



# Chapter 2

## Truth effects in the us justification of the wars on drugs and terror

  <https://doi.org/10.56238/methofocusinterv1-002>

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### ABSTRACT

In this communication, we intend to discuss aspects of the North American interventionist policy. Based on authors such as Frédéric Gros, Michel Foucault, and Tzvetan Todorov, in particular, through the mobilization of concepts such as "power", "knowledge", "territory" and "truth", the statement is discussed, exploring the construction of the justification of the war, the spectacularization of history and politics (GREGOLIN, 2003), the politicization of the law, the foreigner as a synonym of barbarism. Having presented the research problem, a discussion is made on the relationship between discourse, politics, war, and truth. The objective is to show how the United States of America treats other nations, ranking places in terms of values in such a way that it separates territories between civilized and barbarians, leaving the solution to problems of violence to the exogenous subject. In other words, while Americans are civilized and competent, bearers of dignified values, such as honesty and civilization, foreigners are barbaric

and incapable, thus naturalizing crime and savagery. The former has the mission of rescuing the latter from their anomalous condition. Scholars such as Todorov (2003, 2010), Gros (2009), Rodrigues (2004, 2012), and Amaral (2010) support our understanding of the "dangers" spread by the media about controversial regions due to conflicts between "savages" and "civilized", war on terror, narco-terrorism. We live in situations that we cannot call a state of authentic war or a state of pure peace, but a state of violence (GROS, 2009). The global political climate is one of latent conflict with occasional interventions in the name of planetary security. According to Herz (apud AMARAL, p.17), since the end of the Cold War, US security policy for Latin America, especially for the Brazil/Argentina/Paraguay triple border, has been based on the rhetoric of war and militarization of politics. The analysis of the conditions for the production of knowledge in its relations with the powers that be allows an enunciative analysis in the terms defended by Foucault, that is, historical (2009, p. 124).

**Keywords:** Effects of Truth. North American Speech. States of Violence.

*Ser ou não ser, não importa. O que importa é o que o jornal diz, o que o jornal quer. O jornal pode transformar um Judas em Cristo e vice-versa. Um repórter de setor pode, com um pé nas costas, transformar um Judas em Cristo. E na sexta estaremos beijando os pés do Judas. E no sábado malhando o Cristo.*

*(Amado Ribeiro/Asfalto Selvagem/Nelson Rodrigues)*

## **1 LIFE AS IT (IS) SEEMS TO BE**

In this epigraph, taken from the serial-novel *Asfalto Selvagem*, we have an idea of how Nelson Rodrigues understood the fabrication of truth by the Brazilian press of his time. He deserves to be heard on this issue, as he was the son of a journalist and had worked in newspapers since he was a teenager.

Despite his reactionary political positions and a certain degree of stereotyping of the condition of women, the journalist, and playwright famous for the chronicles-short stories of *A Vida Como Ela É...* produces, through his famous character, the journalist Amado Ribeiro, what we risk calling of "naked truth" about the role of the press in the construction and/or destruction of images.

The development of this thesis will become clearer in the play *O Beijo No Asfalto*. A conspiracy drawn up jointly by the police and the press manages to ruin the life of a peaceful citizen based on the human gesture of granting a kiss to another peaceful citizen about to die after being run over.

In *Boca de Ouro* we have three versions of the protagonist's life told by his rejected lover. As Guiomar's emotional state changes, *Boca de Ouro* goes from devil to saint, passing through a certain degree of indifference. It is the voice of Nelson Rodrigues trying to light an alert in the tendency of credibility of the viewer/reader.

Returning to the novel-feuilleton that became audiovisual on Rede Globo screens in 1995 through the series *Engraçadinha - Seus Amores e Seus Pecados* adapted by Leopoldo Serran and Carlos Gerbase and directed by João Henrique Jardim and Denise Saraceni.

We have recurring themes in the work of Nelson Rodrigues, such as the questionable virtue of members of the press, police, medicine, politics, and the church. We also have some progress concerning the homoaffective issue if we consider the legitimacy of the love shown by Letícia to *Engraçadinha* and the phrase repeated tirelessly by the former: "it's not tara, it's love".

### **1) Truth Effects**

Considering the degrees of objectivity of the various discursive fields (religion, art, philosophy, politics, journalism, and science), depending on our tendencies towards the logical or intuitive side, we tend to attribute a greater character of objectivity to scientific or religious discourse:

In the series *Big Bang Theory*, we have hectic discussions between two typical characters of logical and intuitive discourse. Leonard's mother is a psychiatrist and is vain and cold in her various relationships with family and friends. Sheldon's mother is a gospel worker and is warm and suspicious in interactions.

Usually, when they are in the same room, Leonard's mother is irritated by Sheldon's mother's fanaticism and orders him to read a book other than the bible. Sheldon's mother responds that she will read it as soon as God writes another one.

The concept of truth for Foucault is related to the concepts of knowledge and power. Veridiction is attributed to subjects and institutions that carry legitimized knowledge in various disciplines. More important than the content (what is said) is the form (who says it, where it says it, to whom it says it):

By "truth", understand a set of regulated procedures for the production, law, distribution, circulation, and functioning of statements.

"Truth" is circularly linked to systems of power, which produce and support it, and to effects of power which it induces and which produce it. "Regime" of truth. (FOUCAULT, 2008, p. 14)

For Foucault, there are no true or false discourses, but discursive practices that produce an effect of truth. If we want to understand how these effects are produced, we need to analyze the context of production, the authorized subject, and the public to whom the utterance is addressed.

## 2) North American Speech

The United States exerts ideological, economic, and political influence in several countries in the western world, mainly, and eastern, in a less intense way. The most accentuated theme that underpins this philosophy is liberalism. This is based on: freedom, equality, property, individualism, and democracy.

Meritocracy is the flag that sustains liberalism. This form of valuation was consolidated with the French Revolution and the promise of careers open to talent. We can resume Kant, considering that Foucault considers him a current author, due to the argumentative strength of his proposals and the influence he exerts on Philosophy and Law.

Since the advent of Stendhal's "The Red and the Black", Balzac's "Father Goriot" and Flaubert's "Madame Bovary", we have had the enactment of "victory on its own merits" that resembles the American dream of being a "winner". in life," someone who overcomes obstacles and moves from poverty to prosperity.

In addition to meritocracy, derived from political philosophy, another foundation of American identity deserves reflection, the religious-political sermon called jeremiada. This began as the commitment of the American people to a divine entity and extended to the pact between the American nation and its highest leader. It is the belief in the myth of the people chosen by God to bring justice to all corners of the world:

(...) We Americans are the chosen people - the Israel of our time -; with us, we carry the ark of the world's freedoms. Seventy years ago we escaped the yoke; and, along with our birth certificate - embracing an entire continent from the earth - God has given us, by way of a future inheritance, the wide dominions of the political heathens, who are yet to come and recline in the shadow of our ark without let hands full of blood rise. God has predestined us, humanity's hopes, to the great achievements of our race; and the great things we feel in our souls. The other nations will soon be

behind us. We are the pioneers of the world; the vanguard, sent through the wild lands of the never tried, to open a new path in the New World that is ours (MELVILLE, 2021, p. 277).

Despite the advent of the Enlightenment and the strengthening of logical thinking, science, and demonstrable truths, we perceive that mythological thinking, original religious narratives, and passionate adherences are far from disappearing. Fake news or fake news is the most common example of manipulation of the truth in the name of promoting idols and/or destroying reputations.

### 3) States of Violence

Considering the rise of reactionary ideologies and rulers in several countries, we see a growing tendency towards the pathos of hatred, characteristic of fascist regimes. Mascaro discusses the three main characteristics of the philosophy of law: legal positivism, especially the work of Kant (focus on the present and pathos of indifference), non-legal positivism, mainly Carl Schmitt's theory (focus on the past and pathos of hatred), and critical theory, mostly Marxism (focus on the future and pathos of hope).

The 2019 North American film illustrates reactionary ideological traits in current politics. Starting from biographical clippings of Dick Cheney, we come into contact with historical-political issues in the US and the world.

The wife of the former US vice president is represented as having a strong personal influence on Cheney. There is a scene where Cheney is being interviewed and she advises him to fight the welfare state.

Another scene, of the many interesting ones, is the one right after Cheney is admitted to the hospital, which makes his campaign trip unfeasible. His wife gives a strong and persuasive speech to an audience made up of people from her home state. This time, the target is the affirmative action policy that, according to her, speaking on behalf of the republican party, threatens "our jobs".

By placing herself as equal to her audience, she enters the fascist game of "us and them" politics, as Stanley debates in his book *How Fascism Works*. It is opportune to discuss the concept of fascism also from the point of view of the Marxist philosophy of law. In this perspective, we will have support from the work of Mascaro, *Philosophy of Law*.

## 2 FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

To Foucault (1979, p.241), power is defined as "relationships of force administered through tactics and strategy that oscillate between domination and resistance". In other words, we conceptualize power as relationships that involve tension and conflict, submission and transgression of subjects with political, economic, and ideological forces, with other subjects, and with themselves.

The "subject" is understood here as a function, a position occupied by the individual. In other words, when Pêcheux states: "there is no discourse without a subject and there is no subject without ideology: the individual is addressed as a subject by ideology and that is how language makes sense" (PÊCHEUX, 1975, p 17), he is telling us that the individual, when "speaking", does so from a subject position.

To understand how power relations between subjects are processed, we need to analyze discourses. These are the point of intersection between language and ideology, and the basis of ideological representations in the connection between man and the world. Discourse is the bridge between the linguistic and the non-linguistic, due to the historical-social conditions of production being constitutive of the production of meaning.

The exercise of the discourse analyst is close to that of the historian because, both in Pêcheux (2002) and in Burke (1992), discourse is constituted as contradictory structures, which claim interpretative descriptions, and as dispersed events, which imply descriptive interpretations:

There was a time when archeology, as a discipline of mute monuments, inert traces, objects without context, and things left by the past, turned to history and only took on meaning through the re-establishment of a historical discourse; we could say, playing a little with words, that history, nowadays, turns to archeology – to the intrinsic description of the monument. (FOUCAULT, 2009, p.8).

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