two sections, apart from this introduction and the final considerations: as it follows, the text remarks on the relations between journalism and contemporary meanings and then describes *Jornal Nacional*'s coverage on the agony and death of Dona Marisa Letícia between the 24th of January 2017 — when she had a cerebrovascular accident (CVA) and was taken to the hospital — and February 4th, 2017 – when her funeral took place. Finally, the text comments on how the history of Brazil

and the biography of Dona Marisa Letícia are both written in the context of this coverage.

The contemporary meanings of death and journalism

Exploring German thinker George Simmel's (1998) view on the end of life, we have a brief threshold of the complexity of the subject for human beings and of the importance that such a theme acquires in the social context. In the author's measurements, death is seen as a significant element for human beings, because it is from its acceptance that men recognize themselves as such. "In its most intimate aspects, in every era of civilization, life has been in close interaction with the meaning that is attributed to death" (Simmel, 1998, p. 177). The conceptions that men have about life and death are related. And acknowledging finitude is a factor that can be defining for living (Simmel, 1998).

We can clearly see death's meaning as a creator of form. It is not restricted to limit our life, i.e. to shape it at the time of the farewell; instead, death is a formal factor in our lives, tinting all its contents, and even fixing its limits. Death exercises its action on each of its contents and moments; the quality and shape of each one of them would be other if it were possible to override this immanent limit (Simmel, 1998, p. 178-179).

In her reflections over the end of life, Françoise Dastur (2002) sets the thought that man's relationship with the idea of his end is important for the demarcation of his living. And, for Rodrigues (1983), death provides life with meanings and it's also important to differentiate man from other animals.

Ariès (2003) points out that in contemporary Western societies, death occurs in a more hidden way, which results from the difficulty in fully admitting the death of loved ones. There is an attempt to minimize the rites involving the end of life. And death is considered good when it happens discreetly:

But 20th century completely modified these practices of tears, screams and lacerations that ended by the domain of the collective over the individual void. Expressing pain was prohibited, especially in order to spare the collectivity; mourning was abandoned to the individual initiative and considered almost an aggression against community (progressively keeping mourning an individual secret becomes tasteful). From the mourning individual, it is expected that he or she will be always able to show a serene face, and not displaying pain turns into a sign of emotional balance (Rodrigues, 1983, p. 186)

Anthony Giddens (1993) coined the expression "sequestered death" to designate a large process of elimination of the basic aspects of life's experience from the everyday regularities in modernity, with specialized institutions such as hospitals, morticians and others playing such a role. Despite the assertions of Ariès (2003) and Giddens (1993) about death being treated more discreetly nowadays, mass media and social networks practices challenge the authors' perspectives and show that there are other configurations of death. Abundant in books, television, cinema, Internet, newspapers and magazines in the 21st century, death is extremely accessible. There is a huge visibility of death in the media, including its role and status in popular culture and public mourning, seen, for example, after Lady Di's death in 1997.

The media as a whole produces memories for the illustrious deaths. Each textual support corresponds to well specified uses that reconfigure forms of tribute. Thus, the development of the periodic press in the 19th century offers a new space for the ritualized practice of the obituary that flows at the rate of publication and provides the reader with a panorama of a society adapted to its so-called interests. The discourse about the dead registers, then, the mutations underwent by textual forms, involving not only the nature of the writings themselves, but also the modes of circulation and the use they serve.

We also must take into account a dimension of death in the media that needs attention: dying in public (Woodthorpe, 2010). A very well-known case is the press coverage of the young British celebrity Jade Goody's death by cancer. According to Woodthorpe (2010), she had her death sequestered by the media by an overload of reports and interviews in television and radio shows, magazines, newspapers

and websites, showing the dying body. In particular, the photos produced and put into circulation by the actress herself, especially those who glamorized her baldness (a result of failed chemotherapy), challenge the thesis of sequestration of death (Walter, 2009). The reactions were complex, with the criticism of her public death mixed with the criticism of her personal life experience as a reality show in general.

The public and private exposure of the new media creates new arenas to disseminate the corporal, personal and emotional experience of death, at the same time it blurs the public/private limit so that death, including the death of ordinary people, does not remain substantially hidden. Images and events of death are now completely mediated by visual and communication technologies which are used and accessed by numerous citizens around the world. At the same time, the proliferation and the accessibility of images and narratives of death do not necessarily mean the Western world has moved beyond the denial of death. In fact, death mediated by media — as cinematographic, journalistic, broadcasted image and narrative — does not necessarily bring familiarity, and especially does not bring an existential acceptance of death, while it is experienced in everyday life, through media technologies also.

The agony and death of Dona Marisa Letícia in the *Jornal Nacional*

Born on April 7, 1950 in São Bernardo do Campo (São Paulo, Brazil), Marisa Letícia Rocco Casa became known as Marisa Letícia Lula da Silva and occupied the position of first lady of Brazil from January 1, 2003 until 1st January 2011. Married for 42 years with the former president of the country, Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, she died on 3 February 2017 at the Sírio-Libanês Hospital in São Paulo. On 24 January 2017, after having suffered a Cerebrovascular Accident (CVA), caused by an aneurysm, doctors discovered a deep venous thrombosis in the lower members of Marisa Letícia, which, on the 3rd of February at 6:57 a.m., caused the death of the former first lady, at 66 years of age.

Dona Marisa Letícia, as she was known, was not a woman who frequently appeared in the media, but her name often came up when the media approached the figure of former President Lula. Despite her personal history of struggles and her humble origins, the former first lady's image was almost always associated with the figure of the former president. This was even a part of the narrative built by the media while she was hospitalized.

At that moment, investigations were carried out on the suspicion of Lula's acceptance of bribery from a contractor called OAS. In 2016, Lula was charged by the Federal Prosecution Service under the accusation of receiving R\$ 3.7 million from OAS, as part of agreements made by the Workers' Party (PT) in contracts with Petrobras. The sum was equivalent to the holding of a triplex in Guarujá (São Paulo), in addition to the storage and transportation of the former President's collection.

The Operation Car Wash, started in March 2014 aiming to investigate corruption practices in the Government of the State of Paraná, and acquired, throughout 2015, national reputation, with the support of the Supreme Federal Court. This operation - coordinated between the Prosecution Service, the Attorney General of Brazil and the Federal Police - has aggravated the political crisis and the "antipetismo"¹. Notwithstanding the limitations and dead ends of the Workers' Party project, the crisis which exploded in 2013 with a number of anti-government demonstrations (urban mobility, increasing public transport fares, anti-corruption, population removal due to the World Cup construction projects, dissatisfaction with expenses and delays in the stadium works) was engulfed by conservative sectors and by the feeling of dissatisfaction with the government. Thus, although Dilma Rousseff's government sought a more transparent and responsive federal administration, strengthening of the Federal Police with the law of money laundering (12.683/2012), the anti-corruption law (12.846/2013) and the rewarded delation law (12.850/2013) (Svartman & Silva, 2016), it was severely criticized for its involvement in corruption

¹ The term "antipetismo" refers to the sentiment of opposition to the Workers' Party (referred to as PT, in the acronym in Portuguese).

schemes. Despite her sudden fall in popularity, President Dilma Rousseff defeated Aécio Neves (PSDB) on the second round of the elections, something that amplified the political crisis and social malaise started with the 2013 demonstrations under a rather conservative inclination (Domingues, 2015).

The political crisis, associated with Brazil's poor economic performance, made it possible to break the democratic pact, unconstitutionally, with the deposition of Dilma Rousseff after she was charged with a crime of tax liability and impeached. This fact, in contrast, also concerns the limitations of the "coalition presidentialism" — an expression coined by Abranches (1988) to designate ministries, strategic positions in state companies and in the federal public machine granted to congressmen with no ideological affinity with the government and their allies, in exchanges for votes and support at the National Congress — between the years of 2013 and 2016. Brazilian media's coverage did not act impartially and collaborated for the creation of an atmosphere of compliance amongst the public opinion as to the deposition of the President, which contributed to the citizens' increasing disbelief towards the government, the institutions and the democratic system (Vierra, 2017).

Even at the centre of the investigations on the "Mensalão" scheme, Lula managed to keep himself in office and strengthen his popular leadership (Biroli & Mantovani, 2014). The context of Operation Car Wash was different: the spectacular coverage of the political scandal associated with the enormous feeling of dissatisfaction with corruption fortified the antipetismo and, in particular, the antilulismo² (Cioccaro, 2015).

Something that stands out in the coverage of the hospitalization and death of Dona Marisa Leticia is that, even though *Jornal Nacional* has associated corruption in Brazil with former President Lula in their coverage since the "Mensalão" scandal (Fernandes, 2015), images and mentions of the former First Lady had little space in some issues of the program during the observation period, especially during her hospitalization at the Sírio-Libanês hospital. However, as we will see, from the moment that her death was reported a narrative that delves into issues relating to the life of the former first lady was highlighted. It is worth returning to the thought of Marocco (2013), which points out that obituaries seek to briefly tell the life of a person who recently passed away.

The patient's brain death was reported on February 2, 2017, with a live appearance of anchor William Bonner, directly from the studio, even before the beginning of the newscast — that was when the anchor called reporter José Roberto Burnier, who was live directly from Sírio Libanês hospital, in São Paulo, where Marisa was hospitalized since 24 January. This way of calling viewers is quite common on television when there is a desire to deliver breaking news: a live entry, interrupting the normal programming, so as to draw the public's attention to something that is to be explored more deeply in a later, full edition of the newscast.

In the last days of January, we identified that *Jornal Nacional* devoted some space in part of its editions, informing about Dona Marisa's hospitalization at the Sírio-Libanês Hospital, on January 24, and keeping track of her health on the following days. To illustrate this process, we will present a table that summarizes what was broadcast by *Jornal Nacional* over those days. It should be reminded that, in those days, press members stood at the hospital door, daily, waiting for medical reports that could be issued at anytime and could generate news:

² Similarly to "antipetismo", the term "antilulismo" refers to a sentiment of anger or rejection towards former President Lula.

Table 1: Jornal Nacional's coverage of Dona Marisa Letícia's hospitalization

Day of the Month/ Day of the week	01/24/2017 Tuesday	01/25/2017 Wednesday	01/26/2017 Thursday	01/31/2017 Tuesday
Present at the JN headlines?	Yes	Yes	No	No
Video's caption on JN website	<i>Former First Lady Marisa Letícia has a CVA</i>	<i>Marisa Letícia has intracranial pressure monitored by catheter</i>	<i>Marisa Letícia remains hospitalized in an induced coma after CVA</i>	<i>Hospitalized after stroke, Marisa Letícia has her thrombosis managed</i>
Field reporter live from the hospital? Which reporter?	Yes. Reporter: José Roberto Burnier	Yes Reporter: José Roberto Burnier	No	No
Story duration - which section of JN?	1 min. 56 seconds. / 1st section	1 min. 25sec. / 2nd section	16 sec./ 3rd section	29 sec. / 3rd section
Apart from the patient's health situation, is there any reference to the presence of former President Lula and/or other politicians in the hospital?	Yes (Lula)	No	No	No
Does it tell Marisa Letícia's life story?	No	No	No	No
Does it show interview with a doctor?	Yes	Yes	No	No
Uses infographic to explain clinical situation?	No	Yes	No	No
Video link on JN website	https://globoplay.globo.com/v/5599620/programa/	https://globoplay.globo.com/v/5602406/programa/	https://globoplay.globo.com/v/5605333/programa/	https://globoplay.globo.com/v/5617047/programa/

Source: survey made by the authors.

In the days before Dona Marisa's death, the newscast focused more on the actual health condition of the patient, without much effort in tying the patient to commonplace life situations and to the agenda of former President Lula. It is even possible to note that from the day the patient was admitted to the hospital, on 24 January, until the 31 January, the space devoted to the theme was gradually reduced - not only the duration of daily reports on the theme, but also its significance on the headlines of the newscast. We believe that the patient's stable situation over the following days caused *Jornal Nacional* to gradually

reduce the time devoted to the case. The newscast view at Dona Marisa's clinical state evokes Fausto Neto's (1991) analysis that there is a follow-up of celebrity's illnesses until their deaths.

At the dates presented above, for two consecutive days, we observe an expert's authorized voice, the Chief of Staff in charge of the patient, cardiologist Roberto Kalil Filho, who was invited to talk about Dona Marisa's state. What *Jornal Nacional* insists on reporting, on 24 January, during José Roberto Burnier's story, is that the doctor stressed that what had occurred was an aneurysm:

(...) A malformed vein D. Marisa already had broke and caused the bleeding, and according to the doctor, this aneurysm was diagnosed about 10 years before, but as it was very small, doctors at the time considered that no surgical intervention was necessary, only clinical follow-up. It is worth mentioning that the former First Lady is hypertensive, she has high blood pressure and that is a complicating factor (...).³

We point out here that, in the following days, *Jornal Nacional's* approach is very similar, focusing on the patient's clinical state and on medical opinions. It is also worth noting that throughout the entire newscast coverage, 90% of the stories and live on-air reports were performed by reporter José Roberto Burnier. Burnier started his career on Rede Globo in 1980. He has extensive background in major reportages and in the coverage of large-scale events, as well as experience in covering political themes, having worked at Rede Globo's São Paulo newsroom and participated in the coverage of the Constituent Assembly. He also covered the presidential elections of 1989, when he was chosen to follow the campaign of the candidate Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva (PT). In 2004, he accompanied President Lula's official visits to South American countries⁴. Again, we should refer to Fausto Neto (1991), who points out that media follows the health state of well-known people until their death.

By the end of January and beginning of February, we observe that a slightly different picture is presented in the coverage, specially as of Dona Marisa Leticia's death in early February. On the first day of the month, no mention of Dona Marisa was made. On February 2nd, doctors announced that the patient had no blood flow to the brain and on February 3rd, coverage time starts to increase. 5 minutes and 58 seconds are devoted to the theme on February 3rd, when JN's anchor Renata Vasconcellos announces that two exams, performed within six hours, confirmed the death of the former First Lady. On February 4th, *Jornal Nacional* dedicates four minutes and eleven seconds to the coverage of the funeral.

Our mapping revealed the following scenario, described in the table below:

Table 2: The coverage of Dona Marisa Leticia's death

Day of the Month/ Day of the Week	02/02/2017 Thursday	02/03/2017 Friday	02/04/2017 Saturday
Present at the JN headlines?	Yes	Yes	Yes
Video's caption on JN website	<i>Doctors announce that Marisa Leticia has no blood flow in the brain circulation.</i>	<i>Exams confirm the death of the former First Lady Out of her 66 years of life, Maria Leticia spent 42 next to Lula</i>	<i>A crowd says goodbye to Marisa Leticia during her funeral in the ABC Paulista region</i>

³ Retrieved in September 3, 2017 from: <https://globoplay.globo.com/v/5599507/program>.

⁴ Retrieved in February 1, 2018 from: <http://memoriaglobo.globo.com/perfis/talentos/jose-roberto-burnier.htm>.

Was there any live reports direct from the hospital or the funeral? Which reporter?	Yes Reporter: José Roberto Burnier	Yes. Live. Reporter: José Roberto Burnier	Yes Reporter: César Menezes:
Which was the story's duration and in which section?	2 min. 12 sec. / 3rd section	5 min. 58 sec. / 3rd section	4 min. 11 sec./ 2nd section
Apart from the patient's health situation, is there any reference to the presence of former President Lula and/or other politicians in the hospital/funeral?	Yes	No	Yes
Does it tell Marisa Letícia's life story?	No	Yes	No
Does it show interview with a doctor?	No	No	No
Does it use any infographic to explain clinical situation?	Yes	No	Yes
Video link on JN website	https://globoplay.globo.com/v/5623449/	https://globoplay.globo.com/v/5626564/programa/	https://globoplay.globo.com/v/5628728/programa/

Source: survey made by the authors.

On February 2nd, 2017, doctors who took care of Dona Marisa Letícia announced that she had no more blood flow to the brain and *Jornal Nacional* included the subject amongst its edition's headlines:

Doctors who take care of D. Marisa Letícia report that the former first lady has no blood flow to the brain anymore. Lula receives condolences from his greatest political adversary: Fernando Henrique Cardoso. But a possible brain death can only be determined within the following 10 hours.⁵

It is well known that matters selected as headlines in a newscast's opening, as well as cover stories on printed newspapers, are those considered by the vehicle of great public interest and which are highlighted when the newscast edition focus on them.

With a story of a little over two minutes, in the third section of the newscast on that February 2nd, it was presented to the viewers, along with infographics and a notice from the hospital website, explanations about the medical protocols that would be adopted to handle the patient's clinical state within the following hours; a message on social media from former President Lula was also highlighted, with the text in which he thanked all the support, displays of affection and solidarity he received and informing that the family authorized the preparing procedures for organ donation. In addition, the story

⁵ Retrieved September 15, 2017, from: <http://g1.globo.com/jornal-nacional/edicoes/2017/02/02.html>

had a clear intention to mention and show politicians who visited the hospital to show solidarity to the former president and his family and, also, referenced actions like the publication of notes of condolence and solidarity statements dedicated to the former president. On this date, no reference to Marisa Letícia's life history was made, as it is common to observe in journalistic obituaries.

On February 3rd, when Dona Marisa's passing is finally announced, William Bonner, anchor and editor-in-chief of *Jornal Nacional*, reported live⁶ from the newsroom, in the early evening, informing on the death and called reporter José Roberto Burnier live — stood in front of the Sírio-Libanês Hospital in São Paulo — to inform that the death of the former First Lady was confirmed by the doctors at 6:57 P.M. on that Friday. In a live broadcast that lasted less than a minute, the reporter and the anchor informed that more details would be presented in *Jornal Nacional's* edition that night; that is, later that day.

In the full edition of the newscast, in which the death was highlighted in the opening headlines, almost six minutes were devoted to the theme. Right in the opening of the third section, anchor Renata Vasconcellos presented José Roberto Burnier reporting live still from the front of the hospital. The journalist gave an account of the medical protocols and guidelines adopted by the hospital, talked about the movement and about the visits to the family at the hospital on that day and also briefly reminded the clinical state of the patient over the previous ten days. After that, back in the studio, the anchor once again called a reportage produced by then journalist Tonico Ferreira, with a kind of retrospective of Marisa Letícia's life. Aside from retrieving an interview with her, given on December 29, 2002, showing several excerpts of the interview, it was also illustrated by archive footage. Marisa's personal and professional life is a little more visible. The story of a strong woman, being a housewife for a long time and facing many difficult moments, including the absence of Lula — who often travelled due to obligations as an unionists and, later, as President. This retrospective showed her simple origins as a farmer's daughter, someone who started working as a nanny at the age of nine. Marisa's life before she met Lula and also after marrying him is briefly presented. And also a little of Marisa's life as the country's First Lady. Thus, *Jornal Nacional* shared aspects of Dona Marisa's particular trajectory with the great audience, activating the perspective of Herschmann and Rondelli (2003) that biographical narratives built with the death of famous people lead to the building of individual paths so that the public's interest is seized and that an emotional impact for the death of a known person is produced.

In the reportage by Tonico Ferreira, still on February 3rd⁷, one of the excerpts, narrated by the reporter himself, tells a brief trajectory of Marisa Letícia. The story was at times illustrated by Marisa's own lines in the 2002 interview (but, in the transcript below, we chose not to include them). The off-screen narration text produced by the journalist to accompany the story goes as it follows:

Shy, averse to the spotlight, D. Marisa Letícia only agreed to being interviewed for the first time as the First Lady in 2002, after a lot of talk and convinced by her husband. And she showed a strong personality. (...) It was her steady hand that helped Dona Marisa in difficult times. While Lula traveled, she raised her four children. She took care of the house and the family. Worked in the union. Died T-shirts. Sewed flags. When Lula and other trade unionists were arrested for organizing strikes during the military regime, in 1980, she led the women's demonstration. And it was in the metallurgical union, in São Bernard do Campo, the young widowers Marisa and Lula met a few years earlier. They married six months later. D. Marisa already had a son, Marcos. With Lula, she had three more boys: Fabio Luiz, Sandro Luiz and Luiz Claudio. The three births happened away from her husband. (...) [presents excerpts from her 2002 interview]. But it was necessary for her to understand the husband's absence and support him. That's what she always did. D. Marisa, a companion of a lifetime, a partner for the unionist Lula and later for President Lula. Last year, D. Marisa was accused in two Car Wash lawsuits. She always rejected the charges. Lula and D. Marisa were married for 42 years. (Tonico Ferreira's narration, *Jornal Nacional*, 02/03/2017)

⁶ Retrieved September 16, 2017, from: <https://globoplay.globo.com/v/5626217/programa/>

⁷ Retrieved in September 17, 2017 from: <https://globoplay.globo.com/v/5626564/programa/>

The story presented on Tônico Ferrer's narration relates to Herschmann and Rondelli's thinking (2003), already pointed earlier, about the construction of biographical products, saying that there is a search for the production of heroes, offered as exemplary references for other lives.

The reportage stands out because this was the only story in *Jornal Nacional* which offered a brief narrative on who Marisa Leticia was: not only as a former First Lady living in the shadow of her husband, a former President, but as an autonomous, assertive woman. Recalling the 2002 interview, it is evident that at times Marisa had to take care of the household and the union in her husband's absence, since he was regularly committed to his political activities, founding and leading the Worker's Party, and then to his many candidacies for the President.

On February 4th, the day of the funeral, a relatively long story, with over four minutes, was presented at the opening of the newscast's second section and also highlighted in the opening headlines. The report on the funeral did not address Dona Marisa's life history or her personality. This is only mentioned in an excerpt of the speech of Deputy Benedita da Silva (Worker's Party)⁸. The emphasis practically contradicts all coverage of the previous days, in which little was said about the former First Lady's performance in union movements and political performances. Benedita states: "She was not a shadow. She was a backbone, a woman who helped to organize women in the unions". Furthermore, a bit later on the video, a statement by former President Lula shows a little of his wife's personality: "This blonde, who seemed fragile, but when she got hotblooded and spoke up, she made many people afraid".

If we analyse the whole story, a lot of emphasis is placed on Lula and the politicians and political leaders present at the funeral, which happened in São Bernardo do Campo (SP), where Marisa Leticia was born. It also shows a little of the patient's health state in the previous days and presents an infographic explaining her clinical history, reinforces the family's attitude regarding the authorization to donate her organs and puts some focus on the crowd who attended the funeral of the former First Lady. However, the story was mostly inclined to mention the names of the many politicians who were present.

The funeral service, which occurred in the metallurgical union's head office in the city that Marisa was born and where she met and married the former President, was also attended by many common people who paid their last respects. The emphasis on her husband Lula and the political visitors he received shows that memory building, as discussed by Maurice Halbwachs (2006), is related to the moment of its enunciation.

In the end, the story still talks about the legal actions involving the couple and, once again, gives a more political tone to the obituary, associating Dona Marisa's life retrospective to her husband's indictment for leading a huge corruption scheme and benefiting from the acquisition of a triplex in Guarujá and a ranch in Atibaia, in São Paulo. Without dissociating the wife's image from her husband's and from politics, she is explicitly taken as her partner in politics, and implicitly understood as an accomplice (or at least beneficiary) of corruption.

Then comes a speech from the former President, in the midst of the crowd, in which he says his wife died sad and that he wishes to prove the accusations against her frivolous. He then said to the microphone, literally in the midst of a crowd, who applauded him just after that: (...) I want to prove that the bandits that carelessly accused Marisa have, one day, the humility to apologize to her. If anyone is afraid of being arrested, I wanna say that this one, who's burying his wife today, is not afraid (...).

Lula's opinion is that his wife's death was directly associated with the Judiciary and the media's prosecution crusade against him and his family, forcing on him a major emotional instability situation.

Herschmann and Rondelli (2003), in a meaningful way, addressed how the media takes possession of biographical narratives for the purpose of building collective memory based on references of an individual trajectory. The authors' thoughts summarize the discussions about Dona Marisa Leticia's

⁸ Retrieved December 10, 2017, from: <https://globoplay.globo.com/v/5628728/programa/>

obituary construction in *Jornal Nacional*.

Final Considerations

The political content was mentioned at all times in the news coverage observed above. Marisa Letícia's figure was recurrently connected to politicians and little emphasis was given on the characteristics of the Brazilian citizen Marisa Letícia. We also identify, as in most news pieces about public personalities' diseases or medical procedures, the use of visual resources such as infographics to explain procedures adopted by doctors. The recurrent use of these graphical resources intends to make it possible for the public to understand medical procedures and proposes a less formal language. In the case of former First Lady, the visual feature was frequently presented to clarify what and how the patient was treated.

After the revelation, as from the beginning of her hospital stay on January 24, 2017, that Dona Marisa Letícia already knew about this aneurysm for ten years, the news content did not present great surprises to the viewers. As if it indicated that sooner or later this could happen.

The summoning of the chief of the medical staff for an interview and the explanation of medical reports on the patient's clinical state was also regularly used to ensure more credibility and importance to the journalistic material that was presented. In addition, the constant presence of a reporter on duty at the hospital's door, along with several other journalistic teams, not only gave reality to the material presented to the public, but also gave *Jornal Nacional* the character of a newscast that was willing not to miss any new facts that appeared as far as the patient's health conditions were concerned.

As an obituary, the report on February 3 shows quite expected characteristics about death coverages: the cause of death, death in itself, a brief retrospective of the life history of the one who is the main character of the news, the use of archive footage, an interview previously given by the main character which is used to illustrate the present material, citation of facts experienced by the main character and its relationship with the world, statements of people who knew her and so on.

It is also worth noting that, like all approaches over those days, Marisa Letícia's name was much more connected to Lula's actions and activities than to Marisa herself. Exceptionally in the story of February 3rd, some emphasis was placed on Marisa Letícia as a woman who had written her own history. Overall, political elements, facts and characters were interlocked with the construction of Dona Marisa's obituary.

The biographical narrative about Dona Marisa Letícia only appears on *Jornal Nacional* on February 3rd, when she died. Until then, as it is common in journalistic narratives about the death of famous people, there was the monitoring of her clinical state. The structure of the biographical narrative, in this case, briefly presents her life trajectory. Journalism, at the time of narrating a life, usually reproduces a biographical common sense: "the biographical illusion". Pierre Bourdieu (1998) notes that life organized as an account is developed according to a chronological order, which is logical for itself, with a beginning, an origin, a starting point, but also, at the same time, with a *raison d'être*, a primary cause for the accomplishment of an end. In the case of the biographical report on Dona Marisa Letícia, what we observe in *Jornal Nacional's* coverage is Lula's presence. Although she is remembered as a strong, autonomous and determined woman by friends and even by her husband, she is presented as the faithful squire and even as an accomplice in the corruption scheme that would have benefited her with the triplex and the ranch, for example. In this sense, it is evident that because she was such a close companion to her husband and trusted him so much, she ended up being involved with the scheme.

The presentation of Dona Marisa Letícia as a former First Lady in *Jornal Nacional* reinforces other media representations that identify her as discreet, housewife, zealous and loyal to her husband (FERREIRA, 2004). Thus, implicitly, aligns with the criticism of her absence of political participation in the two Lula governments. The comparison with Dona Ruth Cardoso, Fernando Henrique Cardoso's wife,

member of PSDB and President of Brazil between 1994 and 2002, was extremely frequent. Marisa Letícia was a housewife, averse to the press and politics; Ruth Cardoso was an intellectual, an anthropologist with participation in the government. In the story that brings her biographical report, the comparison is not present. However, the memory framework about Marisa Letícia in *Jornal Nacional* reinforces these modes of presenting her in other media narratives.

Another important dimension in this process is to consider that *Jornal Nacional's* memory of Dona Marisa Letícia is also self-referential, since it stems from a self-legitimation strategy. The use of the interview with Dona Marisa Letícia in 2002 seeks, on the one hand, to continue a common practice in the journalistic production about the death of public personalities (to use statements given to the TV network as a direct form of quotation) and, on the other, to demonstrate the participation of *Jornal Nacional* and Rede Globo in her history, a woman who was averse to the press, but had given an interview for the network.

The presence of the past interview constitutes itself as a place of self-referencing, contributing to build a self-image of *Jornal Nacional*, through which it can legitimize itself. The legitimacy of the *Jornal Nacional*, in this case, is given by values dear to the construction of the ideology of modern journalism (Ribeiro, 2007) such as pluralism of voices and social actors, although it also legitimizes itself, in a context marked by a wave of conservatism and antipetismo obscured by a discourse of fighting corruption, for implicitly associating the biography subject to the convenience with her husband's alleged illicit practices.

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