

ORIGINAL ARTICLES TRANSLATED

BODIES, VIOLENCE, SILENCING: THE TRANSGENDERITY DISCOURSE

Corpos, violências, silenciamentos: O discurso sobre a transgeneridade

DOI: 10.14393/LL63-v36n1-2020-16

André Cavalcante***

Translators: Igor A. Lourenço da Silva[†] & Marcela Henrique de Freitas^{††}

ABSTRACT: By reflecting upon the discourse production conditions, the imagination of/on trans individuals and the temporal landmark of the 2018 elections in Brazil, I aim to analyze the relationship between silencing and resistance of/to the trans body in the virtual space. To this end, I selected two pieces of news posted on digital media, one about the play *O Evangelho Segundo Jesus, Rainha do Céu* [free translation: The Gospel According to Jesus, Queen of Heaven], which was interdicted in the Winter Festival of Garanhuns, State of Pernambuco, and the other about a 'travesti' murder in Sao Paulo. I analyzed these pieces to understand the dispute of meanings involving the trans corporeality based on the theoretical framework provided by the Materialist Discourse Analysis. Complementarily, I analyzed the comments on the news, as this is a space where the individuals, under the illusion that everything can be said, produce discourses in tune with the trans cause or hate discourses that delegitimize, make silent and displace meanings about such bodies.

KEYWORDS: Trans body. Transgenderity. Silencing. Resistance.

RESUMO: Pensando as condições de produção do discurso, o imaginário do/sobre os sujeitos trans e o marco temporal das eleições de 2018, objetivamos analisar a relação entre os silenciamentos e a resistência do/sobre o corpo trans no espaço virtual. Para tanto, elencamos duas matérias postadas em meios digitais, uma sobre a peça "O Evangelho segundo Jesus, Rainha do Céu", quando houve sua interdição no Festival de Inverno de Garanhuns (PE) e outra sobre um assassinato de uma travesti em São Paulo (SP), com vistas a compreendermos as disputas de sentidos sobre as corporeidades trans através da fundamentação teórica da Análise do Discurso materialista. Juntamente com as matérias, analisaremos seus comentários, uma vez que este é um espaço no qual, pela ilusão de tudo se poder dizer, os sujeitos produzem discursos em consonância com a causa trans ou discursos de ódio que deslegitimam, silenciam e deslocam sentidos sobre estes corpos.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Corpo trans. Transgeneridade. Silenciamento. Resistência.

* PhD Candidate in the Graduate Program in Linguistics, Universidade Federal Fluminense (UFF), Brazil. Member of the Subject's Archive Laboratory (LAS/UFF), Center of Studies and Language Practices, and Virtual Space (NEPLEV/UFPE). FAPERJ grantee. ORCID: 0000-0001-7654-3704. E-mail: acbs.cavalcante(AT)gmail.com.

† Assistant Professor at Universidade Federal de Uberlândia (UFU), Brazil. PhD in Linguistics from Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais (UFMG). ORCID: 0000-0003-0738-3262. E-mail: ial(AT)ufu.br.

†† Adjunct Professor at Federal Institute of Education, Science and Technology of Paraíba (IFPB) – Santa Rita Campus, Brazil. M.A. in Linguistics from Universidade Federal de Uberlândia (UFU). ORCID: 0000-0003-0381-458X. E-mail: marcelahdf(AT)gmail.com.

*"I've had so much trouble; it's a miracle I'm still here."
(Marsha P. Johnson)*

Part 1. The discourses on body and gender, and their production conditions

Bodies "strutted about", said Foucault (2017 [1976]) about the beginning of the 17th century. Discourses and bodies would not spark embarrassments or scandals. However, in the following centuries, particularly in the 19th century, sex was encouraged by a will to know that took over the individuals.

Foucault (2014 [1970]) reflects that the discursive practice is controlled, selected and organized to avert its dangers and powers. The most evident form of exclusion is interdiction, which prevents one from saying everything:

I will note simply that the areas where this web is most tightly woven today, where the danger spots are most numerous, are those dealing with politics and sexuality. It is as though discussion, far from being a transparent, neutral element, allowing us to disarm sexuality and to pacify politics, were one of those privileged areas in which they exercised some of their more awesome powers. (FOUCAULT, [1970]1971, p. 8)

Foucault (2014) argues that, within the exclusion processes, the areas that witness the highest levels of interdiction are sexuality and politics: the former is disarmed, the latter is pacified to silence, conceal discourses on bodies that bring about meanings and run counter mechanisms of control and submission to the state in an attempt to make them docile.¹ Politics challenges meanings, while sexuality reveals that bodies are endowed with desires and, as such, they are a social dread.

Foucault's reflections date back to the 1960-1970s, but they do serve as a starting point for current discussions about gender and sexuality. In addition, I provide a materialist interpretation, one focused on the relationships of language as a material form of Ideology.

¹ Following Foucault's reflection on biopower, Preciado (2018) argues that the changes of capitalism have transformed bodies, gender, sex, sexuality and pleasure in objects of political management and such a management was based on the dynamics of the post-Cold War technocapitalism, media and bio-technology, with the necropolitical techniques of war ratifying the control over the subjectivities.

The central issue in this study is the body as materiality of the individual's desire, especially the trans body as the corporeality that does not identify with cisnormativity, i.e., the birth-assigned gender. Thus, *travestis*², transsexuals, transgenders, non-binary people and other trans identities subjectify themselves through language and offer resistance through their bodies.

It is through the body as a material site, as a tool of analysis and as language (LEANDRO-FERREIRA, 2015) that these individuals bring about other meanings to destabilize what is given about the hegemonic gender identities, i.e., "man" and "woman". In this study, I aim to discuss the dispute of meanings of/over trans bodies in the contemporary virtual space.

To this end, I build on the discursivities of two online pieces of news from 2018. One is about the play *O Evangelho Segundo Jesus, a Rainha do Céu* [free translation: *The Gospel According to Jesus, Queen of Heaven*], published on *Folha de Pernambuco* by the time it was interdicted in the Winter Festival Garanhuns (FIG – acronym in Portuguese for Festival de Inverno de Garanhuns), State of Pernambuco, Brazil. The other one is about a 'travesti' murder in Sao Paulo, State of Sao Paulo, Brazil, shared on the Facebook page *Travestis e Transexuais Brasileiras* [free translation: *Brazilian Travestis and Transsexuals*].

I draw on Materialist Discourse Analysis as posited by Michel Pêcheux and followers and developed in Brazil by Eni Orlandi and other scholars. This theoretical framework is aimed to understand the meaning effects produced within language, considering that both individuals and meanings are historically situated and always compete for reproducing/transforming the production conditions.

The pieces of news were disseminated online, notably on Facebook, sparking several debates, disputes of meanings and meanings that border both the empirical and the virtual spaces. Grigoletto (2011) argues that the virtual space is not disconnected from the empirical and the discursive spaces, as the virtual space is also an integral part of the social formation, which is historically situated and, as such, is traversed by language. Thus, virtual language practices both are effect of the discursive practices and produce meanings within social

² NT: The word "travesti" could apparently be 'literally' translated as "transvestite" or loosely translated as "crossdresser", but both choices would entail substantial changes in meaning. Therefore, we have chosen to maintain the original word in Portuguese.

practices. As such, the virtual space is not a new space, but rather a space in between the discursive and the empirical spaces, because it has characteristics of both.

In the virtual space, the individuals feel “free” to “say everything”, affected by the subjective illusions (PÊCHEUX, 2009 [1975]) of both being owners of their utterances and controlling meanings. In such a space, they produce discourses in line with the trans cause or hate discourses that delegitimize, silence and force normative meanings upon the trans bodies. Such a contradictory space is a place that enables both transgender resistance discourses and violent transphobic discourses.

In addition to a space where such discourses have been more frequent, eventually affecting the most traditional media, through TV shows, soap operas or movies, among others, the current conjuncture is such that a door may close to the gender subject, but it sneaks in through the window, i.e., gender cannot be completely disarmed through interdiction. This is what took place in the 2018 presidential running in Brazil, which did produce conditions for discourses about the trans bodies, as gender and sexuality issues had a vast influence on politics, showing their “awesome powers”, as discussed in the next section.

Part 2. Between silences and resistance, the trans body

Since the beginning of the LGBTI+³ movement, trans people have been major activists and struggled for the civil rights of this marginalized population. It happened, for instance, in the Stonewall riots, in the United States, in June 28th, 1969: transgenders, drag queens, homosexuals and other people of non-hegemonic sexuality and gender revolted against the police oppression in LGBTI+ bars, such as in the Stonewall Inn. They confronted the police repression and continued protesting across Manhattan, New York City. That day has been a milestone, known as the International LGBTI+ Pride Day.⁴

³ The acronym refers to lesbians, gays, bisexuals, transsexuals, intersexuals and other transgender identities.

⁴ Marsha P. Johnson and Sylvia Rivera stood out as leaders of the Stonewall riot and also as LGBTI+ activists. They criticized the discrimination against these people in the United States. Marsha, a black transsexual and drag queen was constantly chased by the mafia, and several people saw her as a transgressor because of her militancy. Years later, she was found in a river. The circumstances of her death are unclear until today, even though the police ruled it as a case of suicide.

In Brazil, this is not different. Transgenders have headed the movement for equal rights for cis and trans people, both in discussions that challenge the pre-established notions of masculinity and femininity and in social achievements, including access to the public health system. Even though they are part of a wide group that encompasses distinct sexualities (e.g., gays, lesbians, and bisexuals) and sexual conditions (e.g., intersexuality), transgenders have faced more violence, delegitimization and exclusion in the social spaces. According to data from ILGA, the International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Association, Brazil ranks first in the number of murders against this population in the Americas.⁵

Even though the discussions about gender have progressed on TV or in more traditional media such as printed newspapers, it is in the virtual space where the discourses on transgendered have gained a greater proportion and where most of these subjects can speak for themselves, especially through Facebook or Instagram groups or pages. Contradictorily, it is also in the virtual space that we notice silences and transphobic discourses that assault and disrespect these individuals.

As the analysis below will show, the production conditions have favored discourses advocating the trans cause, while also paving the way for a discursivization that is foreign to utterances about transgenerity and, as such, points to transphobia and conservatism. Along with the spaces where such discourses can/should circulate, the social and historical conjecture of the 2018 electoral running led the Brazilian population to discourse clashes and influenced the poll.

Considering the trans body and/as politics, I analyze in the following two posts and the respective comments on them. They are representative of discourse disputes of/over transgenerity and its relationship with silence and resistance, as seen in the discursive theory.

⁵ MPA BRASIL. Available at: <https://mpabrasil.org.br/artigos/parem-de-nos-matar-o-brasil-e-o-pais-que-mais-mata-lgbts-na-america-latina/>. Access on: 20 Sept. 2019.

GERAL

Após polêmica, Governo retira do FIG peça com Jesus travesti

Prefeito de Garanhuns havia criticado a peça, que tem a atriz transexual Renata Carvalho no papel de Jesus

Por: Folha de Pernambuco em 30/06/18 às 15H04, atualizado em 30/06/18 às 16H33



Depois de muita polêmica, o Governo de Pernambuco decidiu, neste sábado (30), cancelar a apresentação da peça "O Evangelho Segundo Jesus, Rainha do Céu". A obra, que faz uma releitura atual de Jesus Cristo vivendo como travesti - vivida pela atriz transexual Renata Carvalho -, estava prevista para ser apresentada na Mostra de Teatro Alternativa do Festival de Inverno de Garanhuns (FIG), em julho.

A decisão foi anunciada através de nota assinada pela Secretaria de Cultura do Estado, que alega, para o cancelamento, "possibilidade de prejuízos das parcerias estratégicas e nobres" que viabilizam o FIG. "O Festival de Inverno de Garanhuns foi criado para unir e divulgar nossas expressões culturais e não para dividir e estimular a cultura do ódio e do preconceito".

- 1 Democracia de verdade será quando a própria sociedade escolherá o que se deve fazer com os recursos públicos, enquanto isso não acontece, esses políticos e seus assessores ficam brigando entre si qual ideologia eles querem empurrar goela abaixo do povo utilizando o dinheiro que não lhes pertence.
Curtir · Responder · 33 sem
- 2 Hoje você foi contra é homofóbico, mas deveriam ao menos RESPEITAR Jesus Cristo, agora eu vou lhes dizer, Paulo Câmara é muito mal assessorado isto poderia ter sido evitado e ter lhe desgastado ainda mais.
Curtir · Responder · 2 · 33 sem
- 3 Parabéns Izaias! Respeito a Jesus é bom e nós cristãos gostamos.
Curtir · Responder · 32 sem
- 4 Tudo tem limite, até mesmo a liberdade artística. Se você tem o direito de se expressar artisticamente nas ruas e nos palcos da vida, isso não significa que você tem o direito de menosprezar, ridicularizar e zombar da fé das pessoas. Se para alguns Jesus Cristo não significa nada, para muitos, ou melhor, a maior parte da população brasileira ou até mesmo do mundo, considera, respeita, ama e tem fé no filho de Deus. Jesus Cristo é o único santo verdadeiro, porque ele não nasceu da carne. Ele foi obra do Espírito Santo de Deus e nasceu da virgem Maria. Sei que alguns não acreditam, mas, tenho certeza que o filho de Deus é reconhecido no mundo todo como a salvação da humanidade. Por isso, não devemos manchar a vida de Jesus Cristo em uma peça de teatro, como se ele não tivesse nenhuma importância ou simplesmente igualar o filho de Deus aos meros mortais aqui da terra. Glória a Deus nas alturas e paz na terra aos homens por ele amado!!!! Amém!!!!
Curtir · Responder · 32 sem
- 5 A desmoralização do Brasil é tão grande que nem Jesus Cristo escapa. Mais um gigantesco absurdo contra o filho de Deus que morreu na cruz por todos nós.
Curtir · Responder · 32 sem

Figure 1. Piece of news on the interdiction of the play *O Evangelho Segundo Jesus, a Rainha Do Céu*

Source: Folha de Pernambuco, 30 June 2018. Available at:

<https://www.folhape.com.br/diversao/diversao/geral/2018/06/30/NWS,73484,71,480,DIVERSAO,2330-APOS-POLEMICA-GOVERNO-RETIRA-FIG-PECA-COM-JESUS-TRAVESTI.aspx>. Access on: 18 Feb. 2019.

Translation:

GENERAL

After polemics, Government withdraws from the Winter Festival of Garanhuns (FIG) a play portraying Jesus as a travesti

The mayor of Garanhuns had criticized the play in which transsexual actress Renata Carvalho stars as Jesus

By **Folha de Pernambuco** on 06/30/2018 at 3:04PM, updated on 06/30/2018 4:33PM

After strong polemics, the **Pernambuco administration** decided on Saturday 30th to **cancel** the play “O Evangelho Segundo Jesus, a Rainha Do Céu”. The piece, which provides a new perspective on **Jesus Christ living as a travesti** – performed by the transsexual actress Renata Carvalho – was going to take place in the show *Mostra de Teatro Alternativa* at the FIG in July.

The decision was released in a note by the State Department of Culture, claiming that it would otherwise “damage strategic and noble partnerships”. **“The FIG was created to combine and disseminate our cultural expressions, rather than to divide or encourage a culture of hate or prejudice”**.

1) Real democracy will be when the very society chooses what should be done with public resources; while it doesn't happen, politicians and their assistants keep arguing with each other about what ideology they want the shove all the way down the population's throat, using money that doesn't belong to them.

Like Reply 33w

2) Nowadays, if you're against it, you're homophobic. But they should at least RESPECT Jesus Christ. Let me tell you something: Paulo Camara is very poorly assisted; this could've been avoided rather than wearing him down even more.

Like Reply 33w

3) Congratulations Izaias! Respecting Jesus is good, and we as Christians like it.

Like Reply 32w

4) Everything has limits, even artistic freedom. If you have the right to express yourself on the streets and on the stages of life, it doesn't mean you have the right to depreciate, ridicule and joke about people's faith. If for some Jesus doesn't mean nothing, many people, or better yet, the majority of the Brazilian population or even of the world population is considerate of, respect, love and has faith in the Son of God. Jesus Christ is the only real saint because He wasn't born from the flesh. He was a piece of God's Holy Spirit and was born from the Virgin Mary. I know that a lot of people don't believe it but I'm sure the Son of God is recognized all over the world as the savior of humanity. For this reason, we shouldn't dishonor Jesus Christ's life in a play, as if He wasn't important, or simply compare the Son of God to mere mortals on Earth. Glory to God in the highest and peace among those with whom He is pleased!!!! Amen!!!

Like Reply 32w

5) The demoralization in Brazil is so big that not even Jesus Christ is safe. One more huge atrocity against the Son of God, who died on the cross for all of us.

Like Reply 32w

The piece of news in Figure 1 was published in one of the most accessed virtual newspapers in the State of Pernambuco. It reports on the interdiction of the play *O Evangelho Segundo Jesus, a Rainha Do Céu*, a monologue performed by trans actress Renata Carvalho. The play was originally written by trans author and actress Jo Clifford, who was forbidden to enter the church for being a transgender, i.e., for identifying herself as being of the gender opposite to the one assigned at birth.

In the play, the parables told by the biblical Jesus are updated to the contemporary world, and the Son of God is portrayed as a 'travesti', which calls for a reflection on gender and spirituality. The play was directed by Nathalia Mallo, who enabled such reflections through art. Notwithstanding, the play did not pass unnoticed by conservative Brazilians, leading to protests, censure, and interdiction.

In a stage of meaning disputes around the (im)possibility of Jesus being portrayed by a trans woman, censure, resistance and protests ensued throughout the Winter Festival of Garanhuns in 2018. Other artists that defended freedom of artistic expression were themselves criticized.

It is necessary to understand which meanings were produced through interdicting such a play and, consequently, silencing trans bodies in the current conjecture. It is also important to understand that there is resistance.

Since the inclusion of the play in the festival program, several debates have revolved around the (im)possibility of Jesus being portrayed by/as a 'travesti'. Some religious and politicians from the city have criticized the proposition without even knowing the content of the artistic production.

Because of the polemics, the State Government of Pernambuco decided to cancel the presentation because, otherwise, it would "damage strategic and noble partnerships". The State Department of Culture released a note stating that the Winter Festival of Garanhuns was created to disseminate cultural expressions, rather than "to divide and encourage a culture of hate and prejudice".

In the Department's utterance, inscribed in the discursive thread through the introduction of another, a different discourse, the play would cause financial damage considering the festival partnerships. As such, the financial capital overcomes the role of art,

which is to entertain and make people reflect, particularly upon the relationship between gender and spirituality in that case.

In addition, when it pointed out that the festival does not aim to encourage the culture of hate or prejudice, the Department of Culture brought forth meanings for those who do not know (and who are not willing to know) about the play's plot. Allegedly, the play itself, because of its "polemic" subject, was the one accountable for inciting the discourse clash around it: it was dividing some religious and politicians, on the one hand, and those who are amenable to see Jesus portrayed by/as a 'travesti'.

In the news, the culture of hate refers to the offensive, violent, conservative discourses against the play, discourses that had been produced by those protesting against its production. Such discourses circulated in the news, especially on social media. However, despite the offensive comments on the play, the punishments fell upon the creators, with the play being interdicted.

Interdiction is a way of silencing meanings. Orlandi (2013) divides interdiction into two types: the founding silence, and the policy of silence. The former is the condition for the production and motion of meanings; it is from silence that discourse can be produced. In turn, the policy of silence refers to how meanings are interdicted. It can be subdivided into local and constitutive silence. Local silence is the interdiction of the saying; the other's voice is shut; they are forbidden to say. The constitute silence is saying 'x' in order not to say 'y' – certain utterances are produced while others are concealed.⁶

Considering how the policy of silence works in the discourse on transgenerity, as well as the spaces between silencing, interdicting, not saying and resisting, I now address the comments to the piece of news under scrutiny.

In the comments section, the individuals, under the illusion that they can say anything, oftentimes produce other discourses that divert from the main topic. Foucault says that the

⁶ The controversy started when the bishop of the diocese of Garanhuns wrote in a letter that if the play took place at the Winter Festival of Garanhuns, he would not grant the use of the cathedral in the event. This caused a problem for the event organization, because that was one of the venues expected for the festival. Followed by bishop Dom Paulo Jackson da Nobrega Souza, other political and religious leaders joined efforts to interdict the play, such as mayor Izaias Regis, judge Roberto da Silva Maia and the Order of Pastors of Garanhuns. On a rainy day, however, the play was performed with a financial aid amid protests.

commentary is a practice of controlling discourses: "Not a few major texts become blurred and disappear, and commentaries sometimes come to occupy the former position" (FOUCAULT [1970]1971, p. 13). This can be seen in those comments that silence the play's topic and proposal. The comments, herein referred to as Discursive Sequences (DS), were "selected" by the very website, through an algorithm that highlights the most liked or responded comments.

In DS 1, the commenter says, real democracy is "when the very society chooses what should be done with public resources." Thus, it is not said that the play would not be performed if it depended on the Brazil people. In addition, this is a criticism toward the politicians in the State of Pernambuco, because they could be manipulating the citizens by choosing which ideology would prevail through public funding. In this case, ideology would be a set of ideas amenable to manipulation and conscious imposition upon certain individuals. However, in Discourse Analysis, ideology refers to material practices affected by the unconscious and materialized in language, responsible for the materiality of meanings and individuals, producing effects on the both of them, as if they were one.

In DS 2, in denial, the commenter says that it is not homophobia. Besides, s/he believes there is no respect for Jesus in associating Him to a trans person. S/he also criticizes the state government that could have avoided the commotion if it had not included the play in the festival program in the first place. By referring to "homophobia", not only does the comment show a potential unawareness about the gender identities, but it also entails a political way of not saying "transphobia" or acknowledging the 'travesti' identity as a female transgender identity that does not correspond to the male gender assigned at birth. In other words, the issue is not in the realm of homophobia but rather of transphobia, even though the commenter, under the illusion of mastering the discourse, claims that it is not about a discriminatory practice.⁷

In DS 3, the commenter compliments the mayor of Garanhuns, Izaias Regis, who had put all his efforts to prevent the play from being performed in the city. When the producers said that they would not change the play, the mayor said he would not authorize the use of the cultural center. This won several supporters for the politician, according to whom Garanhuns

⁷ To Freud, denial is a defense mechanism whereby an individual expresses negatively their wish or repressed ideas, not recognizing them as a wish that has been previously expressed consciously (ROUDINESCO; PLON, 1998).

is a Christian city. As mentioned by commenter 3 Jesus must be respected, because that is how Christians like it.⁸

In DS 4, artistic freedom is a right, but it needs limits because one cannot make fun of Jesus, even though several people do not believe in Jesus. For the commenter, Jesus was not born from the flesh but from the Holy Spirit and Virgin Mary, and therefore, He should not be compared to mere mortals. Curiously, in the State Pernambuco and elsewhere, men have performed Jesus without sparking any commotion. For instance, the Nova Jerusalem theater, in the city of Brejo da Madre de Deus, State of Pernambuco, hosts an outdoor Passion of Christ every year, with Jesus being portrayed by a cisgender actor (i.e., one whose gender is the same as the one assigned at birth), usually a middle-class, white man. Contrary to DS4, the performance is seen and praised by millions.

In DS5, the event attests that "the demoralization in Brazil is so big that not even the Son of God is safe". Jesus, who has died on the cross to save us, is allegedly offended by the fact that a 'travesti' plays His role.

The discussion in this discourse clash is not about the content of the play, or the possibility of other actors playing in it. It is about the fact that a 'travesti' is playing the role of Jesus. It is about a body that not only conveys meaning through memory and pre-established meanings, but also displaces meanings and 'misinterprets' evidences about gender and body. It is also a body that is amid a dispute for the power to be/say to stand up against the ways of silencing. In other words, it is about a body that resists.

On the relationship between body and memory, Hashiguti points out:

The body is a body of memory that both determines and is determined, in the sense that it is both body as a material density of/in discourse (as such, a determinant materiality due to its visibility) and body of/in the discourse memory that makes up its gestures (as such, a determined body). Memory is in the discourse that looks at and says about the body and in the gesture that the body does. Memory is in the body and in the look at it, which means that it is always a body of memory.⁹ (HASHIGUTI, 2008, p. 110)

⁸ Information extracted from the piece of news.

⁹ Original: "O corpo é um corpo de memória que determina e é determinado, no sentido de que é tanto corpo como espessura material do/no discurso, sendo assim materialidade determinante por sua visibilidade, quanto corpo de/na memória discursiva que constitui seus gestos, sendo assim corpo determinado. A memória de que se trata está no discurso que olha e diz o corpo e no gesto que o corpo realiza. A memória está no corpo e no olhar para ele, o que significa que ele é sempre corpo de memória."

According to Hashiguti (2009), the body is a discursive material dimension of the memory where the discursive memory is represented by gestures, body characteristics and the other's look at it. As such, through the discursive threads of the memory, the 'travesti' body brings forward stabilized meanings that have already been said about gender and corporeality. Besides, it brings a significant materiality of bodies that have been read as belonging to another gender identity, one which does not correspond to the social identifications of trans individuals.

Thus, meanings destabilized by the existence of these individuals and further imposed meanings related to masculinity and femininity are silenced by conservative individuals who, based on Christian discourses, aim to interdict the trans subjects and their discourses. Such interdiction is a way of promoting the silence of/about trans bodies, through physical or verbal violence, as analyzed in the next piece of news.

As mentioned before, the body is traversed by language, in such a way that a piece of flesh becomes body and produces meanings because it is subjectified in the symbolic dimension. Therefore, it is also resistance, which takes place in/through language through disrupting rituals and challenging the order (PÊCHEUX, 1990 [1982]). Thus, the trans body challenges the ideological ritual by challenging the cisnormativity order and what is given about masculinity and femininity. It does so even if it means fighting a cause and suffering violence and silence, as analyzed for the following piece of news.

Travestis e Transexuais Brasileiras
 17 de outubro de 2018 · 🌐

Estamos com medo 😱 #EleNão



REVISTAFORUM.COM.BR

Aos gritos de "Bolsonaro", travesti é morta a facadas no centro de SP | Revista Fórum

😞👍😡 86 29 comentários 51 compartilhamentos

6

██████████ Bolsonaro não estava lá com certeza !
 Mas seus seguidores são influenciado por ele , principalmente por
 ele incitar a violência a figura feminina .

Curtir · Responder · 38 sem · Editado



↪ 1 resposta

██████████ Alguém conhecia ela....sabe quem e??

Curtir · Responder · 38 sem



7

██████████ Precisa pegar quem fez isso é ver se e eleitor mesmo
 de Bolsonaro pq a oposição estava programando para vários
 atentados assim só para o povo achar que era do partido dele

Curtir · Responder · 38 sem



Figure 2. Piece of news on a travesty murder
 Source: Revista Forum, 16 Oct. 2018

Translation

Brazilian Travestis and Transsexuals

17 October 2018

We are afraid 🙄 #NotHim

REVISTAFORUM.COM.BR

Amid cries of “Bolsonaro”, travesti is stabbed to death in downtown Sao Paulo | Revista Forum

29 comments 51 shares

6. Bolsonaro wasn't there for sure. But his followers are influenced by him, mainly because he incites violence against feminine figures.

Like Reply 38w Edited

1 replay

Did anyone know her? Who's she?

Like Reply 38w

7. It is necessary to catch who did this and check if they really are voters of Bolsonaro because the opposition was planning several attacks to make people believe these were deeds of his party.

Like Reply 38w

Figure 2 shows a piece of news published on the website Revista Forum on October 16th, 2018, and shared on the page *Brazilian Travestis and Transsexuals* on the following day. The murder reported in the news occurred sometime between the first and second round of the presidential run in Brazil.

According to the news, a 'travesti' was stabbed to death by four men in downtown Sao Paulo as they were yelling "Bolsonaro" and "Yes, him". They assaulted and stabbed the travesti, who eventually died in the hospital.

The image shows bloodstains in front of the now-interdicted bar where the 'travesti' was murdered. It was posted with the sayings "We're afraid" and "#NotHim". Such utterances reveal the fear of a number trans people during the elections because of then-candidate Jair Bolsonaro's violent, transphobic discourses. The hashtag was also recurrent in posts against his campaign.

The post also shared the news from Revista Forum, which shows the silence about the trans bodies. Such silence is derived from an attempt to conceal, as the body no longer produces meanings, no longer signifies. But there is a remainder, as if something still produces meanings: the blood on the floor, the police report, and the comments on the news on social media. Thus, a body that is no longer there is turned into discourse, resisting concealment.

I now focus on the comments on this piece of news.

In DS 6, the commenter ratifies the utterances of fear because of the current conjecture. Mr. Bolsonaro was not there at the moment of the murder, but the comment implies that he have incited his voters to violence against the female figure. His misogynistic and LGBTI-phobic discourses have influenced violence, especially against the LGBTI+ population, as suggested by the fact that the offenders were saying "Bolsonaro" and "Yes, him".

DS 7 shows a discourse clash: the commenter questions if the 'travesti' murderers were really Bolsonaro supporters because, according to him, "the opposition was preparing several attacks like this just for the people to think that these were deeds of his [Bolsonaro's] party". In saying that, the commenter silences the death of another trans person in Brazil, as if it were just a political dispute, with parties financing violence to win the polls. The commenter also conceals Mr. Bolsonaro's widely known discourses of hate and intolerance that have boosted disputes of meanings about gender, body and sexuality during the election time.

The dispute of discursivizations about gender in this period fractures well-grounded meanings about what it is to be a man, what it is to be a woman. It indicates that politics goes way beyond political disputes and management issues, as it pervades the everyday lives of all individuals.

As shown in these analyses, even leading the LGBTI+ movement, the trans individuals are the first ones to be hit and have their basic rights withdrawn, including their freedom of expression and right to life. However, there will always be room for breaking ideological filiations and to "dare to rebel", as Pecheux once said. Trans bodies as a significant materiality, traversed through language, make it possible to displace expected meanings by uttering other words instead of those words that are probable or predictable (MARIANI, 1996).

Part 3. Between discursive threads and knots

Body is the individual's "residence", where the gender construction is produced in the real-symbolic-imaginary relationship:

Gender is an operational programming capable of triggering a myriad of sensory perceptions in the form of affection, desires, actions, beliefs and identities. [...] To produce gender implicates a set of

naturalization/denaturalization and identification/de-identification strategies.¹⁰ (PRECIADO, 2018, p. 127-128, translated from Portuguese)

From a discourse perspective, gender is a construction, which also have to do with affection, identity, desire, and social practices. As pointed out by Preciado (2018), it implicates a strategy of (de)naturalization and (de)identification of meanings already imposed on certain bodies and individuals.

The discourse clash on gender, as triggered in 2018 presidential running in Brazil, points to the importance of the topic, which destabilizes evidences about man and woman categories and how politics is present in our lives. Despite silences, transphobic discourses and violence, trans bodies and individuals resist, leave their print, and produce meanings and fractures in the ideological ritual. Being a trans-subject in a society that aims at their concealment/silence is a resistance act in/through the body, one which displaces pre-established meanings of bodies that wish to strut about without any interdiction, censure or fear of being found in a river as was Marsha P. Johnson.

References

FOUCAULT, M. Orders of discourse. *Soc. Sci. Inform.*, v. 10, n. 2, p. 7-30, 1971.

FOUCAULT, M. **Vigiar e punir**: nascimento da prisão. Trad. de Raquel Ramallete. 42. ed. Petrópolis: Vozes, 2014[1975].

FOUCAULT, M. **A ordem do discurso**: aula inaugural no Collège de France, pronunciada em 2 de dezembro de 1970. Tradução de Laura Sampaio. 24. ed. São Paulo: Edições Loyola, 2014.

FOUCAULT, M. **História da sexualidade 1**: A vontade de saber. Trad. de Maria Thereza da Costa Albuquerque e J. A. Guilhon Albuquerque. 6. ed. Rio de Janeiro/São Paulo: Paz e Terra, 2017.

GRIGOLETTO, E. O discurso dos ambientes virtuais de aprendizagem: entre a interação e a interlocução. *In*: GRIGOLETTO, E.; DE NARDI, F. S.; SCHONS, C.R. (Org.) **Discursos em rede**: práticas de (re)produção, movimentos de resistência e constituição de subjetividades no ciberespaço. Recife: UFPE, 2011.

LEANDRO-FERREIRA, M. C. Discurso: conceito em movimento. *In*: LEANDRO-FERREIRA, M. C. **Oficinas de análise do discurso**: conceitos em movimento. Campinas: Pontes Editores, 2015.

¹⁰ Original: "O gênero é uma programação operacional capaz de desencadear uma proliferação de percepções sensoriais sobre forma de afetos, desejos, ações, crenças e identidade. [...] produzir gênero implica um conjunto de estratégias de naturalização/desnaturalização e identificação/desidentificação."

HASHIGUTI, S. **Corpo de memória**. Tese de doutorado. Campinas, SP: 2008.

MARIANI, B. **O comunismo imaginário**. Práticas discursivas da imprensa sobre o PCB (1922-1989). 1996. Tese (Doutorado), Universidade de Campinas, Campinas, 1996.

ORLANDI, E. **As formas do silêncio**: no movimento dos sentidos. 4. ed. Campinas: Unicamp, 2013.

PÊCHEUX, M. **Semântica e discurso**: uma crítica à afirmação do óbvio. 3. ed. Campinas: Unicamp, 2009[1975].

PÊCHEUX, M. Delimitações, inversões, deslocamentos. Trad. de José Horta Nunes. **Cad. Est. Ling.**, Campinas, n. 19, jul.-dez, p. 7-24, 1990[1982].

PRECIADO, B. P. **Testo junkie**: sexo, drogas e biopolítica na era farmacopornográfica. Trad. de Maria Paula Gurgel Ribeiro. São Paulo: N-1 Edições, 2018.

ROUDINESCO, E.; PLON, M. **Dicionário de Psicanálise**. Trad. de Vera Ribeiro, Lucy Magalhães. Rio de Janeiro: Zahar, 1998.

Submitted on: 09.29.2019

Accepted on: 01.29.2020