

Volume 39
issue 3 / 2020

Contracampo e-ISSN 2238-2577
Niterói (RJ), 39 (3)
dec/2020-mar/2021

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.

Remembering Brazilian authoritarianism in the film *Revolução de 30*¹

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¹ This article is the result of research encouraged by CAPES and CNPq.

TO REFERENCE THIS ARTICLE, PLEASE USE THE FOLLOWING CITATION:

Negrini, Márcio Zanetti; Gutfreind, Cristiane Freitas. (2020). Remembering Brazilian authoritarianism in the film *Revolução de 30*. *Contracampo - Brazilian Journal of Communication*, v. 39, n. 3, dec./mar. 2020.

Submitted on: 12/10/2019 / Accepted on: 06/23/2020

DOI – <http://dx.doi.org/10.22409/contracampo.v39i3.38208>

Abstract

Past images and sounds are made modern in the articulation of cinema editing itself, revealing the historical image dimension as remembrance. Archive documentaries and films have a special place in this understanding, and the feature film *Revolução de 30* – directed by Sylvio Back (1980) – is an emblematic example. Released in the twilight of the Military Dictatorship, the film approaches the authoritarian transition between the end of the first phase of the republic in Brazil and the beginning of the first cycle of Getúlio Vargas' government. By selecting a few sequences, we analyze how the movie suggests correlations among that authoritarian period and the latter democratization, considering three aspects: the workers and the evocation of authoritarianism; the lieutenants' movement revisited; and the oligarchic transition and continued authoritarianism.

Keywords

Archival film; *Revolução de 30*; Military dictatorship; Authoritarianism; Remembrance.

Introduction

Archival movies are made of film fragments, sounds, photographs and documents, underlying the transformation of these materialities by the motion of film editing. The displacement of meaning between what these fragments of sound and image have been and what they become is proper to this kind of process. We understand this particularity of archival films as analogous to history, in line with the concept of remembrance as Walter Benjamin (1994) understands it.

According to the benjaminian perspective of Jeane Marie Gagnebin (2014), the history as remembrance happens by the simultaneous and contradictory movement between the forgetfulness and the remembering. Above all, this threshold is an imagery relationship that shows the nonlinearity of time in history. As postulated by Georges Didi-Huberman (2018), the moving images produce gestures that fundamentally transform time. Therefore, the process of editing archival movies create audiovisual configurations that reveal themselves in the present. Formerly images and sounds are updated, showing a correspondence between these kinds of movies and the socio-political circumstances in which they arise.

On the other hand, Siegfried Kracauer (2001) understands films as having psychophysical correspondences with its social environment; that means, the cinematographic creations happen on the threshold of objective and subjective experiences. For the author, the moving images reveal the social relationships inscribed in the thickness of the physical world; the inalienable physicality of the real creating the experience of time in relation to the social space.

When addressing preponderant historical facts and political personalities, at times such as the establishment of authoritarian regimes and their transitions to democracy, the archival films reflect issues facing the context in which they were produced and released, dialoguing with their time. In this sense, Siegfried Kracauer (2001) argues that movies are symptoms revealing how societies make sense of their traumatic experiences. This happens through inconceivable ghosts that haunt the present, being the Brazilian authoritarian regime emblematic for this understanding (Gutfreind, 2009).

We understand, also in line with Krakauer (2001), that these ghosts - such as the ones mentioned above - return to us so that the imminence of horror in history is not forgotten. According to the author, although Athena guided Perseus on the use of his shield's reflection, as protection against Medusa's gaze in the act of beheading her, this did not mean the end of the chthonic monster's presence. This is because the image seen by Perseus reflected on the shield has remained a ghost haunting him. According to Krakauer (2001, p. 374, our translation), "(...) the cinema screen is the shining shield of Athena (...)", thus, "(...) perhaps Perseus' greatest gain was not to cut off Medusa's head, but to overcome his fears and to look at the reflection on the shield (...)".¹ This analogy, to the author, makes cinema a liberating experience.

With the decline of the Military Dictatorship (1964-1985), the movies made in the period of amnesty² have organized the years of repression and its political conditions under many thematic and formal perspectives. Among them appeared archival documentaries that addressed the trajectories of political personalities (Xavier, 1985). When the trade union movement was resuming its protagonism, films like "Os Anos JK: Uma Trajetória Política" (1980) and "Jango" (1984), both directed by Silvio Tendler, premiered in the country. During those years, old and new political leadership - such as Leonel Brizola and Lula - revived the democratic perspective of the working class inaugurated by Getúlio Vargas in 1945, which was interdicted by the civil-military coup and by the deposition of João Goulart (Jango) in 1964.

¹ In the original: "...La pantalla cinematográfica es el reluciente escudo de Atenea. (...). Quizás el mayor logro de Perseo no fuera cortar la cabeza de la Medusa sino superar sus miedos y mirar su reflejo en el escudo (...)".

² The films made in the amnesty period can be grouped in the concept of "cinema de abertura" coined by Ismail Xavier (1985).

Still in the midst of military repression, Ana Carolina Soares Teixeira produced the feature film "Getúlio Vargas" (1974). In this movie - something like a visual biography of the former dictator - the democratic face of Getúlio stands out; thus, the documentary affronts the political conditions of the time by addressing Vargas' labor legacy. In the following years of growing political openness, Silvio Tendler's films corroborate the democratic side of Getúlio Vargas, highlighting the popular commotion before the president's death in 1954³ and approaching especially the biographies of his different political heirs.⁴

"Revolução de 30"⁵, directed by Sylvio Back⁶ and released in 1980, does not propose to deal specifically with the biography of a political figure. The feature film reconstitutes the participation of several social actors in Brazil's political environment during the 1920s, giving special attention to those who have impacted the republican history after 1930; among them, Getúlio Vargas. The representation of Getúlio in "Revolução de 30" stands out from the other archival films released in the context of redemocratization. Especially since the movie suggests that Vargas has implemented an authoritarian cycle which lasted almost 15 years.⁷ Although in the circumstances of the 1930's uprising - as at the beginning of the democratic phase (1945-1954) - Getúlio has been accused by his detractors of aligning himself to communism (Neto, 2013), Vargas' discretionary years had the protagonism of the barracks and the anti-communist narrative ahead of Brazilian politics. Getúlio Vargas, therefore, transits through the ambiguity of having led a discretionary regime that was consolidated in 1937 under the pretext of combating communism; at the same time in which, as a democratic leader, he was accused of conducting Brazil's political scenario to the left. If we take into account the political opposition of that time, the Labor Ministry of the second Vargas government (1951-1954) - in charge of Jango - became a kind of synthesis to the Brazilian way towards a supposed united republic.

Contrary to the democratic legacy of Getúlio Vargas, the feature film directed by Sylvio Back resumes the conditions that surrounded the rising of Getúlio's political group in 1930. It also shows that the self-proclaimed Revolution of 30 demarched the continuism and improvement of a political repression promoted by some rulers in the final years of the First Republic (1889-1930), being Getúlio Vargas a member of this group. Thus, the film offers a counterpoint to the archival documentaries that had as their central theme personalities linked to the democratic spoils of Vargas.

The movie "Revolução de 30" emerged in a cultural context marked by the crisis of the great narratives which, in the course of the 20th century, aim to cover generalizations about the comprehension of social reality. As pointed out by Rosane Kaminski (2016, p. 42), in 1972 the director Sylvio Back positioned himself in "(...) defense of a cinema that was not a conductor of crystallized ideologies - be it left-wing or right-wing - but it was instead the problematization of a certain theme (...)". Therefore, the feature film presents itself as an attempt to counterpoint both the perspective of history written by the winners in the 1930 uprising and the angle of those defeated by the 1964 civil-military coup; these being privileged by

³ Archival movies that address the political-social democratic legacy of Getúlio Vargas are recurrent in Brazilian cinematography. The first one to be released was "Getúlio Vargas - Glória e Drama de um Povo" (Alfredo Palácios, 1956), followed by "O Mundo em que Getúlio Viveu" (Jorge Ileri, 1963).

⁴ With Estado Novo's decline, Getúlio Vargas has founded the Social Democratic Party (PSD) and the Brazilian Labour Party (PTB). Juscelino Kubitschek (JK) would integrate PSD, and Jango PTB. After Getúlio's suicide, the coalition between PSD and PTB presented itself as the continuity of Vargas' political-democratic legacy. In part, PSD has included those linked to the state bureaucracy, military cadres, and rural oligarchies who supported Getúlio in his cycle of authoritarian rule. On the other hand, the PTB brought together the working class and the political heirs of Getulist Labour (Gomes, 2005).

⁵ The copy of the film used as reference for this article is in the *digistack Cinemateca Sylvio Back vol. 2*, launched in 2016 by Versátil Home Vídeo.

⁶ Born in Blumenau (SC), Sylvio Back began his career as a film critic in the city of Curitiba (PR); as of 1962, he devoted himself to film direction. Over the years, he has directed, scripted and produced 38 films between short, medium and feature films (Back, 2019).

⁷ During the first cycle of government - commonly known as Era Vargas - the country was not subject to exceptional laws between July 16, 1934 and April 4, 1935 (Fausto, 2006).

the diversity of film production inscribed in the redemocratization period.

In the cinematographic context in which "Revolução de 30" was released, part of the political movies made at that time addressed "(...) the discussion of human rights and the law of amnesty, a criticism of the prison system, the problem of housing policy or the discrimination against minorities (...)" (Xavier, 1985, p. 39). Also, according to Ismail Xavier, workers' issues related to industrialization and to the class struggle have become recurrent in the Brazilian cinema since the mid-1970s.

Seen in these terms, Sylvio Back's movie establishes connections with themes that permeated the Brazilian cinematography of his time. "Revolução de 30" suggests a reflection about the lieutenants' movement's militaristic authoritarianism in the 1920s and its intrinsic relationship with the discretionary governments that had emerged throughout the 20th century. The movie also addresses the subject of labor relations, urbanization and industrialization, at the same time that tackle the authoritarian political-oligarchic tradition of Brazil.

In order to place "Revolução de 30" into the Sylvio Back's body of work, Rosane Kaminski (2016, p. 50) points out that his movie highlights "(...) the immobility of social relations and its non transformation through time. The movie emphasizes the repetition and not the rupture (...)". For the author, Back's considerations on cinema reflect his understanding about the process of making films with historical themes that are mainly committed to the moment they were produced.

In terms of editing, "Revolução dos 30" presents a whole lot of archival images and sounds. In its sequences, we find fragments of newsreels, fiction films and a documentary style produced between the 1920s through the 1970s. There are, for example, excerpts from films showing the political success of rulers who were at the head of the country during the First Republic ("A Campanha de Arthur Bernardes", 1922), as well as images that reveal the beginning of an urban society, forged through labor and consumption, at the end of the first republican phase ("São Paulo, Sinfonia da Metrópole", 1929).

In "Revolução de 30", we also find images from other archival movies, such as from "Getúlio Vargas – Glória e Drama de um Povo" (1956). Furthermore, the movie relies on interpretations about Brazilian political history between the late 1910s through the 1930s, taking into account the analysis - in voice over - of Edgar Carone, Boris Fausto and Paulo Sérgio Pinheiro.⁸ In respect to his work as a screenwriter and director in "Revolução de 30", Sylvio Back reported:

I did not engage in a chronology, either as a script presupposition or as an episodic need for the film. "Revolução de 30" is a visual overview, a *ciranda*⁹. Now that I see it done, I recognize this work as a fictional movie (...). Although it is a documentary with hints of period feature films, this work manages to open old scars or badly healed wounds (Back, 1992, p. 67).

This statement by Sylvio Back highlights an important feature of the film: it is not caught up in the dichotomy between documentary and fiction. According to Siegfried Kracauer (2001), the materialities that manufacture the cinematic images share the same nature of the image itself, that is, the thickness of the physical world in which the social reality is reflected. In other words, to Kracauer, the label "documentary" attributed to some movies is only a stylistic designation. In his turn, Jacques Rancière (2009) talks about fiction as a way of accessing the real and as a means of understanding it. The author distances himself

⁸ Edgar Carone (1923-2003) was a historian whose research focused on the First and Second Republics and mainly on the labor movement and Brazilian industrialization. In turn, Boris Fausto, who is also a historian, published the book "The Revolution of 1930: Historiography and History in the Early 1970s". By the time Sylvio Back's film was produced, sociologist Paulo Sérgio Pinheiro had already edited *Política e Trabalho no Brasil* (1975); *O Estado Autoritário e os Movimentos Populares* (1978); *A Classe Operária No Brasil, 1889-1930: Documentos – Vol I: O Movimento Operário* (1979); He would then publish *Escritos Indignados, Polícia, Prisões* and *Política no Estado Autoritário* (1981). The three commentators of the film are representative of a context impacted by the Military Dictatorship, in which the historiography produced under the influence of the years ruled by Getúlio Vargas was revisited.

⁹ "Ciranda" is a regional Brazilian dance style.

from an opposition between the reality of facts and the fiction. Therefore, we perceive fiction movies as privileged places to observe the social reality that surrounds us.

It is not about the fact that everything is fiction. It is about recognizing that fiction, in the age of aesthetics, has defined models of connection between the presentation of facts and forms of intelligibility that make the boundary between reason of facts and reason of fiction undefined, and that these modes of connection were taken up by historians and analysts of social reality (Rancière, 2009, p. 58).

Rancière points out that stories are elaborated through a fictional expression according to a "fraternity of metaphors" (2012, p. 65). As the author states, the cinema - as an exercise of regulation between what might be seen and what might be said - can offer his testimony and it can provide, through material and sensitive aspects, the relationship between the "reason for the facts" and the "reason for the fiction".

From this overview that situates the context in which "Revolution de 30" arose, we would like to reflect about its formal characteristics listing some sequences from the feature film. We are going to analyze the audiovisual relationship that the movie creates in order to understand the actuality that its images present to us. We also want to keep in mind the remembrances (Gagnebin, 2014) that this movie brings at the face of the redemocratization conditions.

According to Walter Benjamin (1994), each period of history becomes readable considering the images that are synchronous to them. Seen in these terms, we seek to discuss how the sequences that are listed for the analysis can be read and understood, juxtaposing the authoritarianism of the 1920s-1930s to the circumstances of the conservative yet democratic opening of authoritarian traits in the decline of the Military Dictatorship. For this purpose, the selected sequences correspond to three categories of images presented in the film: the workers and the evocation of authoritarianism; the tenentism revisited; the oligarchic transition and the authoritarian continuism.

The workers and the evocation of authoritarianism

In "Revolução de 30" we see images of the working class through the film fragments of "Fábricas Votorantim" (1922)¹⁰. Men, women and children walk by the streets next to the railway line and in front of the factory. The frames in master shots and in close medium shots register the workers' walk towards the camera (Image 1). On the soundtrack, Boris Fausto points out the secondary role of the working class in the first republican phase. However, the storyteller highlights that this does not mean the inexistence of the workers' political action in the First Republic, which was marked by the strikes that began in 1917 and lasted until 1919.

In the images, we see a daily life staged for the camera, expressing with relative ease what would be a work routine. As the voice over of Boris Fausto highlights the small participation of the working class in political demands during the years following 1920, we observe the workers' gazing directly to the camera. In a master shot, we see a child who, when passing by the cameraman, jumps in front of the cinematographic apparatus that highlights his playing with the other kids.

According to the analysis of Ismail Xavier (2009) about the movie "Fábricas Votorantim" (1922), the workers' informality in front of the camera subverts the factory discipline in a documentary that aimed to promote the company. Therefore, in the sequence of Sylvio Back's feature film, the gazes at the camera

¹⁰ The images and songs that served to edit "Revolution de 30" are listed in the final credits of the feature film, as well as the collections consulted. Although Sylvio Back sometimes mobilizes iconic films of Brazilian cinematography, in some parts of the editing process it was not possible to identify the reference materials. In order to better situate the files appropriated by the feature film, we use as indication the labels "archival images that integrate Revolution of 30" and "reproduced music", which are in the catalog *Sylvio Back - Filmes Noutra Margem* (Back, 1992, pp. 78-79).

and the child who jumps in front of the cameraman, together with the voiceover of Boris Fausto, recall the political mobilization of the working class at the end of the 1910s. The workers walk towards the camera which is positioned high, in a tracking shot over the train line; thus, they appear to march towards the spectator, creating an effect through which the workers seem to face time. The workers walk in an agile way, causing the impression that they will exceed the limits of the movie screen (Image 1).

Image 1 – The political protagonism of the workers in the strikes of 1917-1919

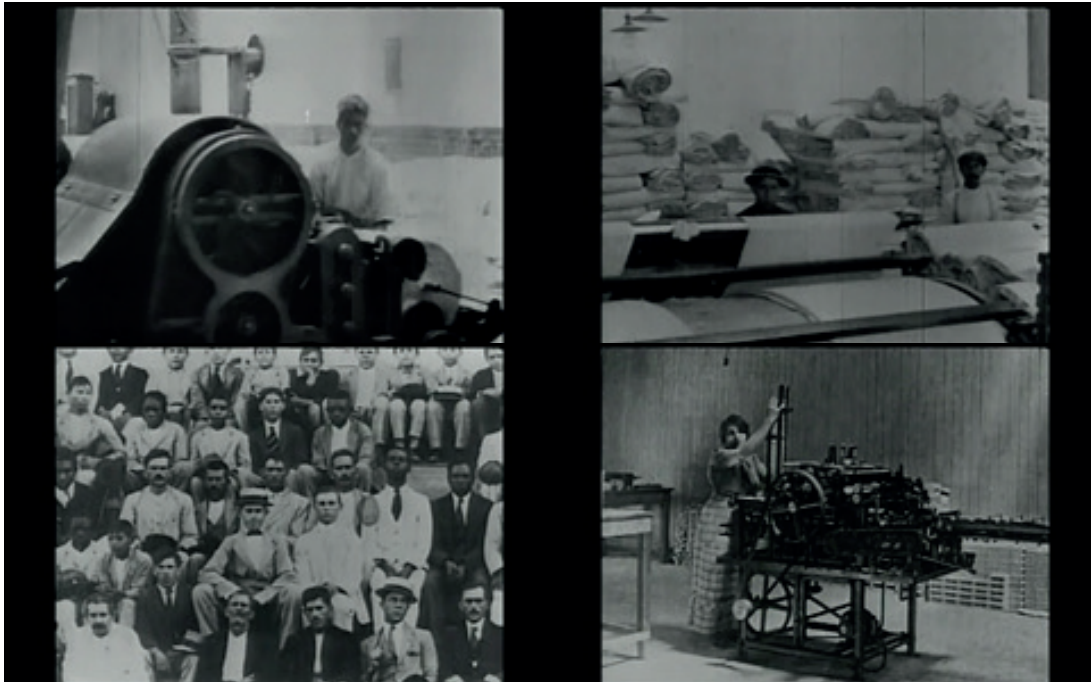


Source: Adapted from the movie *Revolução de 30* (1980). Time: 12'32''-15'02''

In the years following the 1917-1919 strikes, both police repression and the organization of rights for the working class by the state minimized the role of workers in major political movements. Against the background in which Sylvio Back's film was released, in the midst of the strikes that broke out between 1978-1979, once again the workers returned to the protagonism of the political scene, facing the conditions of a Military Dictatorship still in force. Therefore, the movie is aimed at the labor movement of the late 1910s, suggesting that we reflect on its fading in the years leading up to the end of the first Republican phase.

Hence, the feature film creates an ambiguity, connecting the strength of the trade union movement - revived in the redemocratization - to the conditions that led to the weakening of the workers' mobilization in the 1920s. For this purpose, a new sequence made from another excerpt of the movie "Fábricas Votorantim" (1922) is presented by the editing. In the images we look inside a textile industry with large working machines, a place where the men and the children are laboring. The workers positioned in front of the machines move between carrying out their activities and briefly glancing at the camera. There are those who, next to the textile machinery, pose for the cameras in a motionless way. Soon after this film fragment, we notice that the editing uses photographs in which workers appear static. With this kind of images, the feature film hints at the immobility and repression of the working class (Image 2).

Image 2 – The labor and repression of the working class



Source: Adapted from the movie *Revolução de 30* (1980). Time: 15'06''- 16'53''

Thus, in the soundtrack, Paulo Sérgio Pinheiro takes on the analysis of the operating conditions during the last decade of the First Republic. According to the sociologist's point of view, the Brazilian State, both in the first republican phase and in the years following the Revolution of 30, remained a repressive country in relation to the labor movement. In line with Pinheiro, the coercion practices of the proletariat introduced in the 1920s were improved by the following decades governments. Ultimately, the storyteller points out that the repressive state paternalism marked the first cycle of Vargas' government, extending it from the period that succeeded the *Estado Novo* to the 1950s.

In that way, Sylvio Back's movie relates to the assimilation of Getúlio Vargas' authoritarian past until his democratic legacy. As Angela de Castro Gomes (2005) emphasizes, *Estado Novo's* orientation towards a labor ideology started to be elaborated from 1942 onwards. In the circumstances surrounding Brazil's entry into the war against fascism in Europe, a perspective to support the discretionary regime of Getúlio Vargas needed to be created for the inevitable democratic opening linked to the end of the armed conflict. In the context in which the feature film was released, its editing invited us to reflect about a redemocratization that superimposes the democratic face of the Labor Movement to the authoritarian conditions of its own formation.

The Lieutenants' movement revisited

In Back's movie, the lieutenants' revolts that mark the 1920s are revisited, evoking correlations between sectors of the barracks and the urban middle class, which began its growth in the last decade of the First Republic. For this purpose, the editing overlaps images from the feature film "*Alvorada da Glória*" (1931) to the fragments of the short-film "*Revolução de 1924*" (1924).

In the Sylvio Back's movie, we watch a sequence made from images of the characters Nilo e Lygia. From flirting in the pool to strolling in party costumes through the garden, the couple's romance would be interrupted by the military mobilization of the young man (Image 3). In one of the silent film's screens, we read: "At that time there was a dull dissatisfaction among the people. Rumors boiled over. The opposition

shone in the newspapers"¹¹ (Revolução 1980, time: 17'47'').

In the soundtrack, the romantic melody of the song *Lua Branca*¹² intensifies the purpose of bonding between the couple. In another fragment - also withdrawn from the movie "Alvorada de Glória" (1931)¹³ - we see Nilo in a military uniform walking in a hurry with a guy in plain clothes. Then, Nile is led inside a house. The same background song that was used in the images of the couple accompanies the man in his meeting, producing an effect of irony¹⁴ regarding the political connection that was being established there. At the table, Nile has a dialogue with three other characters, and their shadows on the wall suggest an atmosphere of conspiracy (Image 3).

Image 3 – The link between the middle class and the military-tenentista¹⁵ coup



Source: Adapted from the movie *Revolução de 30* (1980). Time: 17'14''-19'12''

¹¹ In the original: "Naquelle tempo reinava entre o povo um surdo descontentamento. Fervilhavam boatos. A opposição fulgurava nos jornaes" (sic).

¹² Composition by Chiquinha Gonzaga (1912), performed by Gastão Formenti.

¹³ It is a sequence of "Alvorada de Glória" (1931) different from the previously described. For the purpose of analyzing Sylvio Back's film, let us consider that the two fragments of the 1931 feature film make up the same sequence of *Revolution 30*. This stems from the link created by the continuity of the song "Lua Branca" in the different fragments. At other times of the archival film, distinct visual excerpts are connected through the voice over of the commentators and the soundtrack.

¹⁴ According to Rosane Kaminski's research (2008), we note that irony is a recurrent feature of Sylvio Back's political-social critique in his films produced between the years 1960-1970. According to the author, the relationship between history and fiction in Back's films is characterized by a "poetic of anguish".

¹⁵ In portuguese, "tenentista" is a derivation of lieutenants. "Tenentista" does not have an English equivalent.

Right after the sequence created with the excerpts from the feature film "Alvorada de Glória" (1931), the editing of "Revolução de 30" presents a new set of images, using the fragments from the short-film "Revolução de 1924" (1924). On the soundtrack, we hear the song *Barão do Rio Branco*¹⁶ conducted in a martial style, producing an epic effect in the movie. The images show us the campaign performance of the loyalist military forces in the city of São Paulo. In addition, "Revolução de 30" reveals some sequences of the rubbles of the buildings and monuments of São Paulo's capital.

According to one of the silent film's screens (Revolução, 1980, time: 19'55"), the people had greeted the successful war against the *tenentista* uprising. In this sense, the movie shows us the staging of war trenches and the mobilizations of troops aligned with the government of President Arthur Bernardes. The information about the popular celebration for the *tenentista* defeat in São Paulo underlines the distance that the feature film of Sylvio Back seeks to create between the lieutenants' movement and the people.

In this same sequence, Edgar Carone takes on the analysis of some aspects related to the *tenentistas* uprisings that emerged since 1922. The historian talks about the authoritarian perspective of the lieutenants, underlining that some leaders of the movement - namely Luís Carlos Prestes (RS) and Ribeiro Junior (AM) - carried out proclamations in 1924 calling for urgent social reforms.

Nonetheless, Edgar Carone emphasizes that the social issues were not a hegemonic perspective of the lieutenants' movement¹⁷. For the historian, the Revolution of the 30s brought together rural oligarchic groups that were dissidents from the federal government, which added up to the lieutenants' movement - this being an essentially middle-class group (Revolução, 1980, time: 20'01"-20'44").

Once again, the editing of "Revolução de 30" draws upon the images from the movie "Alvorada da Glória" (1931). This time, the sequence from Back's feature film shows the couple Nilo e Lygia saying goodbye to each other. When looking at a statue of Our Lady, the woman has a kind of omen and gives the medal she wears around her neck to the fiancé (Image 4).

From here onwards we see images that show marching military troops. At this moment, the military grouping forms a crowd that mixes itself with the civilian population. On the master shot of the troop in motion, we notice the mixture between the military berets, the barrels of the rifles and the hats of the men accompanying the martial parade. After that, warships are seen in the streets. There is a huge number of people who contemplate the military movement. The camera is set up high and takes a master shot of the crowd, creating an effect of homogeneity between civilians and the military. In addition to the people who enjoy the martial parade, we see bystanders and automobiles strolling by the road. There is, thus, a naturalization of the armed forces living in the midst of civilians who transit between the sidewalks and the shop windows (Image 4).

In the soundtrack, Paulo Sérgio Pinheiro takes over the analysis of the *tenentista* movement's developments in the 1930s' Revolution. In his voice over, the sociologist goes on to stress that the uprising achieved by the lieutenants' movement was characterized by expressly authoritarian and antipopular ideas. At the end of the sequence, we see the electric trams, the bystanders and the shop windows in a daily life that seems to flow smoothly (Image 4). In the soundtrack, we hear the martial orchestration of the music *Barão do Rio Branco*.

¹⁶ *Barão do Rio Branco* is a composition by Francisco Braga; in the film, the orchestration is by the Band of the Fire Department of Rio de Janeiro. (No date).

¹⁷ During the pre-revolution negotiations, Getúlio Vargas' political group sought the support of Luís Carlos Prestes, who was opposed to the insurrection project. According to Prestes, the revolt against the federal government by the rural oligarchies allied with Vargas did not characterize a social revolution. At that moment, Prestes definitively broke with the *tenentista* movement, assuming the communist perspective in which he deepened during the exile after the end of the Prestes Column in 1927 (Neto, 2012).

Image 4 – Militarism assimilated to the everyday life of the urban middle class



Source: Adapted from the movie *Revolução de 30* (1980). Time: 24'06"- 28'02"

Addressing the tenentism in his movie, Sylvio Back evokes the assimilation of a militaristic authoritarianism by part of the Brazilian society, from the 1920s to the contemporary. The romance between Nilo and Lygia - inspired by the thoughtful gesture of the bride who donates her religious medal to her fiancé - revives the Brazilian middle class' role in calling up the 1964 civil-military coup. Above all, the *Family Marches with God for Freedom*¹⁸ is a prelude to what would become the 21 years of Military Dictatorship. Thus, the feature film suggests the link between the urban middle class - which began its growth in the 1920s - and the authoritarianism of the first Vargas government cycle.

In "Revolução dos 30" it becomes clear the detachment of the working class and the people from the circumstances that led to the deposition of Washington Luís. In the sequences analyzed above (Images 3 and 4), it stands out the images of an urban middle class that in one part is represented by Nilo and Lygia's romance and in another it is represented by the people who watch the military parade, strolling easily by the warships. The movement of the electric trams and the shop windows of the city intensify such senses evoked by the film. A sort of civil-military romance is hinted at with irony, especially in the

¹⁸ The marches were demonstrations produced by religious institutions and women in response to Jango's rally in Central Brazil (March 13, 1964); they opposed the demands for reforms and heralded the communist danger. Commonly, the most remembered march is that of São Paulo, on March 19. However, Gomes and Ferreira (2014, p. 379) point out that the "victory" marches continued throughout the months of April and June in the states of SP, MG, RJ, DF, CE, RN, AL, PI, SC and GO, accounting for 69 coup support marches.

sequence where we see Nile conspiring in the shadows to the sound of "Lua Branca".

When dialoguing with its political-social context, Sylvio Back's feature film suggests a reflection on what remains of tenentism in Brazilian society. In the circumstances of redemocratization, the archival movie shows that the purpose of those who rose up in 1930 was to anticipate any possibility of a popular revolution. Under the conditions in which Jango was ruling - a period in which basic reforms were claimed - a civil-military coup was consolidated. This interdiction was advocated as a revolution that would liberate the country from a supposed communist threat, just as the Estado Novo coup proclaimed in 1937. According to Angela de Castro Gomes and Jorge Ferreira (2014, p. 376), communists are a "(...) category always able to expand and to have fluid contours in the Brazilian history (...)".

Through the overlap of temporalities suggested by "Revolution of 30", we understand that its editing elaborates the conditions of a conservative redemocratization which was characterized by maintaining traces of the authoritarianism inherited from different discretionary regimes that undermined Brazil's political scenario throughout the 20th century. According to Jeane Marie Gagnebin (2014), by granting amnesty to torturers and tortured alike, the Brazilian state has made official a policy of oblivion.

Over time, Sylvio Back's archival movie also creates a relationship with the political-social moment we experience nowadays. While still serving as a federal deputy, the now elected president Jair Bolsonaro - during the impeachment process of Dilma Roussef in 2016 - praised the person responsible for torturing the former president (Charleaux, 2016).

The oligarchic transition and the authoritarian continuism

In "Revolução de 30", men and women wave at the camera in an extroverted way. They dance and wield barbecue skewers, turning the countryside lunch into a kind of joke recorded in images. Then we see the preparations for a football match between the "Sport Club Savoia" and the "Athletico Paulistano Club". A priest blesses the field and the players pose relaxed for the camera. In the soundtrack, we hear the *marchinha*¹⁹ *Pinta, Pinta Melindrosa* (Freire Junior, 1926). Thus, song and melody intensify the relaxed behavior of the characters seen in the images²⁰. Above all, the editing gives us a glimpse of the festive everyday life that takes place without disturbance (Image 5).

In the soundtrack, the voice over of Boris Fausto still analyzes the geopolitical conditions of the First Republic final years. According to the historian, in that period the US imperialism was gaining prominence in Latin America at the expense of British rule. However, Boris Fausto points out that there was not much American concern about the events of the Revolution of 1930, especially because the uprising did not question the dominant order in the country, distancing itself from a social revolution (Revolução, 1980, time: 33'37"- 34'00").

In the same sequence, a new imagetic fragment is inserted and we see Getúlio Vargas at a reception in his honor. The images evoke the prestige of Getúlio as a federal deputy in the political-oligarchic milieu. This excerpt that makes into Sylvio Back's feature film was taken from an archival movie called "Getúlio Vargas – Glória e Drama de um Povo" (1956)²¹, as seen in Picture 5.

In the "Revolução dos 30" images, Getúlio Vargas appears surrounded by political exponents, military, women and children who greet him, interacting with nods and glances to the camera. The framing in a medium shot of this group catches some of the jokes made by the boys which are directed

¹⁹ "Marchinha" is a Brazilian musical style.

²⁰ We have not identified the origin of these two filmic fragments that make into the Sylvio Back feature film sequence.

²¹ According to the voice over narration of the feature film directed by Alfredo Palácios, these would be the oldest film records of Getúlio Vargas, corresponding to 1924.

to the cameraman, suggesting familiarity among those who pose for the recording and the ones behind the cinematic apparatus. This aspect is intensified by the song *Pinta, Pinta Melindrosa* that we hear in the soundtrack. Then, Getúlio is at the table where the barbecue is served in an apparent informal mood among the characters. These images of resourcefulness and extroversion suggest that Getúlio Vargas was assimilated to the national political scene of the first republican phase.

Image 5 – Images of relaxation suggest Getúlio's familiarity with the political-oligarchic context



Source: Adapted from the movie *Revolução de 30* (1980). Time: 31'26" - 34'48"

In this sense, Sylvio Back's movie invokes another fragment from the feature film "Getúlio Vargas – Glória e Drama de um Povo". This time, the footage is an excerpt from a newsreel that recorded Washington Luís taking the office. We see the train that took the new president to the Tiradentes Palace arriving and the solemn oath session to the Constitution. Finally, we see the new representative being escorted to the Catete Palace where he poses for the cameras next to the ministerial entourage (Image 6).

In the soundtrack, we hear the song "Paulista de Macaé" (Sá Pereira, 1927) joining the voice over of Boris Fausto, who analyzes the political breakdown between Washington Luís and the coffee sector. The musical composition performed by Frederico Rocha creates a dissonance between the enthusiasm of the march and Boris Fausto's observation about the political decline of Washington Luís.

In this audiovisual context there are images of Getúlio Vargas - the politician assigned to the Ministry of Finance - posing with the other ministers of the new government. The camera moves in a panoramic motion in front of the political authorities. However, in the editing of Sylvio Back's movie,

the camera's path is interrupted when it frames Getúlio Vargas and Washington Luís together in the foreground. Getúlio is the first in the center from left to right in the frame (Image 6). This image remains static for a few seconds until it fades out slowly; thus, we see Getúlio absorbed by the political conditions of the Old Republic.

Image 6 – Getúlio is absorbed by the political conditions of the First Republic



Source: Adapted from the movie *Revolução de 30* (1980). Time: 37'31"- 40'54"

In the movie "Revolução de 30", the uprising of October 3rd, 1930 marked the political rise of a formerly peripheral oligarchic group but assimilated to the political dynamics of those who hitherto were at the head of the federal government. Under the circumstances in which the feature film was released, its archival editing process draws particular attention to the conservative conditions of redemocratization. This way, the film overlaps the present with the past to remind us about the transition between discretionary political regimes in the face of maintaining authoritarianism in the political opening of the Military Dictatorship's ending years. Hence, Sylvio Back's feature film suggests that we should pay attention to certain repetitions in Brazilian political history, distancing ourselves from any nostalgia that the images and sounds of the past may provoke. In addition, the editing questions the context in which the film was released, updating images and sounds in front of the new Brazilian social-political challenges. This is the power that makes the past be in an intrinsic audiovisual connection with the present; a relationship that enables us, perhaps, to think about the future.

Final Remarks

The authoritarian past that never goes away is a ghost that haunts Sylvio Back's movie; thus, the feature film creates rememberings of the opening process in the ending years of the Military Dictatorship. Through archival editing, the fragments of images and sounds evoke the authoritarianism that marked the First Republic and the passing to the first cycle of Vargas' government. Therefore, the representation of the former dictator, who became a democratic labor leader, creates a confusion between authoritarian and democratic experiences of Brazilian political history. Especially because the "Revolution de 30" offers itself as a counterpoint to the cinematographic context in which it emerged, a period characterized by the

reviving of labor political personalities' biographies.

In Sylvio Back's movie, the link between workers and authoritarianism represents Getúlio Vargas as simultaneously old and new, considering his participation in the repressive oligarchic continuism of popular political organizations. In addition, the feature film recalls the support of part of the lieutenants' movement for the 1930 uprising, which created connections between the Varguist militarism and an Brazilian middle class' appreciation for the barracks. In this sense, the film overlaps the tenentism's characteristics of the 20s to the conditions of the 1964's civil-military coup.

Eternalized by time, the feature film reveals its relevance in the face of the democratic circumstances that we are experiencing now, a moment marked by the protagonism of nostalgic narratives related to the Military Dictatorship. Hence, the 1980 film expresses its relevance by dialoguing with the political-social context in which it is revisited, showing that its elaboration of our authoritarian past is created through the reminiscences of authoritarianism at the present time. In conclusion, remembrance as a particularity of the archival film editing shows us that the images are always in the present time.

Impacted by the action of cutting and collage, typical of the film editing process, images and sounds relate to each other creating meaning while suffering the inexorable action of loss and resisting repetition by the creation of difference. The expression of audiovisual power is seen in the editing of "Revolução de 30" through a process that highlights the movie's gaps, the suggestion of missing images and the discovery of images that, when saved from the disappearance, reappear in the present, surviving for new visibilities in history.

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