Chapter 119

The movements of power relations in the "christmas special" of the Porta Dos Fundos

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ABSTRACT
This work has as corpus the Christmas special "The first temptation of Christ", the humor collective Portas dos fundos, and aims to analyze the movements of power relations in production, taking into account the attack that the producer suffered after the exhibition on Netflix. The main theoretical foundation is Foucault to explain about regimes of look and power relations, but mbembe's theory of necropolitics was also used, among other theorists. We came to the conclusion that the violent act was encouraged by hate speech about the LGBTQI+ community strengthened after the 2018 election, in which extremists found themselves empowered by having a representative in power. We realized that the policy that is established is a policy of death/violence, which discriminates against homosexuals because it is not biologically within a conception of normality and that favors acts like this to happen.

Keywords: Back doors; power relations; Foucault.

1 INTRODUCTION

Art shows being cancelled, paintings being taken from exhibition because they are considered inappropriate, aggressive or too subversive, musicians and other artists suffering persecution and boycott and many other movements that try to prevent the dissemination of works of art is something we are witnessing with some frequency in recent times. However, the censorship of art is not something new, we can even observe how it was seen by Plato (2006) in The Republic. The main criticism of the philosopher is that the mímesis distances itself from what is true, being, according to him, necessary that censors of the State review all poetic / artistic content, because only through the laws is it possible to say that something is legitimate, fair, beautiful and honest. His defense for such a thought is that in this way he would be protecting beings without reason.

The reality is that art provides other ways of seeing and dealing with the most varied forms of existence, it is a form of power that resists authoritarian regimes, so, says Darnton (2016), it is an activity that is constantly controlled, because, he points out, only in this way is it possible to maintain control and order of a system, this is, therefore, a form of power maintenance. This type of control has already been used by different political regimes and has happened in different ways according to the historical and cultural context of the places where it was applied, but it has always happened. What we cannot fail to realize is that it is carried out in a more invasive way when the regime of government is more authoritarian.

We intend, however, to analyze discursively a work of the present day that received an attempt to interdict and, in the impossibility of this, a violent reaction was taken. In December 2019, the producer responsible for the Canal Porta dos Fundos was attacked after the realization of a Christmas special called
"The first temptation of Christ". In this production, Jesus Christ is supposedly homosexual (homosexuality being his first temptation), which caused there to be great disapproval of the script, leading people to act with extreme violence, throwing molotov cocktails at the producer's office in the city of Rio de Janeiro. Ironically, at no point in the video is it said in first or third person that Jesus is gay; there are only imaging clues that lead us to this interpretation.

For the analysis of this work, a contextualization will be carried out primarily on the special, in which the context of the video production and the motivations of the aggressors will be evidenced. Then some images were analyzed to understand the ways of seeing about the homosexual subject in the video of the special. Finally, the regimes of truth and the movements of the power relations that permeate this production were analyzed.

2 THE CHRISTMAS SPECIAL AND THE ATTACK: CONTEXTUALIZATION

Porta dos fundos is a Brazilian humor collective founded in 2012 that, since 2013, produced a Christmas special in which it satirizes biblical issues and addresses other sensitive themes (as they describe it), which usually bother the population, especially Christian. Every year people issue repudiation notes, or criticize the group's productions in other ways, even encouraging the boycott, but in 2019 everything got out of control. That year, the character Jesus Christ was supposedly portrayed as homosexual and this caused tempers to be changed and there was a great movement so that the video was no longer displayed or that the members of the group were penalized in some way.

The previous year, the group had started a partnership with Netflix and had already bothered with the special that end of the year, because in addition to the topics covered, being linked to streaming made the number of viewers much higher. Then, in 2019, by relating Christ's image to homosexuality, justice was triggered to remove the video from the air, with allegations that the group was making a deceitan attack on the Catholic faith, despising or ridiculing members of the religion. A group of people managed to get a judge to give a determination to remove the video, but the platform and the humor group appealed and managed to keep it accessible to viewers.

Something that needs to be emphasized is that from 2013 to 2018 there was never any direct violent reaction to the group, even when Jesus was portrayed as drinking or violent. In an interview with The Globe, Fábio Porchat, one of the main members of the group, assumes that this intense and sudden violence in 2019 is linked to the election of the new president, Jair Bolsonaro. The 2018 elections were permeated by fake news, which generated great public complackeretion and a sense of hatred for the Workers' Party (PT), which was accused of distributing bottled and beaked in penis and booklet formats that would aim to teach children to be homosexuals. This hatred has even directly affected the LGBTQI+ community, whether with violent attacks or with censorship of gender studies, which are called a prejudiced form of gender ideology. For Porchat "the Backdoor Christmas Special [was like a] bomb [shot in a manhole], only from this manhole came cockroaches, rats and monsters". He also claims to be proud to be part of a creative core that
wide open our rot and that "satires are fundamental so that a democratic society (as, by chance, is still Brazil) can laugh at itself" (OGlobo online newspaper, December 30, 2019).

The group that took over the attack on the production company is from a far-right movement entitled "Nationalist Popular Insurgency Command of the Great Brazilian Integralist Family", and one of the three involved in the attack was identified. Eduardo Fauzi is affiliated to the PSL, party with which Bolsonaro ran for president and, upon being accused, fled to Moscow and there was arrested by Interpol, extradited and turned defendant for terrorism. The integralist movement is considered the political and fascist arm of the Catholic Church, with ultranationalist, authoritarian, conservative and traditionalist religious principles.

Homosexuality, for this group, is seen as an abomination, so the idea of having Jesus portrayed as gay greatly angered them. But there are issues that need to be clarified. First, it is not the first time that Jesus would be related to homosexuality, so what justifies this "audacity" (word used by Porchat) to act with such violence, which may even be related to terrorism? The comedian insinuates that there is connection with the president-elect and his placements with regard to religion. Second, it is not clearly said that Jesus is homosexual. Images bother more than words. What images refer us to this interpretation and how do they mean? Next we will answer these questions from the analysis of selected images in order to understand the ways of seeing and understanding the homosexual subject that resonates from the Christmas special.

3 WORDS ARE NOT NECESSARY: FROM THE REGIME(S) OF THE VER

According to Berger (1999, p.9), "see precedes words", that is, even if we make use of the words to explain the world, "seeing establishes our place in the surrounding world". In addition, our interpretation of things is affected by what we know or believe.

An image is a scene that has been recreated or played back. It is an appearance, or a set of appearances, detached from the place and time when it first made its appearance and preserved it – for a few moments or centuries. It incorporates a way of looking. (BERGER, 1999, p.11 and 12)

To talk about the images, let's first smitude the plot. The main character would be on his 40-day journey in the desert and, on his return, his family was expecting him with a surprise party. He arrives accompanied by Orlando, who is introduced as a friend. Orlando interacts with the people of the house, while Mary and Joseph tell their son that his father is actually God and that he has a mission to fulfill. In the end, Orlando is actually Lucifer and Jesus defeats him.

In the Christmas special we can "read" certain appearances not in the character of Jesus, but in Orlando, his supposed temptation. In the image of God's son there are no marks that make us think he might be gay. But what marks would that be? Society usually associates male homosexuality with the figure of "being effeminate", who has specific trejeitos and a thin voice. According to Foucault (2019b, p.233) the idea of homosexuality was historically constructed and "it was around 1870 that psychiatrists began to
constitute it as an object of medical analysis: a starting point, certainly, of a whole series of interventions and new controls”.

The image of Jesus is different, it is of someone who has spent his life doing things that were not his will and who wished to be free. He talks a lot about not respecting who he is, or his choices, but does not refer to issues of sexuality and gender. He talks about wanting to travel and play instruments. Orlando, in this case, would be where he found himself in what he wants for him, but nothing says about having a loving relationship between them. Jesus has no care, even, little moves arms, does not have a thin voice, his hair is misaligned and his appearance seems poorly cared for associating much with the figure of the "male", the opposite end of Orlando. According to Pino (2007, s.p.), the light of Butler's thoughts, is the brand of the genre that attributes meaningful existence to the subjects, qualifying them for life within cultural intelligibility. The brand of gender qualifies the subjects and gives them recognition as human and, still, is our first identity.

Berger (1999) while talking about Hals' paintings, says that the women painted by him are his reading about them. There is no doubt that the special "The first temptation of Christ" has "illustrated" Orlando so for the purpose of bothering, after all it is a satire. So this is the reading that the Back door team makes of how he is a homosexual, which is still offensive to this group, because it is a stereotyped image that society has. We noticed in the image above the position of the character's hand to fix the hair. These trejeitos are repeated in all the special. In this section specifically there is significant verbal content, because talking about "jewelry" would not be a subject typified as masculine. This characterization of what would be the image of a man and a homosexual is so strong in our society that even understanding how much making these generalizations can become dangerous, we caught ourselves doing this reading while watching the video in question. On this, Foucault (2019b, p.233) said that
 [...] that's right, we are what you say, by nature, perversion or disease, whatever you want. And if that's the way we are, let's be like this, and if you want to know what we are, we'll tell you ourselves better than you. All a literature of homosexuality, very different from libertine narratives, appears at the end of the 19th century: see Wilde or Gide. It is the strategic reversal of a "same" will of truth.

Since Orlando's image is placed with sexuality outside of heteronormality, perhaps what's unusual is that there are verbal indications that Jesus and Orlando are not only friends, but nothing is explicitly said. Moreover, it is not verbally confirmed that Orlando's sexuality is not heterosexual. Aunt Lupita (the personification of the prejudiced family member) comes to question about it, but nothing is confirmed.

Foucault (2019b) explains about the economic exploitation that there is on issues related to sexuality. In this sense, the homosexual body is transformed into merchandise, an alternative body, which is sold for "being fashionable"; there is even a terminology today for this, "Pink Money", which is the means by which products, which allow themselves to this sexual freedom, are sold, seeking to attract this audience. Right

 [...] it has contradictory effects: on the one hand, some social sectors begin to demonstrate a growing acceptance of sexual plurality, and even start to consume some of their cultural products; on the other hand, traditional sectors renew (and recrudescm) their attacks, carrying out campaigns to resume traditional family values until manifestations of extreme aggression and physical violence. (LOURO, 2001, p.542).

The very title of the video, "The first temptation of Christ" plays with this ambiguity about homosexuality, producing this possibility of reading the aggressors, who do not understand that this is how humor works and justifies (not that it is justifiable) that this is the reason for the attack on the producer of porta dos fundos. If, on the one hand, many people watched and accepted the relations placed there, others, the more conservative ones, only saw there a justification for an aggressive demonstration. We then see the power that images have and why there are people who want so much to interdict images that bring information to which they (people represented, even by those in government power) do not agree. In this sense, Marin proposes:

The powers of the image can thus be thought of above, such as the virtualities of the image, the powers of the invisible, the movement always in motion, the "force" of the poiesis always in the work and whose works-objects would be the events, never monuments. (MARIN, 1993, p.20)
The file for Foucault (2019a, p.158), is "the law of what can be said, the system that governs the appearance of utterances as singular events". These works of arts (imagery discourses) that are being prevented from circulating, which suffer violent repression or not, such as the special of the Back door, constitute themselves as an archive, that is, "the set of discourses effectively pronounced in a given time and that continue to exist through history" (REVEL, 2005, p.18) and that establishes us, within a regime of power, what we can say or what should stay out of our discursive practices.

Marin (1993) says that the image has the power to present something in place of its absence and also of authorization and legitimation. The Christmas special of the Back door legitimizes and authorizes the image of Jesus as a possible homosexual, which causes people to react badly to this issue and try to control what is said in this regard. What we must ask ourselves is the functioning of the power relations which establish silencing and interdictions and we intend to look at this next.

4 POWER RELATIONS AND THE ATTACK: regime(s) of truth(s)

The way the homosexual subject is approached in the Christmas special is related to the regime of truth placed by the market. "It is the utterances within each discourse that mark and signal what is taken for truth, in a given time and space, that is, that establish a regime of truth" (VEIGA-NETO, 2011, p.101), a truth that, according to Foucault (2019b, p.51), "does not exist outside power or without power". Thus, discourses more than permeated by power relations, are the very exercise of power that produces one knowledge about the other and makes us naturalize what is said. "Each society has its regime of truth, its "general policy" of truth: that is, the types of discourse that it welcomes and makes it function as true" (FOUCAULT, 2019b, p.52).

We realize, therefore, that there is an attempt by the market to regulate practices and control the discourses about these homosexual subjects, standardizing them, thus producing a truth about what would be more accepted in being homosexual, but being necessary to fit into a very specific type, which even segregates those who do not fit. According to Foucault (1999), the discourse about sexuality is something that is forbidden, "what is proper to modern societies is not to have condemned sex to remain in obscurity, but rather to have devoted themselves to talking about it always, valuing it as a secret" (FOUCAULT,1999, p.36), that is, it uses this subject all the time, but in a way that makes us think that it is something not to be spoken of.

This becomes an even more sensitive subject when it involves Christian religious symbols, for if there is already such silence about sex and sexuality in general, for some devotees it is inconceivable to deal on this subject to a sanctified image like Jesus. The desire for truth that arises is that Jesus could not have a sexual life and, when portrayed as homosexual still adds the pre-concept that some Christians have with homosexuality. That's exactly what we see with the reactions to the Christmas special.
With some groups even discussion on the topic is possible. Even attempts to expand the theme, to make it clear that stereotypes do not define the LGBTQI+ community, are limited only to those who are inserted in this reality and they are often not heard by society because there is already the resistance to hear directly from them who they are, how they feel etc. There's a power relationship here that we need to understand.

Power, according to Foucault, until the eighteenth century, was a sovereign power that was necessarily repressive, "it was first of all, in this type of society, the right of apprehension of things, of time, of bodies and, finally of life [...]" (FOUCAULT, 2014b, p. 146). However, with neoliberalism, there was a change in power relations, which are linked to the regulation of life. We are not talking, then, in a power that can generate death (directly not), but rather, as Pelbart (2007) states, it is a power to control the life of the population. It is from this that society distinguishes between "normal" or "abnormal", normalizing, or not, behaviors, existences, works etc. It is a power that penetrates in all spheres of our existence and controls/monitors everything. The author also clarifies that we are all at the mercy of biopolitical management, because it happens through the family, the church, the school, etc.

We must point out that "the notion of biopolitics implies a historical analysis of the framework of political rationality in which it appears, that is, the birth of liberalism" (REVEL, 2005, p.26). We are then limited to a quantity of information that reduces homosexuals into goods.

Thus, productions that work with the image of the SUBJECT LGBTQI+ usually have commercial intentions, as is the case of "The first temptation of Christ", and that figure the image of the homosexual in a stereotyped way, which often reinforces the prejudice of people.

Michel Foucault stresses the importance of understanding homosexuality within the "device of sexuality". Device, as Foucault (2007, p.244), "encompasses discourses, institutions, architectural organizations, regulatory decisions, laws, administrative measures, scientific statements, philosophical, moral, philanthropic propositions" that allow justifying and masking certain practices. Still walking with this philosopher, the device, either through discursive elements or not, can also be understood as "a type of formation that, at a given historical moment, had as its main function to respond to a historical urgency. The device therefore has a dominant strategic function." (FOUCAULT, 2007, p.244).

The scholar establishes, as we have seen, the relationship of the device of sexuality with discursive and non-discursive practices as a historical emergency, but not without the power game, as we see below:

"The device [...] it is always inscribed in a power game, being always, however, linked to one or the configurations of knowing that they are born of it, but that also condition it. This is the device: strategies of force relations supporting types of knowledge and being sustained by them" (Foucault, 2019b, p.244-246)

Speech is an exercise of power that does not take place in a single hand, but in a network and in this is resistance, because if there is power, there is resistance. In order to maintain power, foucault (2019b) says, it is necessary that it does not exercise itself as a repressive force only, but that produces things,
induces pleasure, forme to know and produces discourse. The statements linked to the media about homosexuals produce knowledge about them, when it makes them objects of knowledge, thus producing their modes of subjectivation, such as in the video, an "effeminate" homosexual. These statements are materializations of the use and functioning of the

 [...] whose positivity allows governing, since governmentality takes place in the order of consent, of the domain of the action of their bodies by others (which actually reflect power), producing behaviors and knowledge that are articulated with a set of devices and strategies capable of subjective, that is, to constitute/manufacture the subjects. By constituting the subject in this way, by constructing the very identity of individuals, the networks of power produce governable individuals through technologies of individualization and standardization. (Moreira; War, 2018, p.405)

It is within this logic of power that we can understand the concept of homosexuality to which we see circular, including in the production under analysis. Homosexual bodies and lives are controlled biopolitically so they are always under surveillance. But we still need to understand what happened so that the form of control over the image of homosexual sexuality was no longer in a disciplinary way, but then there was a need for violence.

Perhaps when thinking that they have lost control over people, it is no longer possible to control them through the ways of fear, judgment and destruction and to be able to force accept a model of non-questioning to be followed about life, habits and choices, they realized that it is no longer enough to use catchphrases, such as "you do not go to heaven", "this is not appropriate for a woman", "you will never get a husband that way" and others similar. So, to force one way of looking and seeing the other, it was necessary to adopt a policy of death/violence. We should think of this case as a necropolitical device. According to Mbembe (2016) biopower creates tools to justify mass deaths, which happens with populations that are considered different and therefore liable to die, that is, it happens through state racism that is

the paradox of biopower, therefore, this power seeks to manage life and that brings to light the right of death of reactivated sovereignty. The discourse of the war of the races, then, brings the possibility and maintenance of war. The sovereign power, in this sense, is also not extinguished with the advent of biopower, quite the contrary: the disciplinary and biopolitical faces are added through racism as a mechanism of exclusion of the abnormal. (ALVES; BARROS, 2018, p.184)

The authors talk about racism, but we can expand the idea to all those who are different from what is placed as normal, including homosexual. Those who "bother" the most, who do not fit this pattern of normativity, are the target not only of moralizing discourses but also of violence. The actors and producers of Porta dos fundo, when portraying Jesus outside the heteronormality became the target of violence, at a socio-historical moment in which anything that addressed LGBTQI+ issues ends up being banned. In other words, the hatred generated during the 2018 elections caused these extremist subjects to find motivation to act violently like those who think differently from them.
We try to understand that speeches such as "communist should receive bullet", "no one likes homosexual, only supports", "Indians are getting more and more human like us", "everyone dies, you want me to do what?" among many other statements said by President Bolsonaro, are used by extremist movements to justify their violence. In addition, these extremist movements, authorized by the current president and his allies, circulate images and sayings in great quantity and speed on numerous social networks that further spread hatred to some minority groups.

Como we can see, in this game of power, the one who stands as the sovereign of yesteryear, since he decides who should live and who should die, establishes a fictitious policy of absolute power through violence and fear through discursive practices that incite hatred among social subjects. We therefore need to understand better about state racism, which is the

A means of introducing, after all, in this domain of life that power has been entrusted with, a cut: the cut between what must live and what must die. In the biological continuum of the human species, the appearance of races, the distinction of races, the hierarchy of races, the classification of certain races as good and others, on the contrary, as inferior, all this will be a way to fragment this field of the biological of which power has taken place; a way to lag, within the population, some groups in relation to each other. (FOUCAULT, 2005, p. 289-290).

Foucault's thinking is linked to what he analyzes as a sovereign government, but if we take into account Mbembe's studies, we can say that the modern state decides to exercise its power as a form of state of exception and practices a government of death, in which they classify homosexuality as biologically reprehensible, including allegations that by not reproducing homosexuals they would be destroying the conception of family.

Between the 19th and 20th centuries, the discourse of power will seek to eliminate internal enemies directly or indirectly, these being threats to the purity and integrity of the social body. Thus, racism becomes a mechanism of all states – modern – through life politicized by biopower, defining what should live and what should die by the biological strengthening of a race or population (ALVES; BARROS, 2018, p.185).

It is this state racism that we perceive that encourages violence such as that committed against the Backdoor to happen, because allowing things like this to happen, or spreading hatred against groups that are biologically discriminated against, is an indirect way of eliminating these enemies of the social order that is desired for the adopted government policy. This government remains based on the regime of religious truth that has the homosexual as a threat to traditional families, because this has them as an enemy.

5 CONCLUSION

We are all the time controlled by speeches that are accepted or not to circulate. These discourses go not only through state control, but also through "codes" of social coexistence. In the case pointed out the attempt to interdiction and the subsequent violent act occurred due to a regime of truth that places
homosexuals as destroyers of traditional family values and therefore the discourse of homosexuality should not circulate.

We went through a period with a very great sense of freedom, where we felt that we had freedom of speech, but hate speech was condemned (starting from the legal definitions for these two terms). So we came across several movements that questioned whether the way things were being conducted was appropriate. Some thought about economics, others on how to deal with crime, others on corruption scandals. However, there was a group that did not accept the changes in the social sphere and took advantage of the discontent of the population to make their thoughts worth and that someone who represented them came to the maximum governmental power. As control over bodies only from extremist discourses was not possible, these groups began to act with violence, interfering in the subjects' right to live.

The Christmas special "The first temptation of Christ" brought what society considers different, brought to the discussion uncomfortable issues for these people who, although not in greater numbers, have a power authorization in their hands, and made it possible to reach the extremism of trying to burn down a building with a person inside (the guard). The acts of violence committed because of this episode of Porta do Fundos echoed as a crude force speech towards those who disagree with them. It is a death policy that is in place, which justifies violent actions with possible "ideals of morality and ethics".

Finally, as Foucault says, there is no power without resistance. In this sense, the special of the Back Door brings in his saying and in his show the provocation, the discomfort necessary for there to be resistance to this power. Even without portraying Jesus as homosexual, playing with the senses through humor, to the viewers, the image of homosexuality had a great power to destabilize discourses that were being placed as dogmatic / unquestionable and caused there to be discursive reverberation about the violent conditions in our condition of existence.
REFERENCES


