


FREE JOURNALISTS COLLECTIVE: independence affirmed in everyday life

COLETIVO JORNALISTAS LIVRES: a independência afirmada no cotidiano
PERIODISTA COLECTIVO LIBRE: independencia afirmada en la vida cotidiana

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ABSTRACT:

This article addresses the independent media after the 2013 demonstrations in Brazil, taking as object of analysis the notion of independence built by the collective Jornalistas Livres (Free Journalists) in their daily lives, understood here as central to the social structures (re) production and change, in order to understand how communication is inscribed in the conquest, maintenance and dispute of hegemony. It is understood here that an independent media is not unique, assuming, on the contrary, different meanings in several contexts. Our objective give focus to the idea of independence, discussing potentialities and limitations to the initiatives that operate under this logic. Anchored in a critical and dialectical perspective, we established as methodological procedures the bibliographic review, documentary survey and discourse analysis.

KEYWORDS: Independent Media; Everyday Life; Free Journalists; Counter-hegemony; Alternative communication.

Introduction

The debate about an independent media is controversial and questionable. As a concept, its meaning is relational, that is, there is no determined essence, assuming different understandings in different contexts. Even so, it is a term that, for a long time, has been disputed in the Communication field. Karppinen and Moe (2016) argue that its use is motivated, above all, by a need to legitimize the journalistic discourse, being claimed also by the hegemonic media companies. Facing multiple interpretations and possible uses, it is necessary to define which independent media we are dealing with in this work.

The notion of independence, as well as, the ideas of objectivity and impartiality have been, throughout history, in the discourse of large media companies and together

they constitute a social representation of the activity and their professionals. This activation, as already mentioned, is not by chance. On the contrary, it aims to establish a privileged space for journalistic narratives as truth or “reality” of the facts (Traquina, 2005). In contrast to the hegemonic claim of the term, there are the uses observed in the field of alternative communication.

From the Catalog of Theses and Dissertations of Capes (Capes, 2020), it is possible to note two great moments of discussions on the theme in Brazil since the turn of the century: the first on the performance of the Independent Media Center (CMI) in the country, around the 2000s; and another current one, based on the network's native media initiatives that have been emerging and / or gaining visibility after the June 2013 demonstrations.

Thus, this work integrates the second moment, seeking to understand the characteristics - considering the potential and the limits - of the idea of independent media claimed by alternative collectives of communication. We understand that the same criticism made of the term alternative communication - alternative to what? (Downing, 2002) - can be applied in independent media. After all, is it independent in relation to what or who?

Taking this issue as central, our objective is to stress the idea of independence, discussing the potentials and limitations placed on collectives that operate under this logic. We share Karppinen and Moe's (2016) view of the impossibility of absolute independence, “instead, any media will always have to deal with a multitude of different types of restrictions and external influences” (p. 112). From the readings of Heller (2011), we can understand that the degree of influence of these variables is directly related to the material and symbolic conditions of a given historical period, that is, social, political and cultural factors are decisive to expand or restrict the possibilities of a more or less autonomous media.

Anchored in the notion of hegemony found in Gramsci, this work seeks to discuss the notion of independence based on the political and social articulations established by the collective, in direct dialogue with the defended ideas and, also, with the means for economic sustainability. For this purpose, we took as a subject of analysis the collective *Jornalistas Livres*, created in March 2015 during a series of demonstrations for and against the government of Dilma Rousseff (PT). The initiative emerges as a response to the socio-political events of the period, as a counterpoint to the coverage undertaken by the traditional media (*Jornalistas Livres*, 2020, w/p).

We realized, from Heller (2011), that the collective - as well as the post-2013 independent media movement - must be understood as a result of a historical process, but also as a producer of this story. This (Marxist) perspective establishes the starting point for the observations pointed out in this work. The adopted methodology is based on bibliographic and documentary research, using the French discourse analysis as an analytical tool.

The life of all men

Daily life is the space in which human beings develop their individuality, their personality and, concomitantly, in which they assimilate the world (that is, their historical and social reality). It is from this dialogue, between the particular and the universal, that the subjects orient themselves, relate and act in a concrete way. The mediation between the world and the individual is not only done through daily life, but also through the media, in a "relationship of mutual conditioning, or even determination" (Cabral & Schneider, 2019, p. 139). In other words, we can understand that the media play a role in the (re) production or transformation of the social structure as it appears, as well as the material conditions of that structure are decisive for the configuration of these media.

Thus, we bring the studies about the everyday life in this research for two reasons: a) to broaden our perception of everyday life, lived in its potentialities and limitations by everyone - including those who seek, either through communication or other means, to contest or break with the social and ideological articulations of the ruling class; b) reflect on the possibilities of social transformation of reality, with an emphasis on the field of communication (alternative). It is necessary, first, that we understand how everyday life is articulated, a space in which the producer and the collective are immersed.

For Heller (2011, p. 31), "everyday life is the life of every man. Everyone lives it, without any exception, whatever their position in the division of intellectual and physical labor". This everyday life is presented in a heterogeneous and hierarchical way, fundamental characteristics for a normal understanding (and experience) and for the simultaneous functioning of other spheres of life. It is precisely these characteristics that conduct the individual to participate in everyday life with all its capabilities, so that none of them will be fully realized, either due to the lack of time or the material conditions of a given period. Thus, according to Heller (2011), the subject can be understood as someone with undeveloped potentials.

The perception of the individual as an underdeveloped being is also pointed out (although with its specificities) in the works of the sociologist Henri Lefebvre and the educator Paulo Freire. The dehumanization of man is a historical truth, "it is not, however, a given destiny, but results from an unjust order that generates violence from the oppressors and this, the lesser being" (Freire, 2003, p. 30). Such dehumanization, according to the Brazilian author, is not only found among the oppressed, but also, although in a different way, among the oppressors.

For Lefebvre, the appearance of this heterogeneous and hierarchical everyday life, which limits the development of human potentialities, is directly related to the establishment of modernity. Based on the author's work, Lacombe affirms that "the modern establishes man's domination over nature, over the world and over life itself, but this is an alienated domain in which man finds himself prisoner of his own domination and of your own life" (2008, pp. 149-150). The French sociologist calls attention to the observed irrationalities, which were not manifested in the high philosophical spheres, but in everyday life. In this way, the modern would be the place of tragedy, but it would be, simultaneously, the space of possible virtualities with a view to overcoming alienation.

In his critique of everyday life, Lefebvre explains that alienation "means and takes place as the exploitation and domination of man by man (social and political dimension) that turns possible freedom into real and concrete fetters." (Lacombe, 2008, p. 155). The power of some human beings over others, however, is not the same at all times and does not affect everyone in the same way (Heller, 2011), that is, the position occupied by the individual in society, as well as the material conditions of society, are decisive for the offer, restriction or limitation of opportunities.

Alienation exists when there is an abyss between human-generic development and the development possibilities of human individuals, between human-generic production and the individual's conscious participation in that production. This abyss did not have the same depth at all times or for all social strata (...) but in modern capitalism, it has deepened beyond measure. (Heller, 2011, p. 58).

Alienation has always existed, but for Lefebvre and Heller, the phenomenon intensified profoundly with the development of capitalism, beginning to penetrate other spheres of life, where it is not necessary or desirable. This means that there are fields in which alienation is not only essential for its functioning, but inevitable. The problem lies in its extension beyond these limits, creating gaps in areas whose

greatness depends on the suspension of everyday life, such as science and the arts, for example (Cabral & Schneider, 2019). Or even, when it establishes itself absolutely on the daily experience, in order to make alternatives impossible or to make impossible a margin of movement for the individual, as indicated by Heller (2011, p. 56):

There is no everyday life without spontaneity, pragmatism, economism, analogy, precedents, provisional judgment, ultra-generalization, mimesis and intonation. But the necessary forms of structure and thinking of everyday life must not crystallize in absolutes, but the individual must leave a margin of movement and possibilities of explicitness (...) if these forms are absolutized, failing to allow a margin of movement, we find ourselves facing the alienation of everyday life.

Although conducive to alienation, everyday life is not necessarily alienated. This means that the abyss mentioned by Heller (2011) is not a barrier to overcome. From his work, we can understand that there are no strict limits between everyday thinking and that one oriented to break it (or contest it), as well as, different types (and means) of transition. However, the author emphasizes that in the more or less alienated life of most men, the abyss has always prevailed. However, Heller (2011), Freire (2003) and Lefebvre (apud Lacombe, 2008) point out in their works possible paths for a more conscious attitude towards the situation of alienation that crosses (and delimits) the lives of men. We will talk briefly about these notes and how they can relate to communication.

In the daily life observed by Lefebvre, the products of the cultural industry assume a decisive role in daily life, satisfying real needs of dream and enjoyment generated by a sharp division of labor and an accelerated production rhythm. In a text written in 1991, the French author already pointed to the use of consumption as a tool for structuring (and programming) everyday life (apud Cabral & Schneider, 2019), emptying the possibilities of emancipation and freedom. Noting the potential power of culture and the media, Lefebvre warned about the need for a cultural revolution, "as an act of appropriating life in the transformation of the elements that define and constitute its drama" (Lacombe, 2008, p. 168).

An important issue punctuated by Cabral and Schneider (2019), who also analyze Lefebvre's work, is the direction given to everyday cultural products. In other words, the role played by culture and communication is not by chance, it aims to meet the needs of profit and maintenance of the power of the ruling class. A similar perspective is defended by Paulo Freire (2003), when presenting the formal educational system as an

impediment to the liberation of men and an instrument of (re) production of the oppressive system. We can broaden this understanding by also encompassing the media, since in capitalist societies the communication systems - especially mass media - assume a symbolic-ideological function very close to that of educational systems.

For Paulo Freire (2003), the path to the development of men's potential - liberation - is closely related to the alliance between thought and conscious praxis, through an emancipatory and popular pedagogy developed with the people. It is in the search process itself that man recreates and frees himself. In this way, communication is potentially allied, if its construction is based on the horizontal dialogue among the oppressed. It cannot be liberated using the same strategies and procedures used to dominate (Freire, 2003), but one must seek to dispute hegemonic narratives that surround science, technology and culture, as these spheres of life are significant to conformation (or transformation) of structures and thoughts of a given society.

Heller (2011), on the other hand, despite pointing out two possible variables for overcoming alienation - suspension of everyday life and conduct of life -, is more pessimistic in relation to the degree of distance from everyday life that can be achieved. Science and art, for the author, are the most lasting ways to rise above the everyday life, because the essence of art brings with it "humanity's self-awareness and memory" (2011, p. 43), while science does it by removing man and nature from its center of analysis. This means that art and science can be understood as paths to the consciousness of the generic man, suspending - at least temporarily - individual particularity. However, the filmmakers' own immersion in everyday life implies certain mediations that affect, on some level, the objectification of production.

Conduct of life cannot become a universal social possibility unless alienation is abolished and overcome. But it is not impossible to be committed to life conduction even while the general economic and social conditions still favor alienation. In this case, life conduction becomes representative, a challenge to dehumanization (Heller, 2011, p. 61).

The notion proposed by the author recognizes the possibilities present in everyday life, taking this as a space not necessarily alienated, which leaves the individual a margin of movement. However, life conduction, as presented by the author, becomes an action of partial transformation aimed at existence (and resistance) rather than a broad transformation of society. This device is, therefore, an individual or small group tactic and not a universal or revolutionary solution.

In different ways, Heller, Lefebvre and Freire sought to affirm everyday life as a complex space for mediation between man and the world (social and historical), marked by constant disputes. The subject is not manipulated by the structures and thoughts of everyday life, nor does he act apart from his daily life. It is in this everyday life, lived in an unthinkable way, but equally central to the historical perspective, that subject and world interpret and (mutually) mean each other.

The discussions on the theme of everyday life brought here seek to delimit that there is a material structure that conditions potentialities and limitations, that embraces all men, including those who carry out projects that intend to contest or oppose the dominant order, such as the independent media, for example. Communication collectives are immersed in a complex daily life, with forms of organization and thinking susceptible to alienation, marked by disputes, but which also offer an alternative and possible margin for movement.

Media, hegemony and opposition

As mentioned earlier, everyday life is ruled by constant power struggles that take place - in the Marxist approach - on two levels: the material and the symbolic or, in the terms used in the works of Marx and his successors, structure (or base) and superstructure. The first deals with everything that relates to the forces of production, such as the means to produce and the workers themselves. The second, on the other hand, can be perceived as the ideological, political and legal apparatus, built (and constantly rebuilt) by the class that holds power (Williams, 2011).

When analyzing the clashes for hegemony, Gramsci distinguishes two spheres within the superstructures. The first is represented by political society, a set of mechanisms through which the ruling class has a legal monopoly on repression and violence, identified with the coercive apparatus under the control of bureaucratic groups united with the armed and police forces and with enforcement of the laws (...). The other sphere is civil society, which designates the set of institutions responsible for the elaboration and propagation of ideologies as conceptions of the world, comprising the school system, the Church, and political parties (Moraes, 2010, p. 57).

The term hegemony first appeared in a journalistic text signed by Lenin in 1905, but it was in the works of the Italian philosopher Antônio Gramsci that it gained centrality and prominence (Gruppi, 1978). For him, the conquest (and conservation) of hegemony does not happen through simple coercitive or ideological manipulation, but it develops at deeper levels through the construction of consensus. In this way, the

arrival of a class to power is directly linked to its ability to lead, politically and culturally, the collective desires.

Dênis de Moraes, one of the greatest scholars of Gramsci's thought, points out that the clashes for hegemony "involve not only issues linked to the economic structure and political organization, but also involve, in the ethical-cultural plan, the expression of knowledge, practices, modes of representation and models of authority" (2010, p. 55). Thus, it constitutes a sense of reality, "an absolute sense because it is a lived reality beyond which it becomes very difficult for most members of society to move, and which covers many areas of their lives" (Williams, 2011, p. 53).

However, it is necessary to emphasize that this process cannot be understood as simple ideological manipulation. Hegemony is not unique; its own structure is complex and needs to be continuously renewed, recreated and defended. The hegemonic view makes concessions to alternative conceptions, absorbs crises and possible challenges, adapting itself in order to preserve its existence (Williams, 2011).

These disputes of meaning, according to Gramsci (2000), occur in civil society, with emphasis on the decisive role played by the media. Under the influence of hegemonic classes, institutions and elites, the press presents itself as an organization aimed at maintaining, defending and developing the theoretical and ideological basis of the dominant bloc:

(...) the bourgeois newspaper (whatever its color) is an instrument of struggle driven by ideas and interests that are in contrast to yours. Everything that is published is constantly influenced by an idea: to serve the ruling class, which is undoubtedly translated into a fact: to fight the working class (...). And, in fact, from the first to the last line, the bourgeois newspaper feels and reveals this concern. And let us not speak of those cases in which the bourgeois newspaper is silent, or misrepresents, or falsifies in order to deceive, deceive and keep the working public in ignorance (Gramsci, 2005, s / p).

In the article originally published in 1916, Gramsci tried to alert the workers to the indirect financing (through purchase) of bourgeois newspapers. In the philosopher's view, workers thoughtlessly offered a projectile to be launched "at the right time, against the working mass" (Gramsci, 2005, w/p). By choosing certain world views over others; in publicizing one subject and silencing others, media chooses and marks a political and ideological position that tends to meet the needs and interests of the ruling class, to which its leaders are closely linked.

Gramsci believed that the proletariat could rise to the ruling class through intellectual work in the party and in the social movement; through a work of critical capacity-building of the subordinate classes and capacity-building of leaders among the mass itself. Party newspapers and / or allies played a decisive role in spreading ideas, creating alliances and educating workers (and politicians). For him, the proletariat could not only come to power, but build a class hegemony.

Gramsci makes us see that hegemony is not a monolithic construction, but the result of the measurement of forces between blocks of classes in a given historical context. It can be reworked, reversed and modified, in a long process of struggles, challenges and cumulative victories (Moraes, 2010, p. 73).

The concept of counter-hegemony is later than Gramsci, appearing for the first time in the works of Raymond Williams in the 1970s. While the Italian philosopher defends a hegemony of the proletariat, Williams argues that, even without achieving it, men exist and resist within the dominant structure through alternative or contesting actions and ideas: For the author, there is a simple theoretical difference between the alternative and the opponent, that is, “between someone who merely finds a different way of living and wants to be left alone and someone who finds a way to live and wants to change society” (Williams, 2011, p. 58).

In other words, the alternative aims at changes of a partial or individual order, despite having in its existence the potential to inspire and be precedent of broader secondary transformations. The opponent, on the other hand, is characterized, above all, by dissent, by establishing the contradictory and questioning ideas and actions that, until then, seemed unison and stable. The hegemonic structure is constantly intended (and disputed) by the opponent in search of broader social transformations.

In Western societies, according to Muniz Sodré (2005), media institutions take a leading role in the clashes for hegemony. If in the first half of the last century, Gramsci (2005) already warned of the potential power of the press for the formation (and maintenance) of social structures, today this reflection becomes even more urgent with the increasingly intense insertion of the media in daily life of people. The media today assume a role as important as it was once intended for the family, the school or the church.

In opposition to the business nature of communications in Brazil, which is increasingly centralized and linked to economic elites, several initiatives are presented as an alternative to this system. The term (alternative communication) can be perceived

as a great umbrella (Costa, 2010), under which are several other types of media of a counter-hegemonic character, such as community, popular, independent groups and many others. It is important to note that the debate about these concepts is not the subject of this work.

#FreeJournalists

The need for definitions clashes with the variety and inconsistency of media initiatives that claim the term independent. Our main concern is not to take a single case as representative of the whole, therefore, we emphasize that our analysis, still in its initial stage, is centered on a specific subject: the Free Journalists collective (Jornalistas Livres, for the words in Portuguese). This is about understanding how the idea of independence is built into (by) the project. For that, we used the documental survey as a method and adopted the French discourse analysis as an analytical tool.

The French discourse analysis (AD) investigates the ideological marks of language materialized in the speeches, revealing the hidden meanings that the speaking subjects produce. According to Orlandi (2010), what is verbalized, whether orally or in writing, does not literally reveal what is being said. In order for the unspoken to be identified and understood, an in-depth analysis is necessary, based on what is said, in order to establish relationships with the context in which it was produced. Thus, in the analysis operation, the analyst has the tacit function of disassembling the discursive object to find out how it was assembled and to identify the conditions of its production. This analytical movement, according to Orlandi (2010), is carried out in three stages: 1) the text (linguistic surface); 2) discursive formation (discursive object); 3) ideological formation (discursive process). These are the procedures that we adopted in the analysis of the Free Journalists collective.

Free Journalists was created in March 2015, during a series of demonstrations against and in favor of the government of the former President Dilma Rousseff. The proposal, led by journalists, was to develop a different coverage from that undertaken by traditional media, opening places for people to be heard. For Carolina Trevisan, in a video that explains how the collective emerged (Jornalistas Livres, 2015, s / p), the group "wanted to have people at the demonstration on the floor, who could tell what was really happening there, who those people were present, what the demands were, what kind of agenda was being asked for". The collective was present both in the demonstrations that demanded the departure of the president Dilma, and in those that defended her permanence.

However, we cannot take the presence in both events as an attempt by the collective to be impartial or neutral, quite the contrary. The idea of independence that was built seems to be related much more to transparency than the absence of a political opinion (or position). It is important to note that, among the first published videos on the collective's YouTube channel, there are satirical coverage¹ of the acts in favor of impeachment and interviews with people who are members of left-wing political parties².

It is fundamental to question the degree of influence of political actors in the work developed and we recognize that, in this first essay, it proves to be a limitation. However, the discussions held so far allow us to affirm that it is not possible to practice an absolutely free or neutral communication, despite the discourse of impartiality being a dogma repeated to exhaustion by many vehicles. Neutrality is not usually a principle pursued by the independent media (Bastos & Costa, 2018), which does not mean that it is necessarily linked to groups and / or political actors. A common posture observed in this type of collective is precisely the (search for) the absence of institutional links with companies, governments or parties.

In challenging the ideas of impartiality, neutrality and objectivity, the collective Free Journalists denies, consequently, a supposed separation between the filmmakers and the constructed narratives. Furthermore, it distances itself from the common position adopted by the hegemonic vehicles, assuming that the cancelation of his individuality and his everyday life is unattainable to the subject who works in the coverage. Affirming such an implication does not necessarily denote an openness to subjectivism, but it marks out to the public that the collective and the director have their own side. In other words, the independence claimed by this type of initiative is based mainly on the principle of transparency.

(...) we do not observe the facts as if we were distant and alienated from them. We know that the media, journalism and journalists directly interfere with what we document, report and interpret. We do

¹ Videos published about favorable acts to the impeachment used narrative elements that compare the events to 1964 conservative demonstrations, with ironies about contradictions on demonstrators demands. The video "Coração vermelho" called attention specially, because of the used satirical and irony discourses. The video is available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M318tRK07kw>. Acesso em: 05/09/2019.

² Personalities like Marcelo Freixo (Psol), Fernando Haddad (PT) and Jandira Feghali (PCdoB) integrate a series of interviews realized in 2015 as part of a campaign for media democratization and defense of free media. Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5haDcVA4qho>; <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5131JF7dzo>; https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_8mPDXYksJM. Acesso em: 19/09/2020.

not cancel ourselves out, we do not delete ourselves from photographs, we do not hide behind facts to manipulate them. We assume that we are active participants in the facts we report. We participate in reality as citizens driven by the collective interest: transparent, true, open, democratic (Jornalistas Livres, 2020, w / p).

According to the conception proposed by Thompson, “symbolic contesting forms are not ideological” (2011, p. 90), this is because the author understands that ideology “is, by nature, hegemonic, in the sense that it, necessarily, serves to establish and to sustain relations of domination and, with that, it serves to reproduce the social order that favors dominant individuals and groups” (2011, pp. 90-91). From this, we can infer that, by opening space for silenced or criminalized themes and characters, one intends to question the dominant structure, offering stories and views that are alternative to those presented by (the) large communication companies.

Silva (2017), who studies the organization and financing models adopted by the independent initiatives, draws our attention to the type of coverage undertaken by the collective Free Journalists. While most of the projects are developed based on a specific theme, the group works from an agenda closer to the conventional one, with broad and representative national themes. On their website, they present themselves as a network of collaborators in defense of democracy and human rights.

Free Journalists is articulated through a network formed by several working groups in various states of the country. According to the last survey found (Silva, 2017), about 150 people, including fixed and sporadic employees, participate in the collective. Among the filmmakers, there are journalists, advertisers, cultural producers, activists, members of social movements, etc. In a presentation manifesto, available on the website, the collective affirms that the defended independence does not appear as neutrality, but through transparency and diversity:

(...) we have sides (everyone has a proper side). Individually, we are not neutral, exempt, non-partisan, white or null. Our plurality is the result of the grouping of all of us, not the internal rupture of our individual bodies and minds. (Jornalistas Livres, 2020, s / p).

The discursive tactic of Free Journalists, according to the definitions proposed by Williams (2011) has an opposing character, this because it aims to be placed as a counterpoint to the hegemonic view aiming at structural changes in society. Silva (2017) notes that the collective agenda is aligned with the agenda of social movements, producing alternative (opposing) narratives with the intention of breaking

silences and questioning reductionisms (and criminalizations). To this end, it adopts counter-information as the main strategy, explained by Lopes (2010) as:

Information whose meaning opposes interest groups and / or sets of ideas, with the purpose of unveiling, denouncing, unmasking, demoralizing, weakening or annihilating opponents, or breaking silences and deletions on certain topics, clarifying controversies and offering alternative or antagonistic points of view to the dominant discourse transmitted by the mass media (pp. 331-332).

Considering the number of participants, the scope - territorial and thematic - of the content, the reach on the networks and the financial sustainability, we can point out Free Journalists, nowadays, as one of the main independent media collectives in the country. Still, one has to think about what it means to survive exclusively online. In this scenario, it is necessary to recognize the possibilities awakened by the cheapening of devices (cell phones, semi-professional machines, tablets, etc.) and, above all, by the internet for the emergence of these actions. However, the use of the network by independent media seems to balance between power and limitation.

The power is reflected in the content production and dissemination facilities, which are infinitely more accessible (technically and financially) than in comparison to traditional channels - TV, radio and press. Virtual networks also favor a more horizontal and collaborative management, in addition to the potential repercussions that, in some cases, exceed interest groups. This was what happened in 2013, when videos, reports and images of the demonstrations spread through social networking sites, reaching people from heterogeneous segments of society. Regarding this phenomenon, Peruzzo (2013, pp. 88-89) adds: each person "with a cell phone connected to the internet can record, interpret and broadcast, even in real time, what was happening in the public square. This counter-information is fundamental to the population's mobilization and awareness process".

However, for technical or financial reasons, there are few collectives that manage to surpass virtual performance. Part of the filmmakers believes that this exclusively online existence is a limiting factor: "what can be done to bring independent communication to the popular classes, to the portion of the population that does not have access to the internet or has it in a precarious way?" (Bastos & Costa, 2018, p. 291). In addition, it is necessary, at least, to mention the impact of the algorithms, the action of robots, the configuration of filters by companies and by the users themselves,

the purchase of personal data and advertising, which are decisive for a given content or website is successful or not on the network, that is, whether or not seen, accessed. This debate is broad and necessary, so, despite not being among the objectives of this paper, it is essential that we make such indications.

Finally, we bring the discussions on the financing of this type of project, an issue that proves to be a challenge to the emergence and maintenance of such initiatives, playing a central role in the debate on the independence sought by these collectives. The management model adopted by the independent media does not aim at profit, but at the economic sustainability of activities, with or without remuneration for the actors involved in production. The journalist Natalia Viana (2018), who works at the Public Agency, argues that this business model has been led by professionals recognized in the communication market as an alternative to large companies and the reduction of vacancies in traditional newsrooms.

However, we cannot understand independent media just as a parallel market for media professionals. On the contrary, we can observe the existence of different initiatives (Bastos & Costa, 2018; Figaro, 2018), guided by the understanding of communication as a potential space for disputes and structural changes in society.

As previously mentioned, Free Journalists is a project, originally led by journalists, but which today has participants from various professional fields. All activists involved work on a voluntary basis, with no remuneration for the work performed on the collective. Since its creation until now, the initiative has survived through collective financing via Catharsis, which raised approximately R\$ 130,000. Such resources have been used to purchase equipment, maintain the site and travel for special news coverage. The collective had a physical headquarter in the city of São Paulo (SP), which was delivered in 2018 to reduce expenses. People who participate in the financing campaign are listed on the collective's website. Among supporters, there is no name of politicians, parties, companies or government institutions.

Final considerations

We intend, throughout this work, to show how the notion of independent media cannot be seen as a given concept, with closed characteristics and definitions. On the contrary, it must be understood as something relative in terms of the historical conditions and events of its time. The idea of independence associated with the media is controversial and contested by professionals and researchers in the area of communication due to the impossibility of absolute independence.

In fact, the material reality (historical and social) experienced by the subjects, as we have argued in this work, changes their way of being and stay in the world. In this way, collaborators and their collectives themselves could not be totally independent, that is, they could not exist without establishing some kind of relationship with the social and thought structure of the historical period in which they live. We can understand that both (collective and producer) are crossed by a specific logic of their time and space, as well as, they will also cross and inscribe themselves in a historical reality.

However, what we seek to elucidate in this work is a specific understanding of the term (independent media), relating it to a type of initiative that took shape in the context of the popular manifestations of 2013 in Brazil. The moment of political and social tension favored the awakening of these actors against injustice, leading them to act with the purpose to change society somehow. Even though they have limited reach, the existence of these initiatives is fundamental in the struggle for more plurality in the media.

Based on what has been observed, we can affirm that there is not a single independent media, but rather a broad and diverse set that claims the use of the term - in large part - as an attempt to move away (and differentiate) from hegemonic media groups. When we look at Free Journalists collective, we realize that the notion of independence they built is based mainly on the principle (and practice) of transparency. In addition, there is a concern and effort not to be tied to institutions or people that may compromise their editorial freedom.

Finally, we recognize that the discussions proposed in this article are broad and complex, being a challenge to weave them in this short space. Our goal is to deepen the debate started here in the next stages of the research, deepening the tension to the idea of independence. For now, this work serves as a guide to several issues to be investigated in the future.

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RESUMO:

Este artigo aborda a mídia independente após as manifestações de 2013 no Brasil, tomando como objeto de análise a noção de independência construída pelo coletivo Jornalistas Livres em seu cotidiano, entendido aqui como central para a (re)produção e transformação das estruturas sociais, a fim de compreender como a comunicação se inscreve na conquista, manutenção e disputa da hegemonia. Compreende-se aqui que uma mídia independente não é única, assumindo, pelo contrário, significados diferentes em variados contextos. Nosso objetivo é tencionar a ideia de independência, discutindo potencialidades e limitações às iniciativas que operam sob essa lógica. Acorados em uma perspectiva crítica e dialética, estabelecemos como procedimentos metodológicos a revisão bibliográfica, o levantamento documental e a análise de discurso.

PALAVRAS-CHAVES: Mídia independente; Cotidiano; Jornalistas livres; Contra-hegemonia; Comunicação alternativa.

RESUMEN:

Este artículo trata de los medios independientes después de las manifestaciones de 2013 en Brasil, tomando como objeto de análisis la noción de independencia construida por el colectivo Jornalistas Livres (Periodistas Libres) en su vida cotidiana, entendida aquí como central para la (re)producción y cambio de las estructuras sociales, con el fin de comprender cómo se inscribe la comunicación en la conquista, mantenimiento y disputa de la hegemonía. Aquí se entiende que un medio independiente no es único, suponiendo, por el contrario, diferentes significados en variados contextos. Nuestro objetivo trata en especial la idea de independencia, discutiendo las potencialidades y limitaciones de las iniciativas que operan bajo esta lógica. Anclados en una perspectiva crítica y dialéctica, establecimos como procedimientos metodológicos la revisión bibliográfica, la encuesta documental y el análisis de discurso.

PALABRAS-CLAVES: Medios independientes; Vida cotidiana; Periodistas Libres; contra-hegemonía; Comunicación alternativa