

THEORETICAL ESSAY

“To remember is to resist” (?): discourses about the military government in dispute

Fernanda LUNKES 

Universidade Federal do Sul da Bahia (UFSB)

Silmara DELA SILVA 

Universidade Federal Fluminense (UFF)



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EDITED BY

- Evandra Grigoletto (UFPE)
- Bethania Mariani (UFF)
- Gian Luigi De Rosa (UNIROMA)

REVIEWED BY

- Luciana Vinhas (UFPE)
- Fernanda Galli (UFPE)

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

- Fernanda Lunkes
Conceptualization, Formal Analysis, Investigation and Writing – analysis and editing.
- Silmara Dela Silva
Formal Analysis, Investigation and Writing – analysis and editing.

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ABSTRACT

This paper, which embodies the theoretical-methodological framework of materialist discourse analysis deriving from the propositions of Michel Pêcheux, aims to analyze the current meanings of the Military Government discourse in Brazil through its different manifestations in the urban space. This work is focused on the conflicts and contradictions that surround such discourse in the cities, in our socio-historical context, to assess a *corpus* comprised by the institutional video of the *Memorial da Resistência* [*Memorial of Resistance*] website, in São Paulo, and by urban manifestations in the form of posters supporting the return of the Brazilian dictatorship and their methods of torture and murder. This assessment aims to promote the understanding of the contradiction between the resistance discourse, which is gaining space at the *Memorial da Resistência* site, and the cynical discourse of the pro-violence posters displayed in the urban space. Such urban manifestations point to the need for questioning the evidence of meanings in an attempt to turn our memory into a gesture of resistance.

RESUMO

Inscrito no quadro teórico-metodológico da análise de discurso de base materialista, que se desenvolve a partir das proposições de Michel Pêcheux, o presente trabalho tem como objetivo analisar discursivamente sentidos em

curso para o regime militar no Brasil, em diferentes materializações no espaço urbano. Com foco nas tensões e contradições que inscrevem tais discursos na cidade, em nossa conjuntura sócio-histórica, traz para análise um *corpus* constituído pelo vídeo institucional disponível no site do Memorial da Resistência, em São Paulo, e flagrantes urbanos de cartazes que fazem apologia à ditadura e aos métodos de tortura e morte por ela empregados no Brasil. As análises realizadas possibilitam vislumbrar a contradição entre os discursos de resistência, que ganham o espaço do Memorial, e o discurso cínico e(m) gestos de violência, flagrado no espaço urbano. Tais flagrantes apontam para a necessidade de questionamento das evidências de sentidos, de modo a fazer da lembrança um gesto de resistência.

KEYWORDS

Discourse Analysis. Military government. Urban space.
Memorial da Resistência.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE

Análise de Discurso. Regime Militar. Espaço urbano.
Memorial da Resistência.

Introduction^{1 2}

The present work, which is related to the Materialist Discourse Analysis and supported by the theoretical-methodological devices designed by Michel Pêcheux (2009 [1975]), in France, and by Eni Orlandi (2001; 2004), in Brazil, has a goal to produce an analysis on some of the conflicts and discourses taking place in the early decades of the year 2000 regarding the Brazilian military dictatorship. To accomplish that, the *Memorial da Resistência* institutional video and some wordings of posters taken from manifestations in urban spaces were chosen as objects of analysis.

¹ This paper was translated by Sonia Mendes e Silva.

² The theatrical play “*Lembrar é resistir*” (Remembering is Resisting) is among this paper subjects of analysis. It was written by Anely Alvarez and Izaías Almada and directed by Silnei Siqueira, and it was performed for the first time in 1999 at the *Memorial da Resistência* museum, during the celebration of the 20th Anniversary of Amnesty, (Source: <http://www.memorialdaresistencia.org.br/memorial/default.aspx?mn=72&c=249&s=#>, accessed on Sep.16, 2020).

The analysis of these wordings, considered by this essay as urban manifestations³, is part of a broader study entitled *Discurso político e políticas públicas a partir do acontecimento do impeachment: análise dos discursos sobre ciência, educação e cultura*⁴ [Political Discourse and Public Policies from the Impeachment: Analysis of Discourses on Science, Education and Culture]. This study aims to consider how the Brazilian political discourses are formulated and disseminated as of the presidential impeachment. Outstanding among its specific goals is the analysis of the political discourse effect on the urban space.

The urban space is defined, according to Orlandi (2004, p. 71), as a “public social space where meanings and subjects have their particularities [...]”, and where the subject who moves around it – its citizen – is granted a legal dimension. The author adds that, unlike the nation, which works in a more abstract form, the city has “dimensions and visible forms” (ORLANDI, 2004, p. 11), some of which we will put into question when confronting the description and the interpretation of the analyses made.

As per Orlandi (2004, p. 12), mobilizing the city means questioning “locality, agglomeration, concentration and quantity”, which are relevant issues to the present paper, as the urban space – or the street, in a more specific way – acts as an analytical device that, in conjunction with the politician, gives rise to conflicts, agglomerations, and mobilizations which spread certain social demands under different ideological agendas.

Questioning the different discursivities that flow in the urban space allows us to consider, based on Pêcheux (2009 [1975]), the contradiction between the materiality of language and history and the constitutive relations amid a scenario in which the Memorial da Resistência is engaged in saying, showing and instigating the political, economic, and social affective effects of an authoritarian regime whose practices are guided by coercive and violent methods, while manifestations take place in the urban space by using wordings that allude to and claim precisely the violent practices linked to the military regime in Brazil.

1. The Museum and the Memorial Spaces

To begin our reflective journey around the museum and the memorial spaces, we will refer to the dictionary's meanings. It is not our purpose, from this paper perspective, to conceive meanings as evident and transparent; the dictionary, as a social-historically determined object of knowledge (ORLANDI, 2001, p. 09), gives legitimacy to the meanings and their evidential effects, in a given social formation.

³ The meaning of “urban manifestations” will be later clarified and understood in the research context.

⁴ A study coordinated by professor Evandra Grigoletto (UFPE) and composed of an interinstitutional team of researchers from UFPE, UFAL, UFSB and UFF. It was developed with the support from Edital Universal/CNPq-2018.

The entry 'memorial' is defined by the Houaiss dictionary (2009, p. 1272) as Memorial: 1. report of memories; 2. work concerning memorable facts or individuals; memories [...] 7. worth remembering; memorable". As for the entry 'museum', the following definitions are presented: "[...] 2. an institution dedicated to searching, preserving, studying and exhibiting objects of lasting interest or artistic, historical value, etc. [...] 3. place where such objects are exposed [...] 4. collection, collection of rare objects, miscellaneous, variety" (HOUAISS, 2009, p. 1335).

It can be inferred that the dictionary meanings of 'memorial' are related to a specific theme; in the case of the *Memorial da Resistência*, it concerns a space of the memorable events and it is particularly focused on the operation of the Brazilian military government, as well as its most villainous features and opposition movements. We can also note meanings that suggest an alignment between the memorial and the museum: the preservation of a memorable item which can /should, based on its value, be placed for public visibility, exhibition, and remembrance.

The museum can be defined, according to Venturini and Schon (2018), as a "discursive space". Bearing that in mind, we can understand the museum as a space that aims at the visualization of memories which (re)calls the non-forgetfulness. As a result, that space strives to protect these memories and keep them alive, that is, the museum is the space where the meanings never cease to be produced. The authors also state that:

[...] we define the museum as a discursive space in the light of Pêcheux (2002) theories, as this is the place of enunciating, which allows an enunciation to derive others, and it is also referred to by Courtine (1981) as a memory domain which enables the understanding of the discursive functioning. (VENTURINI; SCHON, 2018, p. 546).

Given that perspective, it is also necessary to consider the constitutive game between what it is said/shown and what is not said/not shown when it comes to the meanings that make use of the museum space to call into question what they or their absence resonate.

By appointing the museum as one among other "museum's discursive spaces", Sousa (2017) highlights that, in the view of the urgent evidence of certain visibility of/ in such spaces, "the absent, the unspeakable, the incomplete and the element which will not complete the series will also be there" (SOUSA, 2017, p. 78). The author's warning makes us see the incompleteness, the void, the loophole, the gap, that is, the unforeseen or unfeasible meanings which are not stabilized in a reading gesture, thus conveying steady meanings.

1.1 *Memorial da Resistência*: A Gesture of Analysis

Throughout our theoretical analytical journey, we will turn our focus back to the space of the *Memorial da Resistência*, which was inaugurated on May 1, 2008, in the city of São Paulo. The memorial was sponsored by the government of São Paulo state, which through the Secretariat of Culture

founded it with the purpose to preserve and/ or recover a certain memory of the military regime, that is, the 1964 military coup, which also involved civilian leaders and business elites.

Because of the coup consequences, it was demanded, by several Brazilian social sectors (TOLEDO, 2004) targeting the democratic process, that the Memorial took the stand by employing the words and figures it exhibited, hence calling into question the dictatorial process, the torture and the lack of freedom in the country. As can be seen in its institutional video, the Memorial is a space that revolves around three keywords: control, repression, and resistance, which are considered the “three keywords to understand authoritarian regimes in republican Brazil”⁵.

The Memorial area covers part of the building which used to be the headquarters of the State Department of Political and Social Order of São Paulo (DEOPS-SP) from 1940 to 1983. In the project proposal, it was described as an “institution dedicated to the referenced preservation of memories from the political resistance and repression during republican Brazil (1889 to present)”⁶ “through musealization”. When referring to the “authoritarian regimes in republican Brazil”, the Memorial’s institutional video which, as already explained, comprises one of our analysis objects, mentions two periods, namely: “Vargas Age (1930-1945)” and the “Military Government” (1964- 1985).

According to Figueiredo (2017, p. 26), the Memorial is “the only place of memory dedicated to the dictatorship” in Brazil, and its distinctive feature lies on “the resistance to a dictatorship rather than on the pain and victimization caused by it”, although it is located in a prison where several political prisoners were locked and tortured. The space domain of memory (VENTURINI; SCHON, 2018), therefore, allows for the flow of discourses on dictatorship and its coercive devices while concomitantly promoting a displacement of meanings by working as a public space of visitation. It is a space that stands out the speech of comrades who were arrested, tortured, and murdered by the military regime⁷.

The word ‘resistance’ and some of its meanings are stated in the very beginning of the Memorial video, as it can be observed in the four images that follow:

⁵ Link to the Memorial’s institutional video: <http://memorialdaresistenciasp.org.br/memorial/default.aspx?c=130#>. Accessed on Sep 7, 2020.

⁶ Data obtained on the site: <http://memorialdaresistenciasp.org.br/memorial/default.aspx?c=83#>. Accessed on Set 07, 2020.

⁷ In the museum, the visitor has access to the prisoners’ cells, where it is possible to read the inscriptions on the walls. The wordings mark both a feeling of distress and resistance and the reading gesture proposed by the Memorial suggests the revival of memories that turn these feelings visible. During the visit to the Memorial, it was possible to read on the wall the text signed by the political prisoner Rose Nogueira: “They took my baby to threaten me”.



FIGURE 1 - Print screen from the *Memorial da Resistência* institutional video
Source: <http://memorialdaresistencia.org.br/memorial/default.aspx?c=130#>

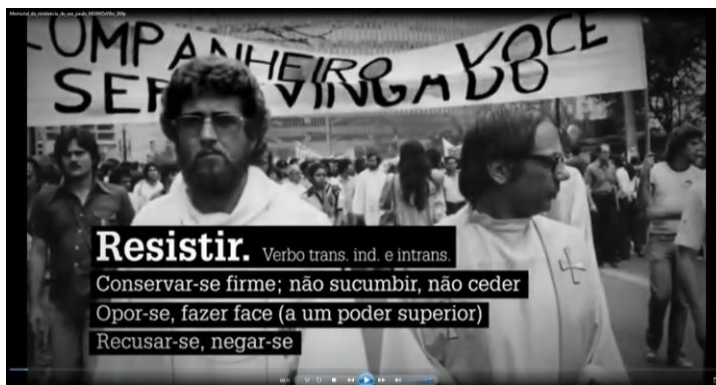


FIGURE 2 - Print screen from the *Memorial da Resistência* institutional video
Source: <http://memorialdaresistencia.org.br/memorial/default.aspx?c=130#>

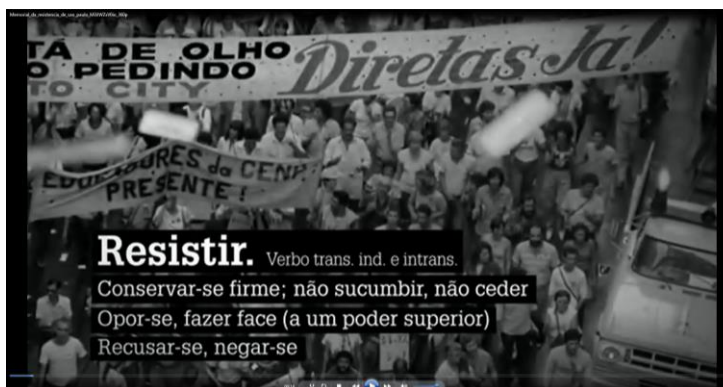


FIGURE 3 - Print screen from the *Memorial da Resistência* institutional video
Source: <http://memorialdaresistencia.org.br/memorial/default.aspx?c=130#>



FIGURE 4 - Print screen from the *Memorial da Resistência* institutional video
Source: <http://memorialdaresistencia.org.br/memorial/default.aspx?c=130#>

This sequence of four images representing our corpus is shown in the first minutes of the video and, by making use of technical resources, the word “resist” and some of its dictionary meanings fade in and fade out on the screen. In this “composition process” (LAGAZZI, 2009) that brings into question the Memorial’s reading gesture towards the resistance meanings, the images of popular demonstrations held during the military regime are displayed. These demonstrations claim, through slogans, posters, and banners, their right to culture, to freedom, to direct elections and to compensation/punishment for acts of persecution, torture, and murder against their companions which were performed by that authoritarian regime. Resistance, in the sense established by the sequence of images, means a collective action that is both sufficient to and capable of “opposing, challenging (a higher power)” by “refusing, denying” to accept the control and repression imposed by a regime of exception.

From a discursive view, the resistance’s framework is outlined in Mariani’s (1998) work. According to the author, the resistance operates on/together with the displacement of expected meanings; a good example of it is the replacement of one word for another which takes place in the discourse thread. Taking that into consideration, the resistance is aligned with the meaning reframing, which can also be obtained through silencing processes. That is, keeping silent is also a gesture of resistance (ORLANDI, 2002).

The museum setting up is itself a gesture of resistance, as per Figueiredo (2017, p. 26), since it propagates sayings and meanings about the “atrocities perpetrated by a regime of exception” and upon which silencing processes were carried out, involving both meanings and subjects in a strong censorship process of silencing and, at times, of physical and subjective annihilation.

Silencing the violence of an authoritarian government can mean, in this case, legitimate the dominant discourse by playing the game of meanings between amnesty and amnesia, as described by Figueiredo (2017). As for Pêcheux (2015 [1984]), the resistance is a subjective process of ideological and unconscious colors, which was marked in the (Proletarian) revolution by its attack on what was overcome and preserved. In our gesture of analysis, we may state that propositions such as the Memorial’s cause an effect of overcoming the censorial silencing process (ORLANDI, 2002) of /over an authoritarian regime by bringing back meanings at stake over that period, when the Brazilian social

formation was ruled by the military regime of violence and torture. Such a scenario establishes different meaning relationships regarding that period and that government, on which social imaginary, economic progress, and customary morality also rest.

Based on the work of Ricoeur's (1995), we understand that the fact of the *Memorial da Resistência* being set up, planned, and built in the same space where torture and murder had once been committed, invites the Brazilian social formation to reflect upon the functioning of certain governmental periods, leading to a mistaken manufactured evidence of such governments, such as the statement "the good old times of the Military Government". The video images bring back that time's manifestations and social revolutions against the lack of artistic freedom, the impossibility of direct voting, and people's disappearance. The framing gesture of the last figure also plays with possible effects of numerical meanings, allowing the visualization of a wide movement that can be associated with social dissatisfaction. A closer framework would arouse a lower popular engagement and limit the dissatisfaction to a more restricted group⁸ - as in the case of Figure 3.

When addressing social traumas, Ricoeur (1995, p. 07), deals with forgiveness and states that it "is the opposite of escaping forgetfulness; you cannot forgive what you have forgotten". Based on Freud, the author proposes the social work of elaborating the different traumas that a group/social formation faces throughout their history. To do so, it's necessary to bring them back via an analytical confrontation of the facts to rebuild such facts by covering other points of view, according to the author's view, to whom "Not only do the events of the past remain open to new interpretations, but our projects also change, depending on our memories, through a notable 'settling of accounts' effect" (RICOEUR, 1995, p. 04).

Forgiveness, from the author's perspective, is "not to be exercised or given, as people say, but rather to be asked for. Forgiveness is primarily asked from others, and from the victim in the first place." (RICOEUR, 1995, p. 7). By reopening a space formerly used for interrogating persecuted subjects who were systematically tortured and murdered there, and prompting meanings other than those commonly related to the authoritarian governments - by suggesting a linguistic game in which the term 'resistance' replaces 'terrorism', for instance - the Memorial space proposes this game to the victims by allowing other sayings about the dictatorship, the different opposition movements and gestures of resistance.

"A world that never stops being divided into two". By making this statement, Pêcheux (2015 [1984], p. 07) raises the question of how "ideological formations refer to 'objects' (like Freedom, Justice, etc.)", which are so identical and at the same time so different. That is how the ideological state apparatus (ALTHUSSER, 1974) bears a contradictory role in the way it produces its forms of knowledge by going through a teaching path aimed at the formation of leaders and, at the same time,

⁸ We cannot fail to mention that in the military discourse the sense of dissatisfaction is related to some groups, on which falls a dominant production of meanings that turn them negative. When we relate it to Mariani's study (1998), we can see the establishment of a metonymic process that places the left-wing, the communism, the enemies, among others, in a circular chain of meanings produced by the imagination of the people's and the nation's enemies.

the technical training of workers. Similarly, the cultural state apparatus reframes a space formerly belonged to the state's repressive apparatus.

The discursive process, therefore, is part of the ideological class struggle which, as Pêcheux reminds us, is not indifferent to language.

Pêcheux's statement also illustrates another point of our work: the contradiction. If, on the one hand, the 1990s and the first years of the 21st century were marked by the emergence of meanings and other sayings about the military regime, providing the necessary conditions for the creation of the *Memorial da Resistência*, on the other hand, in recent years it was possible to note, particularly in urban space manifestations, statements of homage and claims for the return of the military regime in Brazil. Our work goes on analyzing some of these sayings, starting from what we call urban manifestations.

2. The emergence of discourses in support of the dictatorship

What we consider to be a claim movement for the return of the dictatorship was materialized on the streets of large Brazilian cities, more expressively, in mid-2015. In March and April of that year, the self-proclaimed anti corruption⁹ demonstrations were organized mainly to weaken the government of then-President Dilma Rousseff, after her victory at the polls at the end of 2014. It was a political moment characterized by the polarization of the Brazilian social formation and by the social and political consequences of the conflicts caused by the 2013 demonstrations.

It is a claim movement aligned with a right-wing political position characterized by the radical intensification of the meanings put into circulation. Casimiro (2018) presents a pathway for the re-organization of the dominant classes from the 1980s.

It can be implied, however, that the conditions of production of/in the Brazilian social formation urged a (re)emergence of these right-wing discourses from the 2000s, as the author points out:

[...] from the second half of the 2000s onwards, the right-wing discourse started to gain greater dimension and radicalism. Their usual 'constraint' was abandoned, and their manifestations started to spread rapidly throughout Brazil. Their conception type gained much strength due to the new digital

⁹ It is worthy of note that this is not the first movement undertaken by the opposition during the years of PT governments. In 2007, for example, the movement known as "Cansei" brought together institutions like OAB / SP, the Commerce Chamber, and entrepreneurs such as João Dória, artists such as Ivete Sangalo, Hebe, Regina Duarte, Ana Maria Braga, Regina Casé, Seu Jorge, apart from civilians. Demonstrations were held in São Paulo and, among their slogans, we could stand out "Out Lula" and "Lula, you thief, go to prison", which allows us to conclude that those tensions and conflicts were marked by a discursive practice of hatred towards the left-wing, which was materialized in the discourse thread of challenging the position held by the then-President Lula. (Sources: <https://www1.folha.uol.com.br/poder/2017/08/1909369-ha-dez-anos-cansei-dava-a-doria-projecao-politica-e-pecha-de-golpista.shtml>; <https://veja.abril.com.br/blog/reinaldo/cansei-lota-praca-da-se-contra-a-vontade-organizadores-manifestantes-gritam-fora-lula/>. Data accessed on Set 13, 2020).

media and social networks. In addition to wide-spreading the liberal-conservative thinking, their revisionist narratives and fake news fostered the 'redemption' of certain hate speeches which had been considered unacceptable and repulsive for decades by most of society. (CASIMIRO, 2018, p. 43-44).

Casimiro points to what is at stake in the 'right-wing discourse': revisionist narratives and fake news, which are driven by the flow of digital technologies and their technical features (such as algorithmization). Miguel (2018) proposes a broader perspective in his work, by pondering on the right-wing discourses, as the word 'right' can be attached to different movements. The author gathers those discourses in three major areas: libertarianism, religious fundamentalism, and anti-communism. The first one establishes a strained relationship with classical liberalism as it "reduces all rights to property rights and is loathed by any bond of social solidarity." (MIGUEL, 2018, p. 19). In discourses aligned with this movement, a discursive practice is settled to produce an effect of opposition among "State, left-wing, coercion and equality", which should be eliminated, while "freedom, market and right-wing" should remain (MIGUEL, 2018, p. 19).

The second, religious fundamentalism, can be defined, according to Miguel, as "a perception that there is a revealed truth nullifying any possibility of debate" (MIGUEL, 2018, p. 21), and it acts mainly on moral agendas. And the third, anti-communism, rehabilitates the Cold War discourse, but relating it to the "Venezuelan Bolivarianism". The latter could be understood as one of the conditions that occasioned some linguistic equations (MARIANI, 1998) heard in recent years in right-wing speeches, such as: "PT supporter = communist" and "left-wing = communist".

From the discursive perspective, these right-wing movements can be characterized by their affiliation with different discursive formations (PÊCHEUX, 2009 [1975], p. 147). Returning to the already well-known definition - among discourse analysts - that these formations act as a matrix of meaning that regulates "what can and should be said" (in several formats, such as a sermon, pamphlet, schedule) by a subject in a determined scenario, we can describe such movements as discourses that claim different agendas, from economic to moral ones. In the midst of these, we find statements of support for the military seizure of power and the consequent appreciation of authoritarian/ protofascist governments and incitement of torture.

Regarding the movement that claims the return of the dictatorship, we'll turn again to the reflection undertaken by Orlandi (2010). This author highlights that, in the socio-historical and political context of 1968, some meanings suffered censorial silencing processes, such as those related to torture, resistance, and freedom. The author questions the lack of social work at the time, and the absence of a "political meaning"¹⁰, which, for being "out of memory, is neither forgotten nor worked on, metaphorized [...]. It is un-meaning, de-meaning" (ORLANDI, 2010, p.66).

Orlandi's statement is supported by Figueiredo (2017) in his reflections on literature as an archive of the Brazilian dictatorship. In his words: "The political memory is not cherished in Brazil

¹⁰ The *Comissão Nacional da Verdade* (National Truth Commission), whose goal was "to investigate the serious human rights violations which took place between September 18, 1946, and October 5, 1988", was an extremely relevant initiative. However, the short time (2012-2014) to investigate a long historical period already points to other issues that are in line with what Orlandi exposed. (Source: http://cnv.memoriasreveladas.gov.br/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=571. Data accessed on Set 16, 2020).

because amnesty means amnesia. The country refuses to face its past, to reconsider the crimes committed, and to expose the atrocities perpetrated by a regime of exception." (FIGUEIREDO, 2017, p. 26). As for the Ricoeur (2005) theory that brings amnesty and amnesia closer, the author states that the amnesty granted to the Brazilian dictatorship victims and which allowed the exiles to return to the country also meant forgiveness for "torturers and murderers", as if it were a law preventing Brazil from "looking at their past" (FIGUEIREDO, 2017, p. 26).

The failure to look to the past emerges today as an urgent demand which is expressed by the elaboration and dissemination of statements claiming not only the return of the military regime, but also placing it as a matter of order. This is one of the most perverse features of this kind of discourse.

2.1 Cynical discourse and gestures of violence

The year 2015 was marked by intense protests. Indursky (2016, p. 65) outlines a comparative analysis between what she calls "June 2013 journeys" and the 2015 protests. The author explains that the latter was triggered by political leaders, while the first was characterized by an "ideological heterogeneity" (INDURSKY, 2016, p. 78). Such heterogeneity was dissolved in 2015, as the street demonstrations became more and more binary: on one side, some protested against the government and, on the other side, others supported the government. The two groups displayed their respective colors on their clothes and accessories, which colored the streets of the cities where the protesters passed by. Those who protested against the government wore the Brazilian flag colors, while the government supporters wore the red color.

The dissemination of colors on the streets, apart from signaling a polarization, also evidenced different positions and social classes. According to Indursky, we may consider the 2015 demonstrations as discursive practices which bring into discussion the issue of "an existing discomfort, not only regarding the instituted power, but also regarding the democracy, the Brazilian form of government" (INDURSKY, 2016, p. 67). As per Souza (2017), that demonstration moment covers a period - which, for the author, goes from 2013 to 2016 - in which the blame and criminalization, arising mainly from the Operation Car Wash investigations and leaks (selectively revealed by the media), fell heavily on the Workers' Party (PT).

As well as the demonstrations held in 2013, the ones in 2015, apart from spreading through the streets, gained further ramifications in both the traditional media and on the internet; the words on the posters were usually highlighted on the front page of different websites from varied perspectives.¹¹ Wordings that encourage "hate ideology" - as Indursky (INDURSKY, 2016, p. 79) calls it - were framed in different records.

¹¹ While it is not our intention to analyze the outcome of these statements, it is worth mentioning the website on which we located figure 5, which features a poster of protest for the non-murder of then-President Dilma Rousseff. This is a page that claims to disclose the "funniest and most creative" posters of the 2015 demonstrations. It should be questioned how the idea of circulating a

We propose to conceive these records as urban manifestations: preliminarily, by understanding them as gestures whose framing produces a greater or lesser effect of spontaneity. These gestures call into question, above all, the taking of a political-ideological position by/in the urban space by different subjects and groups. As per our analysis, the urban manifestation can, thereby, perform a double role: i) empirically, as the record of the urban landscape and /or any action performed in the urban space; ii) analytically, by force of repetition or due to the emergency leading to its production, as the city space and the object of analysis of the discourse analyst who can dedicate him/herself to understand how one or more significant materialities work. In this regard, it is also necessary to consider the dissemination spaces where these urban manifests gain relevance.

Carrying a poster in street demonstrations, for example, is recognized as an urban manifestation of this gesture which means carrying certain individual and/or collective/social demands. For our analysis, we cut out images after they were witnessed in the urban space and published on the internet sites, by following a route of meaning production. The approach chosen relates the different meanings referring to the military government.

Different demands are being made by the poster bearers. As part of our reading gesture, we selected three posters from these urban manifests: the first (figure 5) is a poster taken from the demonstrations held in March 2015; the second and the third ones (figures 6 and 7), were taken in August of the same year:



FIGURE 5 - Poster taken from the demonstrations held in March 2015

Source: <https://www.criatives.com.br/2015/03/os-22-cartazes-mais-engracados-e-criativos-dos-protestos-do-dia-1503/>

death wish - in this particular case, of the only woman who has occupied the Brazilian leading role - in terms of representativeness - could convey meanings of humor and creativity.



FIGURE 6 - Poster taken from the demonstrations held in August 2015

Source: <http://nao-questione.blogspot.com.br/2015/08/brasil-por-que-nao-mataram-todos-em-1964.html>



FIGURE 7 - Poster taken from the demonstrations held in August 2015

Source: https://brasil.elpais.com/brasil/2015/08/18/opinion/1439908643_894361.html

In the first figure, there are two men, and one of them is carrying a poster with the following wording¹²: “I protest: Dilma was the one who should have died, not the singer Reginaldo Rossi”. In the second figure, we cannot see the protesters’ faces, but the framing allows us to conclude that they are two women sitting on the sidewalk (on the street). One of them is holding a poster with the wording “Why didn’t they kill everyone in 1964?”. The third figure shows a woman who is hiding most of her face, and her poster says: “Dilma, it’s a shame you were not hanged by the DOI-CODI. Out Dilma and PT”. Some posters, such as the second one (figure 6), were given great media coverage.

¹² The poster wordings were transcribed exactly as they were written.

The figure of the lady holding the poster while (apparently) resting on the sidewalk was highlighted in the social networks and called the attention of columnists from different media spaces. In a previous work (DELA-SILVA; LUNKES, 2020, p. 104), we mentioned a chronicle written by Professor Pasquale in which he addressed the usage of “why” in the language, linking it to “a fight against the hate speech prevailing in the social media and on the streets, particularly from the moment Dilma won her second presidential term, in 2014.”.

Refocusing on that poster allows us, at this moment, to point out people’s lack of knowledge about the tortures and murders promoted by the dictatorship in Brazil from 1964 to 1985. This un-knowledge also echoed when Dilma's coup/impeachment was being voted at the Chamber of Deputies, in April 2016, and a congressman dedicated his vote to the “memory of Colonel Carlos Alberto Brilhante Ustra, the dread of Dilma Rousseff” (BARBA; WENTZEL, 2016).

The wordings under analysis are not about supporting authoritarian governments for lack of knowledge of their actions, or about inciting torture and murder based on the belief that they did not take place. Those who held up posters and shout for repression were aware of what they asked for, yet they did it. Baldini and Di Nizo (2015) approach the consequences of the social impact of such a statement (“I know that, but even so ...”) as a depiction of the current cynical discourse, according to which “its operation renders the criticism weapon harmless, as the cynical stand taking already presupposes its criticism...”(BALDINI; DI NIZO, 2015, p. 133).

In our analysis, we propose a replacement. We know the conjunction *but* works as a linguistic element of excellence to suggest opposition meanings in the discourse thread.

The cynical discourse role can be comprehended by the non-coincidence between what the subject has already said and what the subject expects/desires. In the sentence “I know” it is expressed a certain knowledge of a discursive formation which is then discontinued by fitting “but”. Then, a different network of meanings is expressed and the apparent criticism that would be produced is rendered harmless, as pointed by Baldini and Di Nizo; hence, the cynical position that “... already presupposes its criticism” (BALDINI; DI NIZO, 2015, p. 133). In this case, we could connect this theoretical position to some statements, such as: “I know what the military dictatorship is, but I still claim the military's intervention” or “I know what torture is, but even so I wish that for 'communists' / opponents of the military regime.”.

We propose to replace “but” by “and”: “I know that and this is why (...)”. This syntactic fitting makes it possible to understand the subject that, by acknowledging what they have said, they accept it as something they want/wish. That attitude gives rise to a discourse full of hatred in the way it is elaborated. In this case, not only are the gestures of violence welcome at the frontiers of the discourse knowledge, but they are also added to the discursive practices as the day order/agenda, as we could see from the statements under analysis.

The phrase “gestures of violence” was taken from a previous research (LUNKES, 2019). Considering that different movements of meanings are at stake in discursive practices in which (the need for) violence is evident, we understand the term ‘violence’ as a broad denomination process, which

allows us to understand the gestures of violence based on/ from the significant materialities under analysis. In this way, we may define violence as:

[...] a set of gestures of violence that - due to the capitalist social formation ideology - corroborates and legitimizes inequalities of all kinds, whether of class, race and /or gender, acting not only in the sense of verticalizing/hierarchizing relationships but also to crystallize the effects of superiority and inferiority put into play in the speech of one subject or group over another. (LUNKES, 2019, p. 194).

From that point of view, we see such gestures of violence bringing back the same statements, but with other meanings: “I know what torture is and, therefore, I hope/wish it for those from the left-wing / ‘communists’ / opponents of the military government.”

3. Conclusion

Our analysis addressed the urban spaces through different movements: the city as a space setting, such as the case of *Memorial da Resistência*; the city that seems to produce resistance meanings in the Memorial video; the city under the political manifestations of 2015. The city has been crossed in different ways and, as we understand it, in contradictory ways. On the one hand, the Memorial’s demand for life revives the silenced memory of horror (ORLANDI, 2002) using the discourse on/about the military regime; on the other hand, there is an urgent demand for torture and death of those who are considered enemies of the protesters’ discourse.

To conclude the present work, we switch back to a part of its title, which we seek to establish a linguistic game based on the effects of the statement/question: “Remembering is resisting(?)”. Despite the initiative of creating city spaces such as the *Memorial da Resistência*, in which a sort of “settling of accounts” is perceived/seen (RICOEUR, 1995), the urban manifestations of last decade engender the resumption of a discursive memory of /about the Brazilian policies which state that many of the meanings at stake in the discourse on/of the military regime were not established then and, for that reason, they allow the spread of manifestations in favor of the cruelest features of the military regime, as if instigating torture and death were a kind of social demand.

Therefore, with the same urgency and yearning of these discourses that claim and make these gestures of violence seem natural, we insist on challenging them and deconstructing the pieces of evidence within them.

We insist on taking our stand: remembering and /is resisting.

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