The humor of Northeastern Brazil's anthroponomy
O humor da antroponímia nordestina

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ABSTRACT: This article aims to analyze the functioning of Northeastern names as elements of humor in virtual texts. The corpus of analysis consists of two posts of northeastern humor profiles on social network Instagram: Suricate Seboso (greasy suricate) and Bode Gaiato (mocking goat). The analytical process considers Discourse Analysis theoretical premises and considers concepts such as discursive memory, as in Courtine (1999, 2014), Robin (2016) and Paveau (2005) and discursive ethos, as in Maingueneau (2008a, 2018, 2020). Since these notions are directly linked to anthroponomic onomastics regarding historical and social facts related to language, I also consider the work by Leite de Vasconcelos (1928) as organized in Carvalhinhos (2007). The conclusions point to a functioning of the Northeastern names in this type of discourse as elements of humor linked to different memories, which present a shift in the naming processes, for example by updating patronymics.

RESUMO: A proposta desse artigo é analisar o funcionamento dos nomes próprios nordestinos como elementos de humor em textos virtuais. O corpus de análise dessa pesquisa são duas postagens de perfis de humor nordestinos da rede social Instagram: Suricate Seboso e Bode Gaiato. O processo analítico considera premissas teóricas da Análise do Discurso e leva em conta conceitos como memória discursiva, como em Courtine (1999, 2014), Robin (2016) e Paveau (2005) e ethos discursivo, como em Maingueneau (2008a, 2018, 2020). Essas noções estão diretamente ligadas à Onomástica antroponímica no que tange aos fatos históricos e sociais relacionados à língua e, por isso, também considero aqui o trabalho de Leite de Vasconcelos (1928) como organizado em Carvalhinhos (2007). As conclusões apontam para um funcionamento dos nomes nordestinos apresentados nesse tipo de discurso como elementos de humor ligados a memórias diversas, que apresentam deslizamento dos processos de nomeação, por exemplo por atualização dos patronímicos.

KEYWORDS: Discourse analysis. Humor. Northeastern Brazilian identity. Anthroponomy.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Análise do Discurso. Humor. Identidade Nordestina. Antroponímia.

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1 Introduction

Humor can be built through several linguistic and discursive sources, from phonological, morphological, and syntactic variation to intonation and prosody, as in oral texts such as stand-up comedies. The main goal of this article is to present a discursive analysis of humor produced by supposed peculiarities that characterize contemporary Northeastern Brazilian anthroponomy through an analysis of humorous virtual texts. It is, therefore, an attempt of interdisciplinary interface between Onomastics and Discourse Analysis.

The theoretical framework draws on two major fields: 1. Onomastics, based on the anthroponomical classifications by Leite de Vasconcelos (1928), mainly about what the author refers to as nicknames and proper names, considering the classification of this organization by Carvalhinhos (2007); 2. Discourse Analysis, based on the category of ethos, as presented in Maingueneau (2008a, 2018, 2020) and the concept of discursive memory as developed by Courtine (1999; 2014), Robin (2016) and Paveau (2005). Complementarily, the article also refers to Possenti's (1998) linguistic analyses of humor and considerations thereupon.

The corpus consists of two posts made by northeastern humor profiles on social network Instagram: Bode Gaiato (mocking goat) and Suricate Seboso (greasy suricate). Both have a solid virtual reputation as evinced, for example, through their number of followers: around 4,1 million and 1,5 million, respectively.

This article is divided into two parts: 1) theoretical framework, which is subdivided into three parts (Onomastics, Memory, and Ethos), and 2) brief description of methodological choices and text analyses. Finally, it provides some final remarks, which are by no means exhaustive given the limitations of the genre.

2 Theoretical presuppositions

This section is divided into three parts: 1) general information on Anthroponomy and related concepts, 2) the notion of memory, and 3) a brief discussion of the discursive category of ethos.

2.1 What is Anthroponomy?

Onomastics is a research field interested in understanding names which contains several areas, including anthroponomy. The expression, initially coined into the Portuguese language by philologist José Leite de Vasconcelos (1887), refers to the study of individual names, such as first names, family names, and nicknames.

However, the term "name" itself presents a certain opacity. Carvalhinhos (2007), for example, lists a series of meanings to which the term is related: 1. Proper or individual names; 2. Complete names; 3. Any of the name's elements; 4. Nickname. The author also indicates a long list of motivations for anthroponyms, including: birth related circumstances, physical or moral features, profession, and religious, historical, or political influences.

Drawing on Leite de Vasconcelos's categorization of anthroponyms, Carvalhinhos (2007, p. 6) summarizes the list as follows:

> o Proper or individual name: baptism name
> o Surname: "it is a patronym, person name, religion expression or of another kind, that is added to the individual name". The example that illustrates this item is the name of a saint, Saint Francis Xavier, in which *Xavier* is the surname.
> o Nickname: "designation added to the normal individual name by others that observes in them a certain particularity, a physical or moral feature worth of notice, ordinarily playful or insulting, but also serious"
> o Sobriquet: equivalent to the nickname, but its character is temporary, in contrast to the nickname, which is often definitive and passes from one generation to another (changing itself because the son of an

individual that received a nickname will not have it as a nickname, since he does not have the same attributes of his father. The nickname´s *semas* are lost, rendering it opaque)

o Patronymic: "represents a genitive derived from the father´s name, which in the medieval age indicated filiation". As such, <u>Vaz</u> is the patronymic that designated someone as the "son of Vasco"; <u>Lopes</u> was "the son of Lopo" and Perez/Pirez was "the son of Pedro or Pero". Likewise, there are many other cases of patronymics that survived till the present day, even consolidated as family nicknames, and emptied of their primer sense of expressing filiation (author´s highlights)

Through the examples of this article´s corpus, it is possible to find more than one of these types (patronymics and nicknames are the main ones). Besides, their classification shifts, i.e., categories are not easily applied and are actualized, probably due to spatial and temporal differences and the opacity of such terms.

Given their relation to the identity game, individual names are of major importance for the construction of fictional or real humoristic characters. To exemplify this point, I recall two great names of Brazilian humor: Dercy Gonçalves and Chico Anysio.

The humorist from Rio de Janeiro, Dolores Gonçalves Costa, ran away from home very early, when she was 17 years old, to work in popular theater. According to the actress, in an interview for the television show *Roda Viva* in 1995, her name change was motivated by two main reasons: 1) not to be found by her father, who was very aggressive and would not accept his daughter's will to become an artist (profession that at the time was equated to prostitution), 2) to pay homage to the then Brazilian first lady, Darci Vargas.

If in the list made by Carvalhinhos for the motivations for proper names "political influences" are pointed out as a reason for parents' enthusiasm to name their daughters and sons, the example of Dercy shows that this enthusiasm may also come from the own name-bearer. "Dolores" herself, whose name probably refers to the well-

known catholic saint, chose as her artistic name a name with political strength at the time: that of the then Brazilian first lady.

Born in the state of Ceará, Francisco Anysio de Oliveira Paula Filho, known in Brazil as the "master of humor", also changed his name in the first years of his career. The change, however, occurred for another motivation than to pay homage to someone, at least in a stricter sense.

To initiate the show that became known as the "Chico Anysio show", the actor had thought of using his original name, "Francisco Anysio Show". It was the program's director, Carlos Manga, who suggested the change[1]. Probably this change was suggested due to the popular appeal of the nickname "Chico" (as opposed to the most serious aspect of the proper name "Francisco") which was logically more adequate to the humoristic intention of the show. Other Brazilian notables in non-humoristic fields – such as the medium Chico Xavier and singer-songwriters Chico Buarque de Holanda and Chico Cesar – have also chosen "Chico" for their artistic names, which may indicate the more popular feature of this nickname.

Interestingly, the original name of Chico Anysio was chosen in a common practice described by Carvalhinhos: the surname that expresses filiation, in his case, "Filho" ("Son"). Chico Anysio comments that his mother fondly called him "Oliveirinha", a diminutive of his father's surname "Oliveira", and that she only began to call him Chico with the program's debut.

It is also possible that his father received the name Francisco for religious motivations, as happened with the Brazilian singer Luiz Gonzaga, who was born on December 13, Saint Louis Day, and was nominated in his honor, another common practice among Brazilians, as Carvalhinhos (2007) reminds. As for "Paula", another

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[1] See the fourth episode of the documentary *Viver do Riso* (To live of laughter), broadcasted by Globo. The episode was a homage to comedian Chico Anysio and shows a part of an audio track in which the actor tells the story of his artistic name, as well as commentaries by his son, also comedian, Bruno Mazzeo. Available at: https://globoplay.globo.com/v/7505028/programa/.

explanation of the list of cases mentioned by Leite de Vasconcelos may fit: the mother's or father's name was passed on to the son as a surname or second name, as in Maria *Caetana*, daughter of *Caetano*, therefore functioning as some kind of patronymic variant.

These two examples of names of great Brazilian humorists alone offer sufficient material for a notion of how vast the field of studies that encompasses anthroponomy is. They also present some phenomena that will be retaken further ahead in the corpus analysis in this article. Before that, in the next section I will provide some remarks on memory and ethos as part of Discourse Analysis (DA).

2.2 Discursive memory and names

In opposition to the notion of psychological memory developed by psycholinguists, Courtine (2014 [1984]) proposes the notion of "discursive memory" to analyze political speech. The author presents the following definition: "the notion of discursive memory refers to the historical existence of what is enunciated within discursive practices ruled by ideological devices" (COURTINE, 2014, p. 105-106).

In his analysis, Courtine (2014) presents three domains of objects that help him organize the discursive sequences around the discursive reference sequence (drs): the domain of memory, the domain of the present, and the domain of anticipation (notions extracted from Foucault, 2004 [1969]). The first domain is the one that interests us the most in this article, because it is through it that "one can enclose the processes that guarantee the reference of names by an enunciating subject and, thus, authorize predication and co-referentiality" (COURTINE, 2014, p. 112). It is in the domain of memory that one can determine the emergence of enunciations since it is related to the instance of interdiscourse.

In a posterior text, Courtine (1999) revisits the theme of discursive memory, but this time his focus is on oblivion. The author insists that, in the space of what is

repeatable (constituted by the domain of memory), the several formulations that occur by means of the forms of the related discourse point to the unevenness of interdiscourse insofar as what would be a plagiarism functions instead as forgetfulness, by making the syntactic marks disappear on the discourse.

In her work "*Mémoire saturée*" (Saturated Memory), Robin (2016 [2003]) revisiting Paul Ricoeuer's text (*La memoire, l'histoire, l'oubli*) that retakes the Freudian concept of remembrance, establishes a parallel between the epistemological conception of time for History and for Psychoanalysis, fields that employ the notion of repression. Highlighting that History retakes this concept metaphorically from Psychoanalysis, the author argues that: "(…) it is not possible to understand the memorial work without considering the layers of time, those effective moments of 'forgetfulness' that remain as basis, those heterogeneities, those retreats and disjunctions" (p. 36).

As such, the author confirms the existence of those gaps in memory, or, in Courtine's (1999, p. 21) terms, the functioning by repetition in the order of this "memory with gaps or failures", in which what is repeated also necessarily shifts. In other words, even when the referred is given by the related mode of recitation, it is valid "by the event of its return" (COURTINE, 1999, p. 20) since it is different.

As an historian, Robin (2016) tries to maintain a certain distance from the more strictly pathological conceptions related to questions such as memory, forgetfulness, repression, mourning, melancholy, common in the psychoanalytical repertoire to analyze what happens with the so-called "collective memory" and prefers the perspective of "rhythms of memory", in reference to the metaphor of the frayed rope by Walter Benjamin (*Écrits Français*).

Following the same theoretical conception, Paveau (2005, p. 03)[2] emphasizes that the interest of DA for the concept of memory is mainly attached to its constructive dimension, insofar as the discourses reflect and at the same time construct reality. Or, as Courtine (2014, p. 103) puts it: "Memory erupts in the present of the occurrence".

In this article, I will attempt to sustain the hypothesis that proper names function as pre-built (and maybe they are so by excellence) from this saturated memory, which operates mainly in the reinvention of its significances and motivations situated in historical contexts and demarcated space and time, as provided in Leite de Vasconcelos's description presented by Carvalhinhos' (2007) summary. However, they function through the structural forgetfulness that is necessary for such reinvention.

With the affirmation that names function as preconstructions by excellence, I mean that anthroponyms by themselves have these effects of stable memory of the "being" on the world. They are referents of a whole significant imperative that in the present corpus is displaced to a common-ground knowledge, as reference of a group and not of an individual. Certainly, here it is worth remembering that this is a move to amplify what is understood as pre-construction, given that, in the literature, the more typical preconstructions are relative sentences and discursivized nominalization with the use of definitive articles. See, for instance, the discussion on the linguistic problem of adjective sentences in Pêcheux (1988).

2.3 Discursive ethos and names

Ethos, as presented in Maingueneau (2008a, 2008b, 2018, 2020), is a concept originated in classical rhetoric, developed by Aristotle. It refers to the positive or negative image of themselves that the speaker produces in the discourse. According

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2 Please refer to the complete version of this text, in which the author successfully and succinctly presents the concept of memory in DA, highlighting its weaknesses and possibilities for maturation.

to the philosopher, this positive image is based mainly on prudence (phronesis), virtue (arete), and benevolence (eunoia).

In his thesis on the controversy on the religious jansenist and devotee humanist discourses, which resulted in *Genèses du discours* (2008b), Maingueneau extracts this notion for the field of studies of discourse, with ethos disengaging from the need to be attached to orality, as it was in Rhetoric. In Maingueneau (2018), the discursive ethos presupposes a relation with "guarantor", "voice", "character", and "corporality", i.e., the DA ethos is an embodied ethos that must function accordingly to the rules of the "ethical world" in which its guarantor participates.

Regarding the complexity involved by the notion of ethos, Maingueneau presents a differentiation between previous ethos (pre-discursive) and discursive ethos. The former refers to the representations that the public holds about the enunciator even before they begin to enunciate. In Amossy's (2005, p. 145)[3] terms, it is "the preexistent image of the speaker", while the discourse ethos is "the image they build in their discourse".

For a better illustration of the functioning dynamics of the DA ethos, Maingueneau (2018) presents the following tableau:

Figure 1.

Source: Maingueneau (2018, p. 270).

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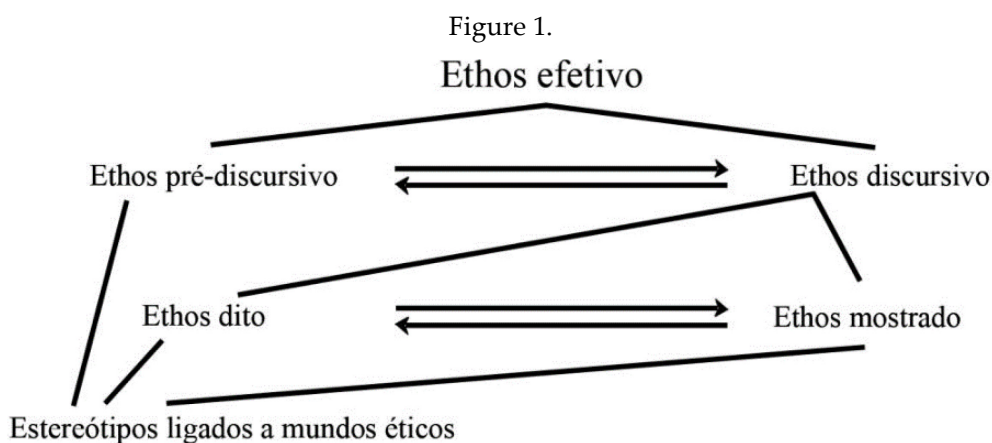
[3] The complete reading of this work is a good starting point for an in-depth understanding of the notion of discursive ethos, which we have just briefly addressed in this text.

From the reading of the scheme above, it is possible to understand that the functioning of ethos requires several factors. All of them, somehow, are associated with the stereotypes related to ethical worlds. As mentioned before, the previous ethos is the one in which the image of the enunciator precedes the act of enunciating. However, the discursive ethos built during the enunciation may be of two kinds: said and shown.

Maingueneau's proposal of differentiation comes from his visitation of Ducrot's (1987) text, in which the linguist proposes the distinction between speaker-L (the enunciator) and speaker-λ (the speaker as being in the world), which, in turn, is related to the pragmaticistic distinction between showing and saying. For Ducrot, "L is responsible for the enunciation, considered exclusively as having this property. λ is a "complete person, that possesses, among other properties, that of being the origin of the enunciation (1987, p. 188). In this sense, the shown ethos is the discursive ethos itself while the said ethos occurs when there are "fragments of the text in which the enunciator evokes their own enunciation" (MAINGUENEAU, 2008a, p. 71) directly or indirectly. The author insists on reminding the reader that the line that distinguishes the said and shown ethos is very thin.

In the case of the present corpus, which circulates through digital media, it is work noticing the particularity that these texts present for the functioning of ethos and enunciative scenes. Maingueneau (2020) revisits his previous texts and defends the need to discuss the problems that the Internet presents to discourse analysts when it comes to the discursive categories presented until then in his work (which will not be discussed here). He states that "the 'digital' scenography is characteristic of the Internet: by escaping to the voice and speech registers, it poses a question to the conception of ethos commonly accepted" (2020, p. 156).

Maingueneau suggests two components of this kind of scenography: 1. Iconotextuality, the multiple images and developments that contribute to the

"global ethos"; 2. Reticularity, which may be internal (connections inside the site) and external (connections with the exterior), "whose relations are generated by different kinds of instruction" (2020, p. 156). Even though the author refers to the functioning of sites, I believe that it is possible to find the same problems in texts that circulate in social networks, as is the case of the texts analyzed in this article.

Based both on these main discursive notions (memory and ethos) and on Leite de Vasconcelos's anthroponomic classification, I shall conduce the following section providing the methodological steps that supported the present analyses.

3 Methodological decisions and analyses of the posts

Given the theoretical concepts presented in the previous section, I will now briefly describe the choice of the material to be analyzed. The corpus of this article consists of two texts that circulate in the virtual environment, more specifically on the social network Instagram, and a third text of accessory interest. I shall refer to these texts as 'posts', disregarding the broad debate on discursive genres (maybe the most important of them being the one on memes), which exceeds the scope of this article.

These posts, published in 2019 and 2020, are of two humoristic northeastern profiles that obtained notoriety on social networks in the last decade: Bode Gaiato (the mocking goat – a profile managed by some people from the northeastern state of Rio Grande do Norte) and Suricate Seboso (the greasy suricate – a profile managed by some people from the northeastern state of Ceará). Both use animals as inspiration for their characters; yet the former uses an animal recognized as typical of the northeastern culture (the goat), while the latter resorts to an animal that can only be found in Africa (the suricate).

Both profiles appeal to very similar resources in several aspects that mainly indicate two social factors: topography (Northeast) and social stratum (low class). These resources are, for instance: 1) the regional accent (linguistic marks that are

displayed in a caricaturized/exaggerated manner) 2) imaginary elements, easily found in low class´ residences that compose the text scenarios, such as clay pots, sandals, leather hats, couscous, carne de sol (a kind of jerked meat), 3) the very content of the texts, which goes from the description of the people´s daily lives to taking political stances, such as the combat against xenophobia.

3.1 The names in *Suricate Seboso* (Greasy Suricate)

For a simple matter of chronological order, I will begin the analysis with a *Suricate Seboso* post (Figure 1), published in April 2019 in their official Instagram profile. It displays a comparison between two allegedly very different forms of naming people: a more normal and another more unusual one and, therefore, funny due to its strangeness. The sections titles are "Normal names elsewhere" and "normal names in the Northeast":

Figure 2 – Names of northeastern people.

Source: image found on Suricate official Instagram profile. Published on April 25, 2019.

The multimodal text consists, in this case, of two equally discursively significant parts: verbal and visual. In the visual part there are elements that retake the profile´s memory, that is, its more stable scenographic marks. The background representing the cosmos, the subtitles in white and yellow and in caps locks, among others, are constant elements of this profile and work, thus, as given information[4], in semantic terms.

However, considering Maingueneau's (2008a) terms of enunciative scenes, these marks would be associated with the generic and comprehensive scenes, since this form of writing is easily found in humorous virtual texts of this genre, while the same background appears, with some variations, in other profiles, such as Bode Gaiato, the profile from which we took the next post (figure 3). It is also possible to think in terms of "digital scenography", as proposed by Maingueneau (2020).

New information regarding discursive scenography is marked by the composition of elements of the text and its content. Far from affirming that the peculiarity of northeastern names is the only theme of this post, the point I want to put forward is the specificity of displays found in the text above. When this content is mobilized by the suricate characters in a graphic and comparative disposition, a scenographic kind of humor order is equally built, i.e., attached to this specific text.

It is through a dialogical functioning of what is already given that humor is built, since novelty is required as humoristic trigger (punchline), mainly by breaking expectations, which occurs through the narrative order as it is presented. That is: first the normal names come from elsewhere, allegedly they are not the cause of strangeness, they are common. Next, names that are normal in the Brazilian Northeast are presented and, there, humor generating strangeness shines through. Humor is built, this way, by an ethical construction of the Northeast as strange, different, peculiar. It is ethical precisely because the enunciator speaks from a northeastern perspective.

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[4] A term that is opposed to new information.

There are two important pieces of information in this analysis that must be mentioned. First, the opposition verbally built by the names is reinforced by the differences in posture (constrained body versus undisciplined body, hand with fingers together pointing forwards indicating a regional swearing expression known as "aí dento"[5]), facial expression (shut mouths versus wide open mouths, as if they were screaming), and clothes (pink tie, white clothes versus colored clothes, leather hats) in the two pictures, which point to differences not only of geographic origin but also of social class.

Second, the cultural knowledge on this region is probably not necessary to understand the humoristic tone of this text, as correctly suggested by Possenti (1998) when he states that, at least in the tradition of Brazilian studies, attaching jokes to culture is a "commonplace" (obviously, I am broadening here the premise of the genre "joke" to all genres considered humoristic). In fact, this premise may be reinforced by the following datum: a considerable part of the followers of northeastern virtual humor profiles is not composed by inhabitants of this region.

More specifically regarding, the names, it is interesting to analyze those that are presented in the composition of this post, providing some background, at least to some extent, to enable the reader to comprehend the analysis of the next post more easily. To constitute the collection of examples displayed as representative of the anthroponomic forming that is characteristic of the Brazilian Northeast, the enunciator resorts to two vertical parallel lists: at the left there are nicknames or, according to Leite de Vasconcelos´ classification, sobriquets, given that they probably refer to names

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[5] During the last presidential elections, the candidate Ciro Gomes, a politician from Ceará, used this term in a press conference. This episode made this swearing expression hit the news and, on that occasion, some tried to translate it to other Brazilian dialects and other languages. The video is available at http://g1.globo.com/ceara/videos/v/apos-eleicao-ciro-gomes-manda-ai-dentro-para-provocador/7071661/

given by the individual himself or someone else accordingly to some personal feature, but differing from the baptism name or the one in the civil register.

"Zefa", for example, is the sobriquet of someone whose name is "Jozefa"; "Maria Dardores" is a variation of "Maria das Dores", which, in turn, receives the sobriquet "Das Dores", suffering variation in its spelling in what constitutes an attempt of phonetic transcription of the popular pronunciation. The list also contains a proper name, "Izolda", which establishes an intertextual relation with a previous humoristic text. It is necessary to activate the memory about the northeastern virtual humoristic speech to understand the reference to the "Coelce Prank[6]".

The second column displays a technique known as a stereotypical characteristic in the region[7]: combining both parents' names in a third one, or referring to one of them. For example: Lucimar may be the name of someone whose parents are Lúcio and Maria, or Josivaldo may be a mix of Josefa and Osvaldo.

One could assume that the names Roniclaysson, Ronivaldo and Roniwelliton in the post are from brothers and that the first part of their names would express their filiations. In these terms, the creation of such proper names would point to the functioning of patronymics, as happened in Fernandes, Álvares, Peres… in which the marks of the genitive "-es" meant "son of" Fernando, Álvaro, Pedro/Pero…, but that nowadays have changed their patronymic status from name to surname.

I propose to sustain this comparison departing from a perspective according to which memory, once effaced by the semantic emptying of these first patronymics, constituted by adding the mark of the Latin genitive, returns through this functioning

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[6]Available at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=37K4lR1Xy0I.

[7] Despite the regional stereotype, there are registers of this practice in all Brazilian regions. See the journalistic article "parental names junctions in unusual names of sons" about such cases in cities of Minas Gerais, a state of the southeast region. Available at http://g1.globo.com/mg/grande-minas/noticia/2013/02/juncao-de-nomes-de-pais-resultam-em-nomes-de-filhos-inusitados.html. Access on July 21, 2020. Also, the text available in the following link, that contains 28 names formed by the junction of other names and that, according to the article, are very popular in Brazil. Available in: https://www.dicionariodenomesproprios.com.br/nomes-criados-brasileiros/. Access on July 21, 2020.

of the constitution of proper names, indicating filiation through the addition of parts of parents' names to the proper names. In the post, the enunciator also recurs to the graphic use of green and yellow colors to emphasize the compositional character of these names.

A final aspect may also be added: the exaggeration in the spelling of the names by the indiscriminate use of double consonants and non-conventional letters, in opposition to the possibilities of graphic simplicity, such as Mychelly versus Michele. Several jokes related to the names of poor people refer to the clumsy and exaggerated way they use the letters w, y, k, and h. Here follows an example taken from the website meme generator:

Figure 3 — Meme Generator.
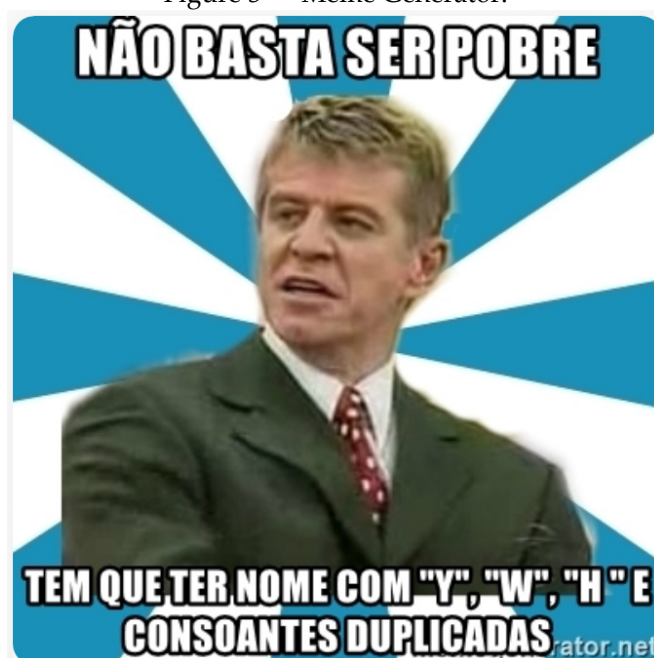
Source: Image taken from website memegenerator.net.

Caco Antibes, a character in the TV show *Sai de Baixo* (Get out of the way), is a broke rich who disdains the lower social classes. He appears at the center of the image surrounded by the phrase "it is not enough being poor, they must have names with 'y', 'w', 'h' and doubled consonants". The text is written in caps locks, as in the two

other posts presented in this article, and elements are displaced in the same way: the image at the center, surrounded by the texts. Here, it is possible to think of the occurrence of the global ethos of the generic scene of memes. These characteristics repeat in Figure 4.

The content of this post is an allusion, in the form of ironic criticism, to how poor people name their sons and daughters. It points to a stereotype of exaggeration and lack of manners as typical of a social class, being corroborated by the text in Figure 3, e.g. in Roniclaysson and Roniwelliton (doubled use of 'l' and of 'y' and 'w').

The indiscriminate use of unusual letters in Portuguese as well as the duplication of consonants point to a previous ethos that is shared both by the figure of the poor person and by Northeastern Brazilians, who to some extent coincide by an intersectionality of categories: geographical and social. For Chambers and Trudgill (1998), for example,

> Some dialectologists began to recognize that the spatial dimension of linguistic variation had been concentrated on to the exclusion of the social dimension. To some, this was felt to be a deficiency, since social variation in language is as pervasive and important as regional variation. All dialects are both regional and social. All speakers have a social background as well as a regional location, and in their speech they often identify themselves not only as natives or inhabitants of a particular place but also as members of a particular social class, age group, ethnic background, or other social characteristic. (1998, p. 45).

3.2 Names in Bode Gaiato (Mocking Goat)

The analyses of the next image retake a discussion on the formation of proper names that have as its purpose to express filiation. However, it is also, as I will show, a field with good material to discuss questions on memory, such as the space of what is repeatable and ethos, as discursive results of the functioning of stereotypes.

Figure 4 — names of people in the hinterland.

Source: Image taken from the official Bode Gaiato Instagram profile. Published: 5/21/2020.

The title of this post is the following: "names of people in the hinterland…". It is possible to take two initial pieces of information from it: 1) there is a relevant topographic difference when compared to the text of the previous post, which did not refer to the opposition hinterland/big city (capital), but to the opposition "Northeast/Other Brazilian regions"; 2) the choice for an ellipsis at the end of the phrase points to the possibility that what comes next may be only one example that may be taken in this context as prototypical of the group "all of" the names of the people in the hinterland.

The background that represents the cosmos is a kind of shared mark of this generic scene (as I have already suggested in the previous subsection), at least as proven by the recurrence of posts by other profiles with the same purpose: to be recognized in the virtual environmental as humoristic and northeastern.

Besides this background, the graphic disposition of the textual elements, as well as the use of caps lock, in yellow and white colors, are features shared by both texts analyzed in this article as well as by the text in Figure 2, which, despite being a humoristic and virtual text, does not share this mark of "northeasterness". As such, it

may be possible to reflect on the graphic disposition of the visual and verbal elements and the graphic conditions of the verbal text as parts of the generic scene of virtual humoristic texts commonly referred to as memes, which, here, I am simply calling humoristic posts. This, as I suggested above, would indicate what Maingueneau calls global ethos of the digital scenography.

The enunciator chooses to present as a good representation of the mode of naming people in the hinterland the use of filiation, a method already described as being strongly motivational in Carvalhinhos′ (2007) analysis. Besides the genitive marks, the author also highlights another form of expressing filiation by proper names: the use of the Latin noun "*filius*", son, or the adjective "junio", which means "the youngest". In English there is also the suffix "son" in names like "Wilson" (son of Will) or Peterson (son of Peter), which, with the passing of time, have be emptied of the semantic charge of filiation.

In the case of the text in Figure 4, the characters represent a chain of three generations: grandfather, father, and son. It is worth noticing that, while in Figure 2, both genders, male and female, are represented, in Figure 4 there is only the male gender, which may be read as a more patriarchal representation of the social order in the hinterlands8. The characters are named through a logical, chronological, and generational sequence whereby the following generation always receives a mark of filiation in its identification: John Doe – John of John Doe – John of John of John Doe.

"Zé Gaiola", "Bio de Zé Gaiola" e "Júnio de Bio de Zé Gaiola" are probably not baptism names, but sobriquets of a strong and updated patronymic nature. These are names through which people from the same community refer to these people and that can only function in a relatively small community where most families know each

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8 In Lopes (2020), I maintain that the equivocal body of the suricate, as well as the communitarian and matriarchal organization of such species indicate a significant difference with the mocking goat which is, in turn, based on this caprine, typical of the northeast region, which is presented in a more manly body, with horns and hoofs.

other. Precisely because of that, the enunciator identifies this process as typical from the hinterland.

Another characteristic to be observed is that these sobriquets are constituted by various and complex anthroponomic processes. "Zé Gaiola", the grandfather´s name, probably refers to someone who was registered as "José" (Joseph) and, for some peculiar reason of his personal history, had his name abbreviated to "Zé" (Joe) and the noun "Gaiola" was added to his name. This double name was consolidated in his community and passed on to his descendants.

The son is called "Severino" and people with this name usually receive the sobriquet "Bio"[9]. To refer to this specific Bio, people recur to the identification expressed by the preposition "of". Therefore, Severino[10] becomes "Bio de Zé Gaiola". This process of referencing to the filiation for the identification of individuals is transmitted to the son of "Bio", who is called Junior. As previously said, junior is an ancient anthroponomic resource that aims to express filiation. In this case, it is very likely that the baptism name of the individual is Severino Junior, but, in his community, he is identified as "Júnio de Bio de Zé Gaiola". The identification thus becomes a kind of display of his genealogical tree, where the preposition "de" (of)

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[9] Sobriquet produced by phonological processes such as vocal elevation from "e" to "i" and stopping of the "v" fricative, which becomes the plosive "b".

[10] The great number of individuals named Severino in this region is remembered by the Brazilian poet João Cabral de Melo Neto at the beginning of his Christmas play "the death and life of a Severino", which was translated by the American poet Elizabeth Bishop as follows:

"— My name is Severino,
I have no Christian name.
There are lots of Severinos,
(a saint of pilgrimages),
So they began to call me
Maria´s Severino;
There as lots of Severinos
With mother called Maria,
So I became Maria´s
Of Zacarias, deceased. (...)"

exhibits a semantic charge of possession and indicates the relation (of possession) between fathers and sons such as it is conceived in the region.

Therefore, the nature of the sobriquet weakens itself in the next generations because the individual can only be identified if his parents and grandparents are known. The enunciator tries to explain in a well humored way that the families to which these individuals belong in these hinterland communities have a bigger importance than the individual's baptism name for his own identification, which probably does not happen in large cities, except, maybe, in peripheral communities. However, it is possible that only "Zé Gaiola" functions as a sobriquet, to speak to someone in a dialogue, as the two others are expressions used to refer to someone who is not "Zé Gaiola" but is related to him. In other words, only when mentioning "Bio de Zé Gaiola" or "Júnio de Bio de Zé Gaiola" do people think of this chain of filiation.

As such, the ethos built by the enunciator in this text is that of an expert connoisseur of the naming processes that occur in this region, while it lso employs this memory to generate humor by identification/strangeness in the reader. That is, the readers may laugh either because they think this practice is weird or because they recognize it and see it represented in another perspective – differently from daily life.

Humor is built by both the physical appearance of the characters and the use of regional stereotypes – the old man, the adult, and the young one. While the old man wears a short-sleeved, buttoned shirt outside his pants and an analog watch (in profile with his hand on his waist and a bit "paunchy", indicating a certain slouch found in the imaginary vision of elder people), the adult wears a similar type of shirt, semi-buttoned and tucked inside his pants, with a belt, and the teenager wears a striped "normal" cotton blouse and is the only one not wearing a leather hat. While their clothes indicate a spectrum that varies from the most to the least solemn, their facial expressions are also distinguished: the most suspicious of all is that of the youngest character.

This differentiation is mainly given to highlight the detachment/unease regarding the environment. It is very likely that the character with less contact with hinterland culture is the teenager, who only visits the region in festive moments and during vacations.

4 Final remarks

Names bear a history that will not be erased, even if it is not transparent; as Carvalhinhos (2007) states, names are semantically emptied throughout time and become opaque. What I attempted to present in this article is an analysis of the humorous posts that resort to names of the region they represent, the Northeast or its hinterland, using the notion of discursive memory, the discursive category of ethos and Leite Vasconcelos's anthroponomic classification as organized in Carvalhinhos (2007).

I thus conducted an analytical description which consisted mostly of comparing two texts to delimit the most typical elements of humorous digital genres (therefore, I resorted to a third humoristic and digital text, albeit unrelated to the Northeast), specifically related to each scenography. In the analysis, I sought to mobilize the descriptions of names in Carvalhinhos (2007) to shed a light on how the process of shifting and opacification occurs when put into the analysis of texts containing names. In the texts I investigated, the names were analyzed in order to understand their importance in the discursive construction of this humor that is mainly based on a stereotypical representation of anthroponomic practices of the Brazilian Northeast.

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