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Other Possible Times: Disputes Over Values and Conventions of Journalism in Tempos Fantásticos

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Abstract¹

This article analyzes how *Tempos Fantásticos* (*Fantastic Times*), a satirical newspaper published in Brazil since 2016, activates matrices of the fantastic to dispute the values and conventions of the journalistic canon. Constructing conceptual and methodological frameworks out of the works of Raymond Williams and Jesús Martín-Barbero and their efforts to consider historicities in any analysis of culture, we demonstrate how the experimentation with the "fictional journalism" in *Tempos Fantásticos* means disputing the ethical imperative that legitimizes journalism as a social institution and one of its central values, topicality. This movement is evidence of political and cultural disputes in the treatment of the values and conventions of journalism, time, and reality.

Keywords

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

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1 Introduction

Does the daily news worry you? The international stage isn't one of the best? Coverage is insufficient? Don't worry. With just one click (and a little financial sacrifice) you can acquire *Tempos Fantásticos*, a newspaper of the future, past, alternate presents. Journalists scattered throughout the four dimensions of the multiverse bring unprecedented news to the curious reader. Reports from the cosmic future, from the time of caves or even from the present day, in a parallel reality. Experience fierce, punctual, and fictional journalism on temposfantasticos.com. Subscribe to the newsletter for more information.¹ (*Tempos*, May 16, 2016)

Tempos Fantásticos (Fantastic Times) is a satirical newspaper that has been published monthly in Brazil since June 2016. In general, the newspaper is produced in A3 format, in black and white, and each edition has only one page, front and back. Its printed versions (on sulphite bond) and digital (in pdf format) are sold online (www.temposfantasticos.com). The editor is Angelo Dias, a young man from São Paulo who, on his personal website², introduces himself as a designer and a writer. Dias has a bachelor's degree in journalism and works as a designer for the *Folha de S. Paulo* newspaper. He is the creator of the *Tempos Fantásticos*. At first, he produced all of the copy and illustrations, designed the layout, and promoted and distributed the newspaper. With the consecutive editions, a community of collaborators from diverse fields joined the project, taking on a variety of tasks³. And even if a team of authors are now committed to writing content, the invitation to collaborate is emphasized in each issue.

In this article, based on the conceptual and methodological perspectives of Raymond Williams and Jesús Martín-Barbero and their efforts to consider historicities in any analysis of the culture, we analyze how *Tempos Fantásticos* activates matrices of the fantastic to dispute the journalistic canon's values and conventions. We analyze the first editions of the newspaper—its texts, illustrations, visual and graphic design as well as promotional videos and strategies, along with statements made by the creator and publisher. We consider both the product and its complementary materials—which are particularly dedicated to highlighting its premises and strategies—useful for demonstrating important political and cultural disputes in the treatment of the values of journalism, time, and reality. Our objective is to show that the experimentation with "fictional journalism" in *Tempos Fantásticos* disputes the ethical imperative that legitimizes journalism as a social institution and one of its central values, topicality. We adopt the fantastic as a potentially transgressive hermeneutic frame, in which the limits of temporal and historical conventions are confronted with the possibility and multiplicity of other times⁴.

Tempos Fantásticos presents itself as a Timeless Newspaper, and promises to "bring news of things that do not exist" and assumes "a commitment to lies, to fiction, to invention, to the idea" (*Tempos*, Oct. 31, 2016)⁵. Its premises and promises offer us an opportunity to investigate connections between journalism, values, and conventions as a key of entry to problematize historicizing processes. It leads us to

¹ Text from *Tempos Fantásticos* Release video, available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VLWrmq-Sok8A> Accessed on March 6, 2018.

² www.angelodias.com.br

³ In March 2018, the *Expediente* notes Angelo Dias; Jana Bianchi, Director of Projects, Communication and Wonders; João P. Lima, Editorial, Editing, and Wonderful Creations Director; Ludimila Honorato, Director of Editing, Correction and Adjustment of Conduct; as well as Raphael Andrade, Director of Illustration, Layout, and Aesthetic Experiments. <http://www.temposfantasticos.com/>. Accessed on March 6, 2018 in "Quem Somos?" (Who Are We) at the bottom of the page.

⁴ In contrast to the studies that emphasize relationships between journalism and entertainment, from the perspective of their general goals, our study focuses on the specificity of the concept of the fantastic as a way of bringing tension to cultural matrices and temporalities of journalism, a problematic to which this work is dedicated.

⁵ Texts from the video *Premissa* (Premise), available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C-INPxOb9wA> Accessed on March 6, 2018.

Raymond Williams's acknowledgement of the existence of elements of different temporalities and origins that configure any sociocultural process (Williams, 1979) and his argument that if a convention expresses a mode of feeling, then changes in the conventions indicate changes in a given society's structure of feeling. It also leads us, in dialogue with Jesus Martín-Barbero, to the understanding that *Tempos Fantásticos* activates at least two important cultural matrices—a journalistic matrix founded on a modern conception of journalism understood as a mediator of historical time and a matrix of the fantastic, cultural kind that mobilizes a fictional repertoire of narratives marked by uncanny elements.

Our methodological strategy will hence be to connect the analysis of the disputes of journalism's conventions with the consideration of how values established in the field of journalism are disputed by *Tempos Fantásticos* as an industrial format and thus constitute their "matrices," in the words of Jesús Martín-Barbero. The newspaper effectuates a movement of dispute of the conventions that shape values and matrices through processes of reiteration, reframing, refusal, and ironic presences. En route, we discuss how the use of "fictional journalism" means disputing the ethical imperative that legitimizes journalism as a social institution and one of its central values, topicality; we evaluate the experimentation with time and the fantastic as a transgressive framework. The experiments with cultural forms and conventions of journalism and fantasy, carried out by the newspaper, have proved themselves analytically relevant places to observe the links between cultural change and social change. This article offers itself as a contribution to the understanding of journalism's historicities.

2 Theoretical-Methodological Strategies: Conventions, Matrices, and the Different Temporalities in Cultural Analysis

The consideration of the archaic, residual, dominant, new, and emerging elements is recurrent in Williams's works, and describes a way of analyzing the process of incorporation, fundamental to the understanding of how hegemonic values are actively lived by, set in practice, and expected from subjects in concrete social situations and, thus, construct hegemonic culture. Cultural analysis, in Williams's works, should thus highlight how values shape life's practices and expectations—values are never mere abstractions, and they cannot be understood only as ideological imposition—and this is exactly the process that shapes a culture as a dominant culture. At the same time, and fundamentally, if we take into account the Gramscian concept of hegemony, there are alternative and opposing values, meanings, attitudes, and opinions. It is this relationship between dominant values and tendencies and alternative and oppositional values and tendencies that can help us understand the ongoing process of renewal, re-creation, tension, conflict, resistance that characterizes hegemony and enables us to think that hegemony can be disputed. Culture has these two aspects or two faces, one that refers to the set of values, norms, regulations, projections among which the members of a society are raised, and, simultaneously, the new tendencies that arise and are tested: this is the common process that links societies and individuals; culture is always, simultaneously, tradition and creativity; it is always exteriority and interiority (Williams, 1989).

In this sense, Williams asserts that the analyst must consider various social temporalities in any analysis of culture and be attentive to a certain sense of movement, of historical process, of complex connections between these dominant, hegemonic elements, and the archaic, residual, new, and emerging. Observing the multiplicity of temporalities experienced in each historical moment (past-past, past-present, present-present, present-future, future-future) highlights Williams's concern with the active process of giving direction to culture and with his effort, concurrently theoretical and political, valuing cultural change (Gomes, 2011).

Williams (2001, p. 33) understands convention, "those modes of expression that have tacit consensus," as a vital part of the structure of feeling: "as the structure changes, new modes of expression are perceived and understood, as old modes begin to appear empty and

artificial” (Williams, 2001, p.33), in a narrow channel between social change and cultural change.

We understand that Raymond Williams's statements form an analysis of conventions as a twofold movement: 1) By identifying conventions, the socially “already recognized,” we regard the disputes around them—how these conventions are subject to repetition, renaming, re-framing, explicit refusals, implicit subversions; 2) When we identify potentially “new” conventions, we observe how they dispute the consensus and how they are places that cultivate processes of persistence, adjustment, unconscious assimilation, active resistance, alternative struggle that characterize any process of the fight for recognition in the cultural field.

We link these movements of analysis of conventions to the proposal that Jesus Martín-Barbero solidifies in the formulation of the diachronic axis from his map of mediations, to address his concern with the heterogeneity of temporalities. For Martín-Barbero, it is fundamental to understand the historical relationship that marks the transition from cultural matrices to industrial formats. The relationship between matrices and formats speaks of the “multiplicity of temporalities, [in] the multiplicity of histories, with their own rhythms and their own logics” (Martín-Barbero, 1995, 43). What is central to Williams's cultural analysis, and what Martín-Barbero captures in the construction of his map of mediations, is the crucial importance of considering the various social temporalities in any analysis of culture.

Martín-Barbero seems to consider the conception of cultural matrices as the matrices of a culture that operated "before" or "outside" media culture, and insofar as it constitutes the diachronic axis of the map of mediations as a relation between Cultural Matrices/Industrial Formats that would allow us to understand how popular matrices are present in the shaping of mass media products. We will explore the hypothesis of considering cultural matrices as already media-based matrices, formed in the historical process of media culture's consolidation (Gomes et al, 2016, Gomes et al., 2017). This justifies our consideration of media-cultural matrices: the shaping of communication products (or industrial formats) would take into account matrices forged in the actual relation to media culture (television, cinema, pop culture, literature, journalism, etc.).

FIGURE 1: First page of the first issue of the newspaper
(Headline: "Lunar Elevator is Chosen in Vote by Scientific Council")
(Ad: "Experience the Amazing Technology / ... / TIMEVISION from the future to you)

TEMPOS FANTÁSTICOS

ANO 1 — NÚMERO 1 O JORNAL ATEMPORAL PRÉCIO: VARIÁVEL

Mineirador de asteroides morre durante explosão controlada

Do Futuro

A atividade mineiradora no cinturão de asteroides entre Marte e Júpiter detona mais uma vítima na última explosão coletiva agendada. Assad Hishini, 39, morreu asfixiado após colidir com um dos minerais que se desprendeu de sua asteroide mãe. Especialistas disseram que os cálculos da explosão foram efetuados sem considerar regras básicas da física enquanto a empresa AstroMine Co. se assenta de culpa.

"O funcionário 3605-11 estava na hora errada e no lugar errado", disse o porta voz da empresa na coletiva virtualizada em realidade virtual. "Peculiar aos acionistas que não se preocupam, 3605-11 foi substituído por 3606-11, que neste momento carrega as funções do falecido."

A declaração se tornou viral em poucas horas. Algumas organizações em prol dos direitos humanos já mobilizam protestos em sete colônias humanas do Sistema para pedir a dissolução da AstroMine Co., formada por duas companhias de mineração terrestres e uma fundada em Marte.

Hishini era responsável pela colocação de explosivos em pontos pré-determinados eletronicamente. Ele respondia para três planejadores, encarregados de alimentar os computadores com os dados dos asteroides para que se calculasse a quantidade, tipo e localização de explosivos. Os cálculos eram repetidos para os colocadores e eles faziam o trabalho de campo. Os coláções correspondem à 87% da população do cinturão de asteroides.

É a 2ª morte no cinturão desde que a AstroMine Co. assumiu as atividades mineiradoras há seis meses. A antiga responsável, MMK Mining, teve mais de duzentas mortes em pouco mais de dois anos, sendo que 210 mortes ocorreram no último semestre de atividade e estão sendo investigadas pela Polícia Unificada.

A escória da empresa que fará a extração de minérios do cinturão de asteroides é feita por um conselho que envolve empresários da Terra, Marte e a colônia Flohas, Deimos, em torno de 150 profissionais da área votam em três sessões a nova companhia responsável. Após escolhida, ela tem mandado de 10 anos que pode ser prorrogado por mais cinco. O único modo de uma empresa deixar o posto antes do período é falência ou investigação criminal, como é o caso da MMK Mining.

Os acionistas da AstroMine Co. temem que a empresa passe por investigação criminal, o que abre precedentes para possível levante dos profissionais contra a companhia, algo comum no ramo de mineração.

Elevador Lunar é escolhido em votação do Conselho Científico

Do Futuro

Após votação acirrada, o Conselho Científico dos Territórios Unificados (UTUC) confirmou a construção do novo elevador espacial, cuja função é facilitar o transporte entre o planeta Terra e a Lua.

Após a ruptura da cascata externa da "escada de Jacó", praziosa construção do tipo na história humana, a comunidade científica tinha dúvidas em relação a uma nova construção. "Muitos queriam o teletransporte, uma pesquisa em voga, mas foi o elevador quem levou o prêmio", disse o chefe do conselho Bao Mukta após a votação do WEP (projeto de esforço mundial em português).

Segundo o documento divulgado pela UTUC, a nova construção terá reforço contra entulhos espaciais, responsáveis pela destruição da "escada de Jacó", maior capacidade de carga e velocidade de transporte. "Não é só uma nova tentativa, é a aplicação de novas tecnologias em um projeto já existente", disse o responsável pela construção, Min Chou Yun. Ele é o projetista da fase Lunar 1 e colaborou com outros projetos de habitação espacial.

A comunidade científica tem opinião divergente em relação ao projeto. Enquanto alguns, como Yun, dizem que o elevador é o melhor modo do transporte entre nosso planeta e o satélite, outros defendem o teletransporte e até mesmo o lançamento de foguetes, tecnologia utilizada nos últimos cem anos.

"Ao invés de jogarmos fora toda a ciência de foguetes, por que não aprimorá-la?", disse Marcos Chevill, sênior do grupo Itoclesters, em discurso no reunião do UTUC. Chevill também apontou falhas na pesquisa de teletransporte. "Vocês acham que fazer uma cópia das moléculas do meu corpo e reconstruí-

EDITORIAL
Um jornal sobre o futuro, presente e passado alternativos

Do Nosso Presidente

Já imaginamos o futuro, o que virá daqui em diante, com as descobertas científicas e o que acreditamos serão boas escolhas para o que virá.

O passado, por mais escrito que esteja, ainda é um mistério. Se os vencedores contam as histórias, como será a versão dos perdedores? E os tempos incertos, anteriores à escrita, como serão as histórias dos seres humanos que não entenderam sua humanidade?

O jornal *Tempos Fantásticos* não foi criado para trazer a informação urgente e momentânea. Vamos além da vontade do leitor e trazemos informações de mundos paralelos, nos infinitos multiversos e realidades possíveis.

O jornal *Tempos Fantásticos* traz textos do futuro, passado e presente alternativos, de mundos que não conhecemos e de nosso mundo desconhecido. Correspondentes enviam notícias de cem anos no futuro, mil anos no passado ou em alguns minutos "para o lado", ou seja, em outra "futura" como a nossa.

O escritório do *Tempos Fantásticos* é composto de um só humano, ele escreve os textos através de circuitos eletrônicos, pergaminhos e viagens telepáticas. Em alguns casos, até mesmo a posseção de seres extraterrestres pode ser um modo de transmitir uma notícia.

O papel foi a mídia escolhida para passar essa informação ao leitor, afinal, em quase todos as possibilidades temporais em que o editor teve contato o papel prevaleceu, seja para a higiene pessoal, o equilíbrio de presentes ou o alimento mental de leitores ociosos.

É com essa premissa — trazer informações impensáveis, de todos os tempos e planos, que o *Tempos Fantásticos* vive. É o leitor que nos retribui pagando poucas moedas (ou créditos, mercadorias, sangue, cunhas, tudo depende da linha temporal em que o jornal for vendido) pelo conteúdo.

A vontade do *Tempos Fantásticos* é que essa seja a primeira edição de muitas, que as matérias aqui apresentadas se desdobrem e sejam analisadas, aprimoradas e comunicadas.

Trazemos dois leitores, um infográfico e uma peça opinativa sobre a escolha do Conselho Científico, diretamente de um futuro possível para os anos do leitor.

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Incêndio em floresta pode iniciar crise do fogo, dizem analistas

Do Passado

Os seres humanos à beira do Rio Vermelho passaram por crise. Um incêndio se abateu pela floresta após a queda de um raio. Nossos analistas não previram grande destruição na flora mas estimamos enorme extinção.

"Os acionistas da tribo Pé Duro passaram meses cultivando uma lúcha e trocando fogo por mercadorias", dizem os observadores do período pré-histórico.

O fogo vendido pelos Pé Duro deverá perder valor, quando de uma cultura e duas pedras para apenas três machadinhos, queda de 68%. Se a tecnologia dos Pé Duro que mantém o fogo aceso não voltar para outras tribos, em breve o preço se estabilizará.

Portal Interdimensional é aberto por ocultistas em SP

De um Presente Paralelo

Um grupo de adoradores do oculto abriu um portal interdimensional no fim da rua Augusta, no centro de São Paulo. O grupo se reuniu em um apartamento abandonado em torno das 16h e, após desatar símbolos desconhecidos com o sangue dos presentes e recitarem cânticos escurados, uma esfera negra de aproximadamente dois metros de diâmetro se abriu. O globo continuou se expandindo lentamente e agora ocupa dez metros de diâmetro. Os bonificantes calculam que a esfera tenha entre vinte e cinco e trinta metros até a meia noite.

Jorge Silveira, 34, vizinho do prédio erguido pelo portal, declarou ter escutado todo o pro-

ASSINE NOSSA NEWSLETTER >
COMPRE OUTRAS EDIÇÕES >
CONHEÇA OUTRAS OBRAS >
COLABORE COM O TF >
WWW.TEMPOSFANTASTICOS.COM

The historical relationship that marks the passage from the cultural matrices to the industrial formats is fundamental for understanding the heterogeneity of temporalities evoked by *Tempos Fantásticos*. With its name, the newspaper already evokes at least two important matrices. The first is a journalistic matrix, founded on a modern conception of journalism as the mediator of historical time. The very use of "time," in the title, refers to a journalistic tradition that emerges from an Anglo-Saxon press at the beginning of the nineteenth century. It is a concept that finds synthesis in the notion of journalism as a mirror of time (VOS, 2011). Today it still serves as a marker on the map of the world's leading journalism:

newspapers such as *The Times*, *The New York Times*, the magazine *TIME* and the Minas Gerais newspapers *Tempo* and *Hoje em Dia*. The latter, although it does not carry “time” in the title, points to what underlies this journalism's relationship with time, the idea that newspapers operate as mediators of our historical experience, offering their community of readers upon readers a temporal and ontologically determined map of narratives from a socially shared reality.

The second matrix is that of the fantastic, cultural kind that mobilizes a fictional repertoire of narratives marked by unusual elements—forms of the supernatural, the occult, and the unknown. On several occasions during the presentation of the *Tempos Fantásticos*, it is presented as a “newspaper of speculative fiction,” a term coined by the American writer Robert A. Heinlein in the 1940s to describe stories based on premises that start with “let’s suppose that ...” or “What would happen if ...” (Heinlein, 2011). In literary circles, the term would serve as an umbrella notion to refer to a variety of genres such as science fiction, fantasy, and utopian and dystopian fiction (Thomas, 2013). All of them, in general, are driven by the fantastic as the narrative’s modulator, that is, by its temporal workings. In particular, *cyberpunk* and *steampunk*, subgenres of science fiction, are characterized precisely by the construction of diegetic universes historically anachronistic, in which elements of the past and future are fused. Beyond a discussion of the fantastic’s conventions, the important aspects to consider are its temporal implications, insofar as the unusual emerges to weave an alterity of the experience of time and daily life into the plots’ fabric.

3 Ethical Imperative and Journalistic Temporality

A set of values constitute the journalistic canon or at least purport a hegemonic constitution: they structure hegemonic discourses of journalism and constitute their normativity; they are proclaimed in the manuals, and they even attempt to shape curricular matrices of teaching. Such values, topicality, impartiality, exclusion, objectivity, independence, public interest are performed by *Tempos Fantásticos*, in a tense relationship between reaffirmation and deconstruction—a relationship that is the basis of meta-journalism’s satirical elements⁶. *Tempos Fantásticos* grounds itself in canonical journalism in order to dispute its values, in a complex movement that displays the conventions with all their excesses, almost as caricatures, therefore attempting to deconstruct the values to which these conventions give shape. Of course, in these attempts, we also observe certain obstacles, and what is meant to deconstruct and dispute sometimes appears as simple reiteration. Conventions and matrices are simultaneously displayed, triggered, and deconstructed. And this is done in the self-referential discourses (in the videos, in the editorials, in the promotional material) and befittingly in the concrete materiality of the product (texts, illustrations, visual and graphic design).

In the *Lançamento*⁷ (*Launch*) video (*Tempos*, May 16, 2016), whose text we offer as an epigraph to this article, in an ironic tone, an advertisement with old-fashioned language presents/displays *Tempos Fantásticos* in contraposition to the verdict that “the journalistic coverage is insufficient,” playing a game with journalism’s treasured values: independence (“fierce journalism”), the ability to find news (“our journalists are scattered across the four dimensions of the multiverse”), topicality (a “punctual” journalism).

Tempos Fantásticos imparts the diagnosis of journalism’s collapse in contemporary culture while promising to provide the journalism that the reader needs. Its proposal is born of a criticism announced

⁶ We have carried out, in the Center for Research in Cultural Studies and Transformations in Communication / TRACC (<http://tracc-ufba.com.br/>), some efforts to analyze political and cultural disputes in the treatment of values and conventions of journalism, especially those of Brazil. We highlight, especially: Gutmann, 2014; Gomes et al, 2016; Ferreira, 2014; Vilas Bôas, 2012; Maia, 2012; Gutmann, Ferreira & Gomes, 2008; Gomes, 2008.

⁷ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VLWrmqSok8A>. Accessed March 6, 2018.

to journalism: "Journalism in the 21st century, in modern times, is ready to die," says Angelo Dias at the beginning of the video *Premissa* (*Tempos*, Oct. 31, 2016), seeming to reverberate Williams's observation that the change in a culture's values and tendencies makes old forms of expression seem "empty and artificial" (Williams, 2001, p. 33). But why would journalism be ready to die? What would be ailing journalism, according to *Tempos Fantásticos*? The way journalism is done today "it borders on fiction..." This diagnosis, at the same time as it serves as the basis for the introduction to *Tempos Fantásticos*' future strategy (the subversion of the journalist's daily experiences while producing *Folha de São Paulo*), shapes the expectation that another journalism will be possible. A tense connection binds fiction and journalism: fiction arises as a problem in journalism (which would closely border on fiction akin to the manipulation of information, according to the video *Premissa*), but fiction is also the place to carry out an alternative struggle, because instead of manipulating information, *Tempos Fantásticos* offers us, shamelessly, "news of things that do not exist" (*Tempos*, Oct. 31, 2016)⁸. In the same video, Angelo Dias commits to the idea that, contrary to what he learned in college, impartiality and ethics are not possible, and the only way out is to follow through completely, offering the reader a commitment to lie, to fiction, to invention.

The intention to create "fictional journalism" immediately disputes the ethical imperative of journalism and one of its central values, topicality. The ethical imperative would designate "news as the true discourse on the facts of reality" (War, 2008, p. 34), as an important link between the journalism's credibility and public trust—information cannot, rightfully so, "become fiction" (War, 2008, page 33) nor can the public systematically doubt "the reality of the facts reported" (War, 2008, page 33). The reality at the foundation of *Tempos Fantásticos*, however, constitutes a transgression: "The texts in *Tempos Fantásticos* must have a basis in reality; they aren't stories detached from what we are living" (*Premissa* Video), but it is a parallel reality that operates in the mode of fantasy, of science fiction. The newspaper offers us "fantastic and surreal texts from all of space-time"⁹.

Topicality, this temporality of the present time, defining and legitimizing journalism as a social institution, in turn, would demarcate the very meaning of reality and construct referential relations for daily life. In journalism, symbolic labels of the present moment are also methods of organizing everyday life: instantaneity, simultaneity, periodicity, novelty and public revelation describe "temporal relations that journalism triggers, linked to actions, situations, and ways of handling events in the present time" (Franciscato, 2005, p.23). In *Tempos Fantásticos*, we have movements that open up multiple temporalities.

The editorial of the first issue disputes the links between the ethical imperative and the value of journalistic topicality explicitly:

The newspaper *Tempos Fantásticos* was not created to bring urgent and emerging information. We go beyond the will of the reader and bring information from parallel worlds in the infinite multiverses and inside-out realities. *Tempos Fantásticos* brings texts from the future, past, and alternate presents, from worlds we haven't seen and our unseen world. Correspondents send news from a hundred years in the future, a thousand years in the past or a few minutes 'to the side,' in other words, in another Earth like ours (Editorial, 2016a, p. 1).

4 Anachronistic Times

As an interpretive gesture of the structuring temporal relations of journalistic mediations, journalism's relationship with temporality ends up being pacified, both in the discourses legitimizing the institutionality of news as narratives of the present time, and by the criticisms of the insufficiency

⁸ Texts from the video *Premissa*, available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C-INPxOb9wA>. Accessed on March 6, 2018.

⁹ In the newspaper's introduction text, on its website: <http://www.temposfantasticos.com/>

or inferiority of these narratives' historical quality. Studies that are most conscious of these temporal relations realize that a complex framework of temporalities guide journalistic narratives. When analyzing the daily newspapers' discourses, Elton Antunes (2007) affirms that the information media "short-circuits the times":

[...] while it is standardizing the present time—chronologically ordering and setting the pace to daily life—it is also broadcasting representations of diverse temporal relations, giving rise to other times of other strata. They are, in the same movement, overlapping and intersecting layers. To bring the times up to date with experience, the media allots visibility to non-contemporary times. Hence the media does not only transport time; it engenders temporal relations. (Antunes, 2007, p.289)

Recognizing this temporal complexity in journalism is fundamental; moreover, it is fundamental to understanding what is at stake when we come across a newspaper such as *Tempos Fantásticos*, whose temporal and historical structures actuate journalistic conventions to rightly subvert their values, exhibiting multiple temporalities. In the first edition's editorial, it lets it be known that, after all, it's "A newspaper about the future, past, and alternate presents" (Editorial, 2016a, p.1). Throughout their editions, games with temporalities are deeply explored, particularly with historical categories of past, present, and future. We can see these games in the news stories' space-time reporting. Below the headlines, we read "From the future," "From the past," "From our present," etc. The labels express not only the diversity of times, but also the emphasis on time, to the detriment of space (as we commonly find in newspapers, and their news "from São Paulo" or "from Brasília," for example), in the contextualization of narrated events and the sites of fictional reporters. The news anchoring is also strategically vague, referring to vast historical extracts, unlike the geographical delineations, which are usually more specific and localized.

And if temporal diversity spreads in this historically stratified model, *Tempos Fantásticos* further expands its possibilities by creating alternate and parallel times. In news such as "Large Hadron Collider Destroys Solar System—From an Alternate Present" (Grande..., 2016, p.1), the newspaper entertains topicality's fabular and speculative narration. The same applies for news such as "Jack the Ripper is Found Alive in London Alleyway—From a Parallel Past," in which the newspaper recreates the past. This, in turn, is set against opposing news, on the same page: "Jack the Ripper is Found Dead in London Alleyway—From Another Parallel Past." The two stories' very arrangement on opposite sides of the page strengthens the relationship of parallelism, further demonstrated by the illustration between the two stories (Figure 2).

FIGURE 2: Fragment of the second page of the first edition of *Tempos Fantástico*

Jack, o estripador, é encontrado vivo em beco de Londres

DE UM PASSADO PARALELO

Preso o criminoso conhecido como Jack, o estripador, John Langham Ferris, 27, foi encontrado esfaqueado a barriga de uma prostituta em um beco de Whitechapel, Londres. O homem tentou fugir porém foi capturado após um fio da polícia atingir seu ombro. Junto com Ferris foi encontrada uma faca serrilhada e o equivalente a 660, provavelmente roubados da vítima.

A investigação levou os policiais ao flagrante após depoimentos de prostitutas e frequentadores dos locais onde outras vítimas foram encontradas. Em um trabalho conjunto de investigadores particulares e policiais da Scotland Yard, uma série de evidências foi coletada e classificada. A parceria com médicos legistas também ajudou a descobrir o possível local do próximo crime.

O modo de operação de Ferris era simples e metódico. Ele frequentava as casas de prostituição por dias até ganhar notoriedade entre as trabalhadoras. Após ser reconhecido pelo nome, trocava de casa por alguns dias, no mesmo processo. Ao voltar para a primeira, reconhecia as prostitutas que ficavam mais felizes em vê-lo e marcava encontros com elas em locais não movimentados.

A procura do cliente fêz, a prostituta seguia suas demandas e aparecia no local combinado. Ferris então cortava a garganta da mulher e esfaqueava a área abdominal, roubando dinheiro e um pedaço da roupa da vítima.

"É um marco para a Scotland Yard e para a Inglaterra", disse o chefe da polícia metropolitana de Londres, em discurso para jornalistas. Ferris será julgado ainda essa semana.

Tricentenário foi pioneiro na invenção e construção urbana

ORTUTURADO - DO FUTURO

Mesmo após trezentos anos de progresso, todos se lembram de Vladimir Kutz, o Viad, como apenas mais um vampiro. Esquecem-se da sua participação —ainda em vida— da construção da malha ferroviária do oeste americano. A transformação em vampiro, aos 60 anos, não trouxe tristeza para o homem, vivoo desde os 50. Ele costumava dizer que mais tempo de vida era tudo o que precisava para por em prática projetos mazzafiosos.

Viad escondeu sua condição vampírica por anos, dizendo que havia contraído uma doença dos trabalhadores chineses das minas de carvão, um tipo de fobia à luz que o fazia ficar em casa durante o dia e só sair à noite. Seus trabalhadores estavam acostumados a varar madrugadas sob a tutela do empresário, que nunca passava um dia sem supervisionar cada nova milha construída.

A chegada da modernidade no oeste americano afastou o tycoon de sua terra natal. Viajou por quase toda a América do Norte, atividade perigosa, já que precisava dormir em posões de estalagens para não ser ferido com raios de sol. Sua veicula era descalpa para vedar as janelas e seu dinheiro pagava pelas cortinas negras.

Viad adaptou uma carruagem de carga com as próprias mãos, de modo que ela pudesse servir como condação e quarto a qualquer momento. Com a tecnologia, sua criação foi melhorando cada vez mais, até se tornar o que nós conhecemos como os trailers ou motorhomes.

Sua inclinação para o progresso não parou no veiculo. Viad foi pivô de várias construções para melhorar a qualidade de vida dos acometidos pelo vampirismo, condição que ele aprendeu a tratar como doença. Cibou casas, carros, navios e aviões totalmente protegidos dos raios solares. Fez tudo em parceria com grandes empresas que, hoje, após sua morte, finalmente admitem sua colaboração por tantos anos.

Foi Viad um dos responsáveis pela aprovação da primeira cidade subaquática. Ele imaginou e projetou a construção que levaria mocada, comércio e entretenimento para o fundo do oceano, tudo isso bem longe dos raios solares. Contratou pesquisadores e construiu, nos arredores de Nova Iorque, a primeira cidade subaquática do mundo.

Foi nessa cidade —chamada Maritima— que Viad decidiu ter seus últimos momentos. Morreu após sua parceira, Mirian Kutz, vampira recém transformada, desferir um golpe de estaca no peito. Deixou testamento em vídeo declarando o desejo pelo suicídio assistido.

Jack, o estripador, é encontrado morto em beco de Londres

DE OUTRO PASSADO PARALELO

Encontrado o criminoso conhecido como Jack, o estripador, John Langham Ferris, 27, foi encontrado morto após ser esfaqueado por uma sobrevivente do criminoso. Enquanto tentava matar mais uma prostituta, Ferris foi subjugado por ela e morto com seis facadas no peito. A prostituta Poliana Myrtie foi quem chamou a polícia e os levou para o corpo.

A faca serrilhada utilizada por Ferris ainda estava cravada em seu peito quando a polícia chegou. A mulher foi aconselhada por médicos já que não conseguia parar de chorar. Pelo que concluiu a pericia, uma fantástica colaboração entre policiais, investigadores particulares e médicos legistas, Ferris estava no meio de uma relação sexual quando foi morto. Para a surpresa do público, Poliana confessou ser cúmplice do assassino.

O modo de operação de Ferris era simples e metódico. Sua amante, Poliana, apontava suas principais concorrentes das casas de prostituição vizinhas. Ele as cortejava, vivava cliente comum e, após sumir por alguns dias, voltava pedindo encontros em lugares inusitados. Lá, matava as mulheres e esfaqueava suas barrigas, a pedido da própria Poliana.

"Poliana confessou que ela mesmo pedia para que Ferris destruísse a parte inferior da barriga das mulheres, um modo de passar uma mensagem que seus díctos estavam em perigo", disse o chefe da polícia metropolitana de Londres.

Mesmo após testemunhas e sobreviventes terem reconhecido Ferris como o assassino, a polícia ainda tem dúvidas se Poliana participava ou não dos assassinatos.

Ilustração William Mur (murcontato@gmail.com)



In many ways such as this, *Tempos Fantásticos* constructs times that, by definition, cannot come to an end in themselves. It is interesting to note that, although the newspaper travels through different temporal extracts, the recurring label "From Our Present" always functions as the editorial column's temporal link. Such anchoring refers to a historical experience based not only on the topicality of its reports (in 2016, 2017, or 2018, the newspaper's "base" period), but also on a topicality shared by its culturally situated readers—"ours" acting as the sign of this commonality. Thus, even the future, the past, and the alternate presents have "our present" as a referential core and key to the text.

The deliberate exploration of the possibilities of temporal opening is often thematized in the newspaper's self-referential speeches. In the editorial "Different times can bring the same needs," this exploration takes on an ethical and political tone:

We want to speak and be understood, to do and be recognized. We want to be accepted and included in society, regardless of race, color, sex, sexuality, or ability. Different times bring different people, with different thoughts and complex philosophies. The acceptance of diversity as evolution must be proclaimed to the four corners of the multiverse. (Editorial, 2016b, p.1)

In *Tempos Fantásticos'* launch video¹⁰, the audiovisual language configures temporal relations that are also very significant in terms of the structuring of the newspaper's own temporalities. Firstly, these temporal relations emerge through the aesthetical evocation of early twentieth century newsreels, the use of black and white archival images, the announcer's diction, the old-fashioned sound of his voiceover. The images themselves point to a world in the first half of the century: in addition to images of war and the era's technologies, we see journalists gathered around old presses with a 1938 newspaper in hand.

The old-fashioned references are recurring in the newspaper's style and themes, not only in the

¹⁰ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VLWrmqSok8A>

excursions into the past, but in the very method of utilizing classic matrices of the fantastic, especially those of literature and science fiction cinema. Not coincidentally, when announcing that the newspaper brings reports from the cosmic future, the video uses a shot from Méliès's *A Trip to the Moon*. Furthermore, the newspaper embraces the poetics of steampunk and speculative fiction by summoning and reimagining the historical past. Secondly, it is in the midst of this return to the past that the newspaper constructs its anachronisms as strategies of bringing tension to temporal coherence. The invitation to the viewer to buy the newspaper employs the phrase "With just a click...", introducing a strongly out-of-place element to the announcement speech. The words are accompanied by a hand holding a computer mouse, and the image's black and white frame creates an artificially seamless transition into the rest of the film.

In the video, there is another anachronism, this time not in the use of anachronistic elements within the film's temporal structure, but within the work's relation to the time period of its intended audience. The disparity is evident when the speaker says that the newspaper brings news "even from the present day," although the speech is accompanied by images from the past (an old scene of cars circling a street). The first page of *Tempos Fantásticos*, a new newspaper released to readers upon readers in Brazil in 2016 (its "base" time period), appears in the video's images of an old press, followed by a scene of a middle-aged man opening his newspaper while sitting in a rocking chair.

Tempos Fantásticos presents the slogan "The Timeless Journal" in its headline and in its promotional material. Here again the label of the relation between journalism and time in the mediation of historical experience is put into play, reiterated, and disputed. This dispute, as suggested by the slogan, occurs in the way the newspaper goes beyond a sense of topicality defined by the present time, or at least for a coherent and stable present time, homogeneously seized from a linear historical plot. From what can be seen in the movements of the newspaper's content, this "timelessness" implies that *Tempos Fantásticos* is not fixed in (our) time; it breaks through its borders.

However, it is interesting to note that the newspaper operates, effectively, not because of a timelessness, in other words, because of a denial of time, but because of the diversity with which it defines its movements for inclusion of different times. Past, present, and future are mobilized and merged by the newspaper in such a way that their temporal identities are preserved and also considered, allowing several historical strata to coexist horizontally in the same publication, without, at first, one taking priority over the other. This is a curious form of anachronism, in as much as the editorial unit understood through the newspaper's exemplar is not characterized by a contemporary world's narratives—topicality—but by timelessness as a proposal of the open perception of time demonstrated by the newspaper's model.

The slogan "The timeless newspaper" becomes more significant when we note that the *Tempos Fantásticos* does not display the date of the edition in its headline (or anywhere else), signifying its denial of chronological constraints, which also means refusing to mention a determined (chronologically identified) reality.

In addition to the modes of the narratives' organization, the exploration of temporal possibilities is often formulated as a theme in the *Tempos Fantásticos*. And this can be seen in several places in the newspaper, including in their ads (most of them fictitious). An illuminating example is an advertisement that stands out in the center of the first page of the first edition, a product called "timevision" (Fig. 1). The illustration features a TV with an hourglass displayed on its screen. The old model of the TV set, accompanied by the slogan "From the future to you," crafts even greater complexity in the symbolic web of tangled temporalities in the advertisement. It, once again, enables the readers to envision multiple timeframes in the newspaper, also the potential viewers of such a "technological marvel." And even more fundamentally, it draws attention to the centrality of time in the configuration of mediation represented by the *Tempos Fantásticos*—something that, as we seek to argue, refers to the very relation with the modern matrix of journalism understood as mediator of the experience of time and history.

From movements like these, putting the *Tempos Fantásticos* in perspective with the temporal

conventions of the journalistic matrix that it activates, we can observe an evident tension between temporality and untimeliness. The untimely here, recovering meanings of the term employed in Nietzschean thinking (Nietzsche, 2003), describes the temporally unexpected and impertinent aspect of certain ideas and postures in the order of time. This is how the temporal frames of the *Tempos Fantásticos* are distinguished from the official newspapers, in that these frames promote a more radical “short circuit,” making multiplicity a strength, rather than a threat. This strength is summoned in its poetics, approaching the fantastic not only through the unusual and supernatural themes, but through the transgression of the temporal logics that govern its reality(s).

5 The Fantastic Quotidian

It is important to understand to what extent the anachronisms exhibited in the operations of *Tempos Fantásticos* are connected to the ways in which journalistic mediation is conceived in modernity, in its close relation with the experiences of daily life. In this aspect, the fantastic can be understood as a classification that is potentially transgressive of certain hermeneutical limits, particularly of the limits of temporal and historical conventions, when confronting them with the possibility and multiplicity of other times. As we will go on to argue, if there is a radical temporal short-circuiting in progress within the pages of the *Tempos Fantásticos*, its spark begins in the quotidian and returns to it.

In evoking a modern matrix of journalism, the *Tempos Fantásticos* appropriates discourses that regard the newspapers as an important—or even necessary—mediation of historical experience (Manna, 2016). This implies that, in modernity, newspapers become understood and legitimized as mediators of a socially shared and temporally determined reality. In this reality, there is not only a social consciousness of newspapers’ supposed duty to report world events, but a truly historical consciousness of the present, inasmuch as the moderns promote a “temporalization of history” (Koselleck, 2006).

It is within these conditions that the *Tempos Fantásticos* performs its reflexive movements. It is not random, in this sense, that its declared intension to satirize reality, as Angelo Dias states¹¹—“*Tempos Fantásticos* is a satire of reality” (*Tempos*, Oct. 31, 2016), is presented within mediation’s modes of operation. The newspaper configures a set of layers of tension—beginning with journalism’s conventions and values—in order to reach the culturally constituted and journalistically connected world. These layers are accentuated in the following speech by Angelo Dias, in the same video, which expresses reality’s critical process that does not occur without the conditions of its perception through journalistic mediation: “*Tempos Fantásticos* is a satire [1a] of journalism, [2a] of the way we read the news, [3a] of the way we tell each other facts, and [4a] how all of it reflects our real life.” (*Tempos*, Oct. 31, 2016, emphasis added).

For this satire to take on meaning, it begins with the recognition of journalism’s importance as a social institution of time and history. As Antunes affirms, the news “is one of the temporal signals utilized by society for its orientation” (Antunes, 2007, p. 287), and daily journalism is one of the social institutions “that acts as a frame of reference to delineate what is understood by time” (p.287). Recognizing topicality as a distinctive operator of the journalistic discourse of time, Antunes evokes André Vitalis, who analyzes the importance of journalism for the constitution of a modern notion of topicality:

Topicality gives form to our experience of time. Living perpetually listening to the world news alters our relationship with others, but also our own perception of the temporal frame. It is the daily press that, since the middle of the nineteenth century, has introduced a new way of relating to its contemporaries and that has installed a temporality hitherto unknown. (Vitalis et al., 2005, p.12, apud Antunes, 2007, p.10)

In this way, we can better understand the nature of bringing tension and what is at stake with the

¹¹ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C-INPxOb9wA>

mobilization of the fantastic in a newspaper. It is important to keep in mind that in his book *Introduction to Fantastic Literature* (2004), Tzvetan Todorov emphasizes the distension that the fantastic initiates in the perception of reality. The fantastic is not just the appearance of the unusual, but it is the tension that is drawn when something unusual bursts into normality. Related to "morbid" states of consciousness, the fantastic would expose a laceration in the world of regularity from the appearance of that which cannot appear/happen, but appears/happens. The fantastic, says Todorov, has a close relationship with people in their daily lives, defying the parameters of normality by confronting notions of the natural (the regular, the coherent, the possible) and the supernatural (the unusual, the inexplicable, the absurd).

In *Tempos Fantásticos*, the fantastic emerges bringing with it a fictional repertoire, evoked since its promotional videos. Speeches about the premises of an eccentric newspaper project—based on fiction, invention, and a "commitment to lies"—are interspersed with scenes from classic science fiction films—*Aelita: Queen of Mars* (Yakov Protazanov, 1924), *First Spaceship on Venus* (Kurt Maetzig, 1960) and *Voyage to the Prehistoric Planet* (Pavel Klushantsev, 1965). Thus, it is possible to anticipate that the inclusion of aliens, vampires, or entire planes of the newspaper's imagined reality will serve not only to create a set of absurd news stories, but to bring new dimensions to the journalistic narrative as the historical experience's mediation of the commonality of the quotidian.

It is interesting to note that, if journalistic narratives are so strongly founded on observing everyday life, *Tempos Fantásticos* unfolds its material at the intersection where journalism and the fantastic can meet, insofar as the fantastic itself is founded on the (transgressive) relationship with everyday life. This relation is defined in the terms of Roger Caillois, when he says that all of the fantastic is a rupture of the recognized order, an outburst of the inadmissible within the inalterable everyday legality (Caillois, 1965, 161). It's also through this relationship to the everyday that Italo Calvino (2004) organizes his well-known anthology of fantastic tales from the nineteenth century: on one hand, he comes up with texts that he calls the "visionary fantastic," which depend on perception "behind ordinary appearances another world, enchanted or infernal" (Calvino, 2004, p.13). On the other hand, in the stories he describes as the "everyday fantastic," he identifies narratives "in which the supernatural remains invisible, more 'felt' than 'seen,' engaging an inner dimension, such as mood or conjecture" (p.13). In any case, we can perceive that, in one or another form of expression, the fantastic employs as its jumping-off point, as a temporal constraint (always in relation to space as well) daily life.

In this sense, the fantastic emerges precisely when the time of everyday life opens up to other times. As Dorothea Von Mücke (2003) proposes, the unusual enters into fantastic narratives as a *historical other*. Thus, the author characterizes her plots, not through the thematization of certain anachronisms that arise—lapses, fragmentations, overlaps, temporal inversions, or encounters between characters and elements of different times—but above all by constructing an anachronistic experience of the narrative world experienced by a reader who seeks coherence and totality.

Putting in perspective journalism and the unusual, Leal, Manna, and Jácome (2013) emphasize that newspapers operate, in culture, as regulators of our relationship with quotidian reality and other worlds through which we travel. By means of journalistic narratives, we shape our modes of recognition, go along with patterns of meaning for what happens, and we hitch on that which we interpret and share it as part of our lives. However, the authors also call attention to relations that are more complex than the mere acquiescence and pacification of mediated reality. There is frequent "tension between novelty and repetition, control and the uncontrollable, and the perspectives that view reality as 'multiple' or inhabited by 'possible worlds'" (Leal, Manna, & Jácom, 2013), demonstrating an instability in the very rituals of stabilizing their routines.

In this sense, we could, on the one hand, interpret modern journalistic operations as a tendency to maintain "everyday legality": the concern for maintaining this legality can be seen plainly, day after day, in the newspapers, evident in their interest in normative deviations and the threat of the uncontrollable.

“The reality projected by journalism, through this bias, would always aspire to a transparent and unveiled world—and, therefore, symbolically controlled.” (Manna, 2016, p.25). On the other hand, the fantastic can arise as a heuristic approach to interpret the tensions inherent to journalism:

The fantastic and the journalistic, as general categories, seem interesting to us, in this sense, because they can easily occupy, in our imagination, the poles of a polarity that would separate the consonance from the intrigue of temporal dissonance. But this polarity is more interesting to us in that it reveals itself as a trap, and challenges us to perceive its poles in a dynamic way. This means understanding the different ways in which narratives are specifically set up by the dilemmas of time and history, never against or despite them. (Manna, 2016, p 126).

6 Conclusions

We have seen how the *Tempos Fantásticos* activates matrices of the fantastic to dispute matrices and conventions of journalism, its values, its institutions, its hegemonic practices. *Tempos Fantásticos* is based on a number of modern journalism’s values, which are performed within socially recognized conventions. Tension is brought to these conventions through predominantly satirical means, insofar as language and journalistic cultural forms are mobilized in a self-conscious and reflective way for the construction of the newspaper’s fantastic universe.

In the reflections on the relationship between time—and, in particular, historical time—and journalism, there is a recurring idea that journalism is dedicated to narrating the present time. Far from being linked to the recent configurations of journalism and the logic of instantaneity, or to the diagnosis of a supposed regime of historicity marked by presentism (Hartog, 2013), this idea has a very modern form. As Koselleck (2006) points out, with an effective temporalization of social experience and the moderns’ growing interest for their own historicity, the past and the future, particularly, arise as universes of historiographical reflection. In this context, says Koselleck, a historical perception of the present, of the daily, and of topicality was brought forth and cultivated, to a large extent, by journalists.

On a stage of Modernity, journalism constructs modes of presence and absence as crisis, as time/space scission, as disjuncture (Giddens, 1991). The present, in journalism, appears as its own temporal dimension, relatively autonomous in relation to the memory of the past and projects for the future. The emphasis on the present and life experienced in daily life would thus be fundamental elements of the social experience mediated by journalism. But, as long as experiencing the everyday, enjoying the time that passes, is the possible mode for a common life—we experience time in duration—modern journalism attempts to establish the primacy of the present in the experience of social life, at the same time utilizing the present as a measure of all things and making life a life without a trace and without a future.

Tempos Fantásticos recognizes this crisis scenario—of Modernity and Journalism; it recognizes multiple temporal fabrics of the present, guiding us to other possible temporalities, and reminding us of the importance of the fantastic for shaping our lives. The radical experience of temporal alterations and fantastic realities promoted by *Tempos Fantásticos* demonstrated anachronisms constitutive of journalistic mediations in their relationship with everyday life. The manifest evocation of the fantastic allows us to exhibit these anachronisms, understood as power, and not as impertinent aspects of a journalism viewed through stabilizing and deontological lenses. *Tempos Fantásticos* thus proved to be, analytically, a productive place to observe the connection between processes of cultural change and social change, so dear to Raymond Williams, and the temporal frames that shape the disputes for modern journalism, as well as the productivity of the adoption of the fantastic as an interpretative strategy. In the experiments carried out by the newspaper, in the exercises with cultural forms and conventions of journalism and the fantastic, a complex framework of temporalities is constructed and a political and cultural dispute becomes

effective. *Tempos Fantásticos* is thus one of those dynamic and concrete objects in which continuities and ruptures are evident, in a constant hesitation/tension between determinations and conflicts, between resolutions and irresolutions, between tradition and change, memory and refusal.

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