

REVIEW

Discourse and biopolitics: subjectivities and resistance


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DATES
Received: 13/06/2020
Accepted: 13/08/2020
Published: 26/08/2020

HOW TO CITE
Reis, J. N. S.; Pereira, L. P. S.;
Souza, M. M. M. F. (2020).
Discourse and biopolitics:
subjectivities and resistance.
Revista da Abralin, v. 19, n. 2, p.
1-5, 2020.

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ABSTRACT

In order to problematize the relations between discourse and biopolitics, the table *Discourse, Body, Biopolitics: the relations between discourse and biopolitics*, composed by professors Atilio Butturi Junior, Maria de Fátima Lima Santos and Bruno Franceschini, mediated by Jair Zandoná, proposed a densely qualified journey in the concepts of biopower, biopolitics, necropolitics, subjectivation, resistance and persistence concerning life. Divided into three moments, the first intervention of the round table was given by Professor Atilio Butturi, entitled *Tecnobiocuir*. Subsequently, Fátima Lima disserted on a text of her own on *Bio-necropolitics(s), counter-coloniality(ies) and the next day*. Finally, an exposure was performed by Bruno Franceschini, who talked about *Discourse, body and biopolitics: pink money and the Brazilian LGBTQ + art scene*. This triad based on diversity, marks a reflective moment with current debates on population subjugation, bodies and subjectivations, having as ground the use of the language device.

RESUMO

Com o intuito de problematizar as relações entre o discurso e a biopolítica, a mesa *Discurso, Corpo, Biopolítica: as relações entre o discurso e a biopolítica*, composta pelos professores doutores Atilio Butturi Junior, Maria de Fátima Lima Santos e Bruno Franceschini, mediada por Jair Zandoná, propôs uma jornada densamente qualificada nos conceitos de biopoder,

biopolítica, necropolítica, subjetivação, resistências e persistências em torno da vida. Dividida em três momentos, a primeira intervenção da mesa-redonda foi proferida pelo professor Atilio Butturi, intitulada *Tecnobiocuir*. Em seguida, Fátima Lima dissertou um texto de sua autoria sobre *Bio-necropolítica(s), contracolonialidade(s) e o dia seguinte*. Por fim, houve a exposição de Bruno Franceschini, apresentando sobre *Discurso, corpo e biopolítica: pink money e a cena artística LGBTQ+ brasileira*. Essa tríade pautada na diversidade, marca um momento reflexivo com debates atuais de assujeitamentos de populações, corpos, subjetivações, tendo como terreno o uso do dispositivo da linguagem.

KEYWORDS

Biopolitics. Discourse. Resistance.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE

Biopolítica. Discurso. Resistências.

The round table entitled *Discourse, body, biopolitics: the relations between discourse and biopolitics* transports us to a discursive field in which these relations can be thought of under different biases, namely, literature, linguistics and anthropology, converging towards discussions involving language devices within biopower and biopolitics. Thus, mediated by professor Jair Zandoná, authors Atilio Butturi Junior, Fátima Lima and Bruno Franceschini gave their presentations based on research focused on discursive production and subjectivity issues that led/lead to the erasure of subjects and entire populations.

The first intervention, *Tecnobiocuir*, given by Atilio Butturi Junior (Graduate Program in Linguistics at the Federal University of Santa Catarina - PPGL/USFC), presents itself as a means of describing the relationship between cuir (and not *queer*) and the AIDS device, as a way to think about resistance production. To do so Atilio divides his exposure in two parts: the first, to think about Biopolitics in the light of the technobiodiscursive, epistemologically immersed in Lazzarato (2006), Preciado (2008), to expand deleuzianamente to Biopolitics studies; the second to compose a panoramic analysis of the technobiodiscursive treatment of cuir, from its emergence in the USA (*queer*) until its circulation in Brazil.

Atilio raises the reflection, during the first moment of his exposure, about the mention of life in Saussure's famous *Course on General Linguistics* when questioning himself/us the reason for the allusion to this phrase when establishing a theory about language. Coincidentally, reflections on life emerge at the turn of the 19th to the 20th century. At this point, the debater mentions the theorists Aristotle and Agamben, to problematize that modern man acts in an individual and social body and

it is in the instance of speaking that life qualification is known. This is a fact present in the theorizations of the philosopher Michel Foucault, which prompted the participant Grîme to question the chat: "Aristotle in Foucault? How so?", a commentary resumed at the beginning of the debate and, in his reply, Atilio clarifies that other Biopolitics theorists also quote Aristotle and antiquity appears in Foucault in different ways.

The concept of Biopolitics developed by Foucault in 1976, starting from the device of language, is the prism that concerns Atilio's rapport, since it moves through both the discursive and non-discursive universes. The researcher marks his speech on racialization in the Biopolitics premise of "making live and letting die" and the concept of Mbembe's Necropolitics (2016), suggesting a *Tecnobiocuir*, i.e., dissent, displacement of identity policies. This discussion leads us to the milestone of the invention of care intrinsically linked to the virus and the politics of the body.

Thus, Atilio takes us to the second part of his speech, towards the discussion of the *cuir* paradigm. The speaker discusses *cuir* as an import, a shift in theory to be thought from the materialization of the South. Therefore, the researcher provokes us to think about this difference, this shift from the American queer to the Brazilian *cuir*, thinking the latter from the theory of *cu*, under the perspective of Preciado (2008), Perlongher (1987), Pelúcio and Milskolci (2009).

Based on this reflection, the researcher problematized the issue of homosexuality in Brazil, in the 1970s and 80s, which related biological characters of the DNA itself to AIDS. With that, a separation between people reverberated, dictating the differentiation between normal and healthy life. Atilio's interest lies in this non-human, virological factor, inscribed in DNA, as an element of a power and transforming effect that takes humanity to various new realisms, creating a dangerous subjectivity dictating what was citizen, moral, and what was not.

Finally, Atilio summarizes his explanation on the relationship between dissident subjectivities in Brazil, as well as in the USA, linked to the AIDS virus transmission. It warns us of the need to think of a theory X in order to think discursively, biopolitically, about the problem of caring, sexualities and gender, all of which are issues that are still scarcely investigated in Brazil.

The second lecturer, the anthropologist and feminist Fátima Lima (Interdisciplinary Graduate Program in Applied Linguistics - PIPGLA/UFRJ and Graduate Program in Ethnic-Racial Relations - CEFET/RJ), by reading a text of her composition, as Luiza Cassemiro predicted (chat participant), writing a "powerful speech, a stroke to the soul", addresses the theme *Bio-necropolitics(s), counter-coloniality(ies) and the next day*. For her, the politics of (survivors)living beings is directly linked to the bodies, in which it creates discursive productions in the subjectivities about the other, through language. In her studies there is a central place in Foucault's analyses concerning the relation of power and desire in the enhancement of life, regardless of whether it occurs through subjection and resistance processes, including the elimination of some lives.

Fátima proposes a differentiated reflection (a twist, according to her) of Biopolitics based on what she has termed *Bio-necropolitics*. For her, this concept operates in spaces marked by colonialisms, persistent colonialities, hierarchies and classifications that are updated daily. This conception would

be an intercessory notion in the understanding of the vicissitudes that compose and cross us in these “Brazils”. We are called to twist or fray Foucault’s Biopolitics, making use of anti-colonial lenses.

To handle this debate in Brazil, it is necessary to face the ethno-racial issues present in the country, with our racisms, the legitimated brutalities and the violence, as well as the true meaning of democracy and law. Herein, the studies of Apple (2003) are recalled and one observed how urgent a constant uprising is in opposition to neoliberal fronts. We believe that these are precisely aimed at transforming the very idea we have of democracy, making us observe it as an economic and not a political concept. It is in the political field that the traditional hierarchies of class, race and gender find space to reproduce.

Fátima recalls that the notion of sovereignty is key to thinking about the necropolitics, no longer seen in a classic debate context, but of a sovereignty capable of breaking the limits of nation states and state institutions themselves.

For the exhibitor, there is still a lot of war to come, a war interspersed in a Bio-necropolitics marked by a necroeconomy or necropower. According to her, the way enemies are created and eliminated, the lives that are not regretted, are reflections that lead her to this conclusion.

Necropolitics predicts a complex maturity policy. Conceição Evaristo, a renowned Brazilian writer in the Literature field, present at the conference through the chat, is mentioned by Fátima as a black intellectual who has aided her in thinking about the deaths of social minorities, such as blacks, the poor, slum dwellers, and about the violence of the act itself. For her, in deaths lies the power to respond to life, mainly in bodies and subjectivities that they know in the epidermis. It is in necropolitics that points of visceral resistance would be activated. In this focus, the researcher ends her speech, dedicating the text to Miguel, yet another victim of the brutality of necropolitics.

In the last intervention, *Discourse, body and biopolitics: pink money and the LGBTQ + Brazilian art scene*, Bruno Franceschini (Postgraduate Program in Language Studies at the Federal University of Goiás - PPGEL/UFG) opens his speech commenting on his research project around gender and sexuality issues. In his intervention he explains that, in the midst of the conservative wave present in the country, resistances are emerging frequently and proposes to transcribe such practices undertaken by transsexual artists and drag queen subjects in the artistic milieu and, specifically, in music. This analysis had as its motto media visibility, since these so-called infamous subjects, resist prejudice through art and market discourse crossings, such as pink money (the purchasing power of the LGBTQ + population) and pinkwashing.

The debater states that the LGBTQ + community is currently gaining notorious visibility in the social, legal, school and religious spheres. Exemplifying, he shows us some LGBTQ + artists appear in mainstream media, demonstrating capital interest through pink money and pinkwashing speeches. Bruno says that these movement practices are intensified by the visibility of LGBTQ + artists who resist prejudice through art. The exposure is based on three questions: (1) How are LGBTQ + bodies subjectified and objectified by the discourse of pink money and pinkwashing? (2) How does this body, objectified, subjectified and regarded as infamous, resist both the order of gender discourse and the order of economic discourse in the face of discourses that aim to standardize

and normalize their conduct? (3) How does this body resist heterocynormativity, or even transgress and make its life a work of art?

In response to these questions, Bruno says that everything goes through resistance to power and freedom practices with their bodies. Or, as explored in response to the listener Loraine Lisboa, through promoting reflections around the subjectivity of the other.

Undoubtedly, the exhibitions rewarded listeners in the unveiling of devices that silence and subdue “minorities”, with debates that have always sought an articulation to the lived scenario. By demonstrating that oppressive practices of the past insist on haunting our present, they indicated how much we still do not recognize ourselves as a politicized society.

Countless injustices, faces of oppression, of control over the many populations that make up society are noted. These are marks of a past that, according to Fátima Lima, requires coping. Therefore, it is mainly up to us (subjects inserted in the academia) to guarantee spaces for voices that resist the discourses that emerge in the devices of biopower.

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