

A Historical Perspective of Press Analysis

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Abstract: This article aims to shed light upon an analysis of historical press. The method of depth hermeneutics by John Thompson, aided by the concepts of Pierre Bourdieu and Terry Eagleton are applied in an effort to elucidate the orientation of a newspaper (O Comercio) in a city in the countryside of Brazil, in early 20th century. To illustrate the application of Thompson's Hermeneutics for historical press, 4 O Comercio news reports from 1905, 1906 and 1907, are presented in full. Our analysis has shown that such hermeneutics is valid to analyze the press of the past as this possibility can be explored with new fronts of research.

Key words: historical press, countryside press, press analysis

1. Introduction

Although my first idea was to explore rice entrepreneurship in a historical perspective in Cachoeira do Sul, I soon realized that the object of the investigation was the still unexplored newspaper O Comercio. In this perspective, as says Assis (2013), the idea of writing about the press in the countryside of Brazil, which has more than 5,000 cities, is intended to give these places the value they deserve instead of overestimating research into Rio, São Paulo and Brasília, where country's main political decisions are made, or even in some other state capitals.

The aforementioned author claims that it is necessary to go further, "shedding light on the uncertainties that, from a scientific point of view, can be found in smaller settings" (Assis, 2013, p. 16). This must take into account the setting, its population and its location. The way he sees it, not much has been written about the press in the countryside of Brazil. In this sense, we can also include our motivation to study the press in the countryside of Rio Grande do Sul. In addition, the newspaper under study has not been digitalized. So, its records may be lost over time if the sheets are not kept intact. Some records have been lost, despite all efforts by the Historical Archives of Cachoeira do Sul in preserving the materials.

According to Marialva Barbosa (2005, pp. 51–61), as shown in "O que a história pode legar aos estudos do jornalismo (What history can bequeath to journalism studies)", journalism research has seen a massive increase. Since the 1980s, this has been a common topic of research that guided the professional activities and the construction of newspaper discourses, since the end of the 19th century. The first thing to do in connecting History and Journalism would have to do with the questions that researchers ask when investing in their research.

If, on the one hand, the area of Sociology provided theoretical references to characterize the various phenomena of journalistic activity, these analyzes overlooked the reasons behind historicity. Most research unveils the events but fail to show why the events occurred.

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It is not about saying that the media can determine how to think or what to think, but why things happen in a given social space, which can be fundamentally different from another space. In this sense, historicism is essential (Ricoeur P., 2003).

Another issue brought forth by Barbosa (2005) and which we will address is that both the product of History and that of Journalism are narratives. In Journalism, a story would tell events of the here and now, in an effort to organize information about the world in which a given event occurred.

In that scenario, a journalist would try to coherently inform how and why this event occurred in that given way: “When reporting a situation or making a situation into an event, once it is published, journalism establishes — just as fictional texts do — the world as it is told” (Barbosa M., 2005, p. 54). Another aspect brought forth by Barbosa (2005) concerns the legacy that History leaves to Journalism on a critical consciousness. An example of this is, if we want to know what happened in the 19th century, resorting to History not to reprimand the past or check it out of curiosity, but to make it a lesson for the present.

In this case, it is the critical view that would generate true knowledge. However, whatever is deciphered or interpreted, is always in the present, in the sense that History works with traces in the form of messages and signs in the present: “If we understand the trace as a message and associate it with the possibility of containing a message, in the present, and assign a value to these traces in the present, we would be producing the indispensable interpretation in historical action” (Barbosa M., 2005, p. 55).

In this context, both traces and a propensity to read and interpret, that is, to have critical interpretation are necessary to make history: “Historiography implies reading messages about things that are absent here and now, the ability to see the message (method) and its interpretation (the criticism) in the signs” (Barbosa M., 2005). This would be very useful in using History to study Communications or Journalism, as it is necessary to look at it from a historical dimension to realize that journalistic actions occur in a present full of visions that reflect history.

Barbosa (2005, pp. 51-61) claims that no generalizations should be made. The way she sees it, particularization is one of the principles of the theory of history. When we interpret something, we cannot generalize it for all contexts, as each social space has its historicity, its own path: “Thinking historically implies contextualizing social spaces in a chain of facts, events, occurrences, customs, institutions that conform as a flow (before and after).” (Barbosa M., 2005, p. 56).

Paul Ricoeur (2003) claims that memory can appear in the analysis, first as a matrix of history, from the perspective that history is written, and then as a way of bringing back the past when it is reported in a historical perspective. The past would thus be the sign of absence. Even though it is no longer present, the past is accepted as a state that memory makes an effort to rediscover. In the fight for truth, for Ricoeur, especially when it comes to written testimonies, historians should ask themselves the following questions: why have they been preserved? By whom? Who will benefit from it?

This situation should not be limited to History as a science, but should also include the conflict between a memorial tradition and other traditional memories. For the French author, there is significance in historians themselves choosing the area to be studied and also which files to be used in the research until they find the ultimate or final explanations. In that sense, interpretation would operate in all levels, from knowing testimonies and the archives to the explanation of the casualty and the purpose; from the economy to the culture.

In this context, we began to study this topic because, as said before, we had relatives in Cachoeira do Sul. Therefore, we often went there to talk to people in the city. Thus, we could see that the golden period of rice is still vivid in the city: an absent past that is still there alive. If we bear in mind that History brings contributions to the

study of Journalism, and that historians are naturally inclined for interpretations, as suggested by Ricoeur, we had that in mind that when we choose the research method. Aiming at this interpretation, we chose to use Thompson's proposed hermeneutics as a method (Thompson J., 2000) to analyze media products.

At first, this author suggests that a socio-historical analysis be carried out. Then a formal discursive analysis; and then the interpretation/reinterpretation will be carried out, according to the following scheme:

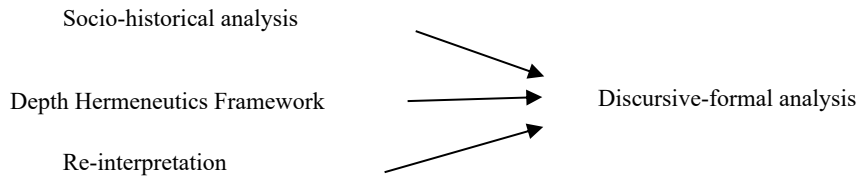


Figure 1 Thompson's Forms of Hermeneutic Investigation (Thompson J., 2000)

These steps were followed as we conducted discourse analysis using the proposed concepts and interpreting or reinterpreting the material according to the researcher's view. Bearing in mind Thompson's postulates that, when doing socio-historical analysis, domination relations must be taken into account as a particular type of power that is normally asymmetrical, we use the use of Bourdieu's concepts in this process (Bourdieu P., 1987, 1990, 1997, 2001a, 2001b, 2017).

In this sense, and in agreement with Bourdieu's concepts of field, Thompson postulates that:

When used in the interpretation of ideology, socio-historical analysis must pay particular attention to the relations of domination that characterize social institutions and fields of interaction. Because we are interested in the ways in which these relationships are fed and sustained by the symbolic forms that circulate in the social field (Thompson J., 2000).

Thompson suggests that the focus on ideology guides socio-historical analysis to testify the relations of domination, so that formal or discourse analysis be used to identify "the structural characteristics of symbolic forms that facilitate the mobilization of meaning" (Thompson J., 2000). Then, we move on to analyze these structural characteristics of symbolic forms, on the one hand, and to interpret the ideological ones, on the other.

For the purposes of this article, the aforementioned characteristics of symbolic forms as concepts of analysis are used to interpret the ideology and the relationship of domination. Pierre Bourdieu's and Terry Eagleton's concepts are used as support (Eagleton T., 1997).

This served to demonstrate "how these symbolic forms can operate as an ideology in specific socio-historical circumstances" (Thompson, 2000, p. 380). Thompson uses the following table to analyze the structural characteristics of symbolic forms in relation to the interpretation of ideology. These units will be used as key concepts later in this work, as a means to interpret, according to the proposed hermeneutics, some news report from the newspaper O Comercio.

The notion of ideological production field has been used and so have the notions of symbolic power and worldview, concepts brought forth by Bourdieu to be discussed later, as key concepts of analysis/interpretation. From Eagleton, we will resort to the concepts of values and beliefs, which will be discussed later in this work.

Table 1 Modes of Operation of Ideologies (Thompson, 2000, p. 81)

General Modes	Some typical strategies of symbolic construction
Legitimization	Rationalization; Universalization; Narrativization
Dissimulation	Dislocation; Euphemism; Tropos
Unification	Standardization; Symbolization of unit
Fragmentation	Differentiation; Exhaustion
Rectification	Naturalization; Eternalization; Nominalization/passivation

Thus, the objective of this work is to apply John Thompson's method of depth hermeneutics, aided by the concepts of Bourdieu and Eagleton, to elucidate the orientation of a newspaper in a city in the countryside of Brazil, in the beginning of the 20th century.

We are aware of the risks of employing this method proposed by Thompson, as it has been adapted to the context of the beginnings of the mass press in the countryside of Brazil, in the beginning of the 20th century, in conjunction with the use of concepts by Bourdieu and Eagleton to conduct this analysis from a broader perspective.

However, we believe that, despite the limitations, the attempt to use this hermeneutics / analysis is valid to build, from the traces of History, a view about the historicity of mass communication in Brazil, starting from a micro perspective of the countryside.

2. Development: Theory and Method

Pierre Bourdieu (1990, pp. 149–168) works with the concept of social space, which is the representation of society, where all of its powers are. It consists of a number of possible social positions determined by capital, which can be, among others: cultural capital (art and languages); economic capital (material goods); and symbolic capital (prestige depending on cultural and economic capital). This way,

[...] These fundamental social powers are, according to my empirical research, economic capital, in its different forms, and cultural capital, in addition to symbolic capital. That is the form that different types of capital take when perceived and recognized as legitimate. Thus, the agents are distributed in the global social space, in the first dimension according to the global volume of capital that they have under different species. They are also distributed in the second dimension, according to the structure of their capital, that is, according to the relative weight of the different types of capital — economic and cultural — in the total volume of their capital (Pierre Bourdieu, 1990, p. 154).

Bourdieu (2001a, pp. 7–16) goes on to say that the so-called symbolic power is a supplementary power, a modified form, that is, imperceptible, altered and legitimized from other modes of power. Hence, we can only take one step further than the energetic paradigms that characterize social relations as relations of strength and the cybernetic paradigms that make them relations of communication if we specify the laws of changes that modify the different capital categories into symbolic capital.

In particular, covering up and transforming can be seen as an euphemism that ensures a real metamorphosis of power relations, as it ignores/perceives the violence that they objectively encompass and make them symbolic power. This symbolic power enables them to achieve actual results without visible effort. To his mind, symbolic power is the power to build groups. These groups may already be in place but need to be consolidated or perhaps they are to be constituted. They are, then, anchored in two levels.

At the first level, this power must be anchored on the retention of symbolic capital. At the second, symbolic success is a consequence of the level at which the presented vision is based on reality. It will be more likely to succeed if it is based on reality. The more convenient the theory, the more powerful the result of that theory will be: “Symbolic power is a power to do things with words. It is only to the extent that it is true, that is, adequate to things, that descriptions are helpful to things.” (Pierre Bourdieu, 1990, p. 166).

This is how the concept of symbolic power will be used as an instrument of analysis and interpretation of O Comercio. Bourdieu still adds that:

Symbolic power as the power to constitute what is given by enunciation, to make one see and believe, to confirm or transform the world view and, thus, the actions on the world, therefore the world; this almost magical power that allows us to obtain the equivalent of what is obtained by force (physical or economic), thanks to the effects of mobilization, it is only exercised if it is recognized, that is, ignored as arbitrary. This means that symbolic power does not reside in “symbolic systems” in the form of an “illocutionary force”, but it is defined in a determined relationship — and by means of it — between those who exercise power and those who are subject to it, that is, it is in the very structure of the field that belief is produced. The belief in the legitimacy of words and in the one who utters them is what produces power in words, the power to keep the order or to subvert it. The production of this belief does not rely on the competence of words (Pierre Bourdieu, 1990, p. 14).

The author also brings forth the concept of social field, which would be external to the individual and different from the habitus, which is internal to the individual. He studies reality from the concept of field. Social field would comprise the areas of complex societies that tend to gain some degree of autonomy. Within these fields, there are rules of behavior and rules of production. For example: less autonomous fields depend on the market; autonomous fields produce for those who are within the field.

The habitus, in turn, would be a scheme that conducts individuals into a set of actions. It makes it possible to apply old experiences to new experiences. These applications are categories, ways each one of us see the world. Who lives the habitus tends to incorporate domination, but also to incorporate resistance strategies. Thus, the habitus creates strategies of action and enables us to recognize these strategies. The categorization of worldview which is inherent to the individual is flexible.

For Eagleton (1997), Bourdieu’s concern is to analyze ways in which ideology deals with ordinary life. Thus, the former understands that the latter studies the disposition that causes particular practices to occur, in which individuals act in an internalized process which, for him, would be the “cultural unconscious”. In our habitual behavior, some of our implicit norms and values will occur over and over again. Habits, then, would be just the transmission procedure with which social and moral structures are incorporated into everyday social life.

In that perspective, Bourdieu's habits, the way Terry Eagleton sees it, would be an open system that gives individuals the possibility to face unforeseen situations that are permanently changeable, since they would be the creators of strategies that allow innovation. The term ideology is not central in the work Bourdieu, but the habitus would have relevance to the concept because it would induce social actors to wish for and take actions consistent with the demands of social occurrences.

Thus, “[...] for Bourdieu it is through this combination of the subjective and the objective, of what we feel spontaneously willing to do and of what our conditions demand from us, that power is consolidated.” (Pierre Bourdieu, 1990, pp. 158–159). Life in society would have many different habituses, as each process is adapted to what Bourdieu calls a “field”, which would be a set of institutions and individuals that compete for the same purpose.

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For Eagleton (1997), symbolic violence would be Bourdieu's way of reconsidering Gramsci's postulate on hegemony. In this perspective, the French theory would be a “microstructure” of ideology, this being seen as everyday life. For Eagleton (1997), the term ideology has a wide range of historical meanings. The author has often indicated the means by which signs, meanings and values help to reissue a dominant power in society, but which can also demonstrate a significant context between discourse and political interests.

He believes that ideology does not generate a social unity, but, first of all, tries to reestablish the unity at the imaginary level. It is a systematizing social force that forms individuals at the source of their real experiences and seeks to equip them as modes of values and beliefs in their particular occupations and for the dissemination of the social order. Therefore, we will use the notion of ideology, as well as values and beliefs, as the concept of analysis and interpretation of O Comercio.

Ideology is rather a matter of “discourse” than “language” — more a matter of certain concrete discursive effects than of significance as such. It represents the points where power has an impact on certain things, as it lays within them. But it should not, therefore, be equated with any form of discursive partisanship, “self-seeking” discourse or rhetorical bias; rather, the concept of ideology aims to reveal something on the relationship between something that is enunciated and its material conditions of possibility, when these conditions of possibility are seen in the light of certain power struggles that are key to the reproduction [...] of a whole form of social life (Eagleton T., 1997, p. 1994).

Eagleton concludes by saying — and in connection with Bourdieu — that there is a place where modes of consciousness can be transformative. This happens all the time and can be called a political struggle. It is characterized by citizens who produce political resistance at the local level, driven by the inner strength of these oppositions, to clash with the power of the State. Consequently, these individuals may have their thoughts permanently modified.

Bourdieu sees representations as visions of the social world, how it is divided, how it is classified and how it works. They are classification systems that identify these processes. For him, there are two forms of representations: 1) self-representation, which, in the first process, is for conformity, but also for conflict. These are the representations that groups make of themselves and of others; and 2) symbolic forms are representations, in the sense that any narrative about the world is a representation, which, in a given space, has a high degree of autonomy.

In this context, for Bourdieu P. (1997), the journalist's actions imply the sale of worldviews, and, thus, the transformation of news into merchandise is already an ideology. The relationship between the public and the journalist involves a similarity of habits. Those who experience the *habitus* are willing to incorporate domination strategies, just as they have to incorporate resistance strategies, since this use of categories to see the world that the individual has is flexible. Journalists convey a pre-conceived view. It serves to shape their worldview as it produces practices and representations and allow various collective forms and journalism to connect. In this regard, we will also use the Bourdieu's notion of worldview as a key concept of analysis and interpretation of the newspaper under study.

As for newspapers from the first decades of the 20th century in Brazil, Coelho T. (1993) argues that the invention of movable types has propelled the rise of mass media, at least in its initial form. In other words, they made it possible to reproduce the texts of the time without limitation. However, because of the large number of illiterate individuals, not many people would consume them. On that line, Thompson J. (2000) claims that, the use of machines to produce these newspapers, as well as institutional devices that favor their organization, creates a gap between the transmission of the symbolic form and its actual production, which can be considered a characteristic of mass communication.

Thompson adds that "Horkheimer and Adorno used the term 'cultural industry' to refer to the commodification of cultural forms brought forth by the rise of the entertainment industry in the United States in the late 19th and early 20th centuries" (Thompson J., 2000, p. 131). After that, the author declares that, in the context of their studies, the Frankfurt School made us devote attention to some topics of mass communication to "[...] those aspects that belong to the commodification of symbolic forms by the media industries" (Thompson J., 2000, p. 136).

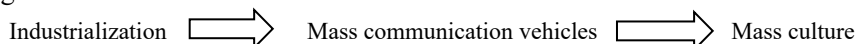
Coelho T. (1993) points out, however, that the cultural industry would only appear when the first newspapers began to circulate. Mass culture would only settle later. It needed the two other previous processes to exist and, besides them, several other products, such as *feuilleton*, cinema, *fotonovela*, etc. Edgar Morin (1997) is positive about the fact that books and newspapers were already commodities, but culture and private life would never have entered the commercial and industrial sphere at the same time, had it not been for the technical viability that industrialization allowed and the creation of mass culture. In his words, this is known as a "third culture" that emerged after the Second World War, originated from the press, cinema, radio and television and which is carried out in parallel to classic and humanist cultures. Thus, he defines mass culture as follows:

The term mass culture, that is, a culture produced according to the massive norms of industrial manufacture; propagated by mass media [...] techniques; conceived to a social mass, that is, a gigantic cluster of individuals beyond the internal structures of society (class, family, etc.) (Edgar Morin, 1997, p. 14).

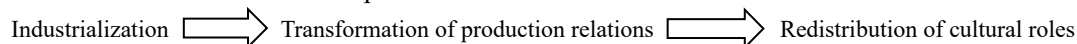
According to this author's point of view, we could think that the cultural industry is characterized by and acquires specific features of entertainment. These features were widely disseminated by the technical means of mass communication in the post-war and originated the so-called mass culture. However, in having the technical apparatus that enabled serial reproduction, as stated by Morin, the 19th century artist/creator/author "tends to disintegrate with the introduction of industrial techniques in culture. Creation tends to become production" (Edgar Morin, 1997).

In this context, the first technical means and vehicles of mass communication (the first mass media), the newspaper and the book, saw the beginning of an era of culture produced in the process of industrial production and its commercialization. Although 19th-century paintings could also be called commodities to some extent, the

circulation of massively produced symbolic goods is part of the advent of industrialization. Lima L. (1990) questions the chronological scheme:



For the author, those who conceive of mass culture as an inevitable effect of the continuity of mass communication vehicles need much more reflection upon it. So, he suggests a more appropriate framework, although the cause and effect relationship remains:



In this sense, we could say that industrialization has led to the commodification of culture. Bourdieu shares similar ideas (Bourdieu P., 1987) as he approaches the relationship between the field of erudite production and the field of cultural industry as he claims that, in this last category, “creative freedom and market law”, are opposing phenomena (Bourdieu P., 1987, p. 140). He places cultural industry as a medium in which symbolic goods are commercialized, in addition to being a market interest. This is in line with Ferreira’s point of view (Ferreira J., 2005). Bourdieu, in the last stage of his work, looked at it as he resorted to the critical theory of the Frankfurt School, establishing relations between journalism and the market and raising questions such as journalism having relative autonomy. On that line, Bourdieu P. (1994, pp. 3–9) adds that:

The journalistic field consolidated as such, in the 19th century, as it opposed newspapers offering “news”, preferably “sensational” or, rather, “sensationalistic”, and newspapers offering analyses and “comments” to mark their distinction from the former in affirming high values of “objectivity” is when two logics and two principles of legitimization, peer recognition oppose. It is granted to those who more fully recognize “values” or internal principles, and (...) the numbers of sales (best sellers) and profit in cash, the sanction of the democracy. In this case it is inseparable from the market.

Although the author has shown the journalistic field associated with the emergence of the objective American journalism, he refers to the invention of Journalism in France, signaling that in that context, as in America, literary and political journalism are opposing forces. Surely, Bourdieu did not accurately reflect on particular issues in the French press (Martins, L., 2018, p. 89). Additionally, drawing these insights to the analysis of journalism in the countryside of Brazil, in the Old Republic needs some contextualization. The reason being is because, in that setting, a range of newspapers were in circulation. Most of them were affiliated to political parties or were simply commercial ones, representing the figure of the classic owner/communicator who owns a newspaper in a family business, as in the case of O Comercio.

We believe that in the case of Cachoeira do Sul in the beginning of the XX century, it is safe to say commercial journalism was incipient, within a nascent growing capitalism. However, it would not constitute a journalistic field per se, without the context in which that newspaper is in. Hohfeldt A. (2006, pp. 1–12) points out, as will be discussed in more detail later, that the journalism of Rio Grande do Sul from 1870–1930, comprising different types of newspapers, would be characterized by the beginning of industrial companies. In that context, owners and journalistic companies, without considering their alignment with parties and ideologies, needed publicity. Then, subscription to the newspaper would ensure financial survival. Thus, newspapers began to act as companies, seeking profits beyond the spread of the principles and ideas of the respective owners.

Similarly, I believe that it is not possible to ignore a more comprehensive concept than that of the journalistic field to “account for this intersection between newspapers and political agents involved in similar disputes, despite the use of different instruments” (Martins L., 2018). Because of this, I will also use Bourdieu’s notion of the field of ideological production as a key concept of the newspaper under study. Bourdieu defines the ideological

production field (Bourdieu P., 2017) as a:

[...] relatively autonomous universe. In this universe, in competition and in conflict, the instruments of thought of the social world that are objectively available at a given moment are designed. At the same time, the field of politically thinkable is defined or, if we want, the legitimately problematic [...] (Bourdieu P., 2017, p. 372).

When conceptualizing the field of ideological production, Bourdieu develops a particular category to understand the process of struggles between the various fields of symbolic production in relation to their possibilities of discussions in society. Thus, this concept sees the space for discussions as a place where political actors, journalists and other significant groups in a given society establish a competition to centralize the most legitimate view on community-relevant events.

In this way, pressures that are external to the field of production, such as economic and political ones, are outlined in relation to pressures that are internal to the same field, as they define the orientation of the actors within it (Martins L., 2018). Thus, we will therefore also use the concept of ideological production field in the analysis of O Comercio.

When looking at Bourdieu's theory, John B. Thompson (2000) states that symbolic forms are generated by agents who are located within particular socio-historical contexts that are equipped with varieties of resources. These which modify the way each individual receives and interprets the symbolic form. These forms, because they are contextual, also often undergo a process of valuation that gives them a certain variety of value.

The author points out that, for Bourdieu, a field of positions could be seen simultaneously as a space of positions and, in a diachronic way, as a sum of trajectories. These positions and trajectories would be defined by the quantity and the dissemination of various modes of resource or capital. Thompson⁹⁵ claims that, for his postulates, there would be three main types of capital: economic capital, which would include goods and properties; cultural capital, which would include knowledge, skills and educational background; and symbolic capital, which would include merits acquired in a concentrated manner, prestige and recognition linked to a person or position. Inside each field, the subjects are anchored in these different modes of resources to achieve their own goals. They can also look for opportunities change a resource.

For the author, according to Bourdieu's theory, the norms and conventions that drive various actions and interactions in social life are implicit and imprecise. They would conceptualize themselves as flexible schemes and find themselves in modes of practical knowledge progressively inculcated and repeated in everyday practices. However, when practicing the schemes or relying on rules, individuals also enhance and adapt them. This process is not mechanical. Actions were not rigidly defined by them. On the contrary, the realization of schemes and rules would be something creative that can be modified.

However, Thompson (2000) distinguishes the fields of interactions, with their rules and schemes, from the social institutions, which can be seen as specific, more or less stable groups of rules and resources. They would act in conjunction with the social relations that are instituted within them. For him, "social institutions can be seen as constellations of rules, resources and relationships that are within a field of interaction, which, in turn, are, at the same time, created by them" (John B. Thompson, 2000).

Thus, although social institutions are constitutive components of the fields of interaction, they are not coextensive with them. There are several actions and interactions that occur within the fields and outside of particular institutions. However, this does not mean that these actions and interactions are not influenced by power and resources, rules and schemes that are inherent to the social conditions of the field where they are located.

For the author, this analysis leads to the exercise of power. It is known as the ability to act to achieve particular goals and interests; for example, an individual's power to change reality and which is anchored in the resources they have at their disposal. This power depends on the position that subjects take within the field or the institution. At the moment when these established associations of power are systematically asymmetrical, domination occurs. Power is, then, exercised in a stable manner to the point of excluding other groups or individuals.

Thompson (2000) sees that the attributes of social contexts are established through action and interaction as well as through the production and reception of symbolic forms, whose production entails the use of available resources and the exercise of various rules and schemes by subjects who are somewhere within a field or an institution. Thus, when an individual aims to produce symbolic forms for certain recipients, the prospect of receiving these forms lies in the circumstances of production. The position an individual occupies in a field or institution and the expectation for receiving a given symbolic form are social conjunctures of the production that shapes it.

In this sense, it is normal that the expectation that precedes the reception of symbolic forms is usually within the circumstances of production. On the other hand, if the attributions of social contexts include the ways in which these forms are received and understood, it must be considered that they are received by subjects who are located in particular socio-historical contexts, whose characteristics shape their reception, understanding and appreciation. This process does not occur passively, since individuals attribute meaning and give significance to what they receive in view of the resources, rules and schemes that they have. This system varies according to the individual's position in the fields or institutions.

When obtaining and working out the symbolic forms, the subjects participate in a continuous process of meaning making and revisiting. The author calls it the symbolic reproduction of social contexts, whose consequence is the fact of being subject to intricate systems of valuation, evaluation and conflict. There are two types of valuation: symbolic, which is the value by which symbolic forms are estimated, and economic, which is the value given to them for exchange in the market. Through economic valuation, symbolic forms become symbolic goods or merchandise. Both types of valuation are surrounded by different levels of conflict.

With the increase in the commercialization of symbolic forms, most conflicts of economic valuation are demarcated by media institutions, which normally have a precise interest in the economic valuation of symbolic forms and in the deliberation of these conflicts. For example, when a publisher transforms a symbolic good like a book into merchandise and offers it for exchange on the market, the prestige of the author and the producer can add economic value to the symbolic good.

Hence, for Thompson (2000) the subjects involved in the production and reception of symbolic forms usually know that they can be evaluated by valuation processes, so that they can develop strategies to increase or reduce symbolic and/or economic values. The strategies used are connected to the positions that are occupied within the field of interaction and are subordinate to the resources that one has and the connection with other subjects in the field.

Thompson (2000) continues his reasoning by stating that the media industries now play a major role, but that their emergence and growth was a particular historical process that followed the birth of modern societies. The beginnings of mass communication, for example, in the 15th century, are associated with Gutenberg's press technology having spread to commercial locations in Europe with the aim of making several copies of manuscripts and texts. This was the beginning of a progress that totally changed the way symbolic forms are produced, received and transmitted by individuals and that goes hand in hand with the expansion of industrial capitalism and the constitution of modern nation-states.

Within this perspective, the author continues addressing cultural transmission, “[...] that is, the process by which symbolic forms are transmitted to producers and recipients” (John B. Thompson, 2000, p. 220). This is related to the relevance of writing and the incorporation of technical apparatus for the conservation of written messages, specifically with the appearance of the massive circulation of newspapers in the 19th and 20th centuries in Europe.

The author differentiates three aspects of cultural transmission:

a) Technical means of production, b) Symbolic exchange and c) Temporal distance (Thompson J., 2000, p. 225).

At the moment when symbolic forms are transmitted when they are not co-present, accessibility tends to be improved, depending on the technical means of transmission and the institutional apparatus. For example, the means that initially provided greater accessibility in space tended to be somewhat light and transportable, such as papyrus and paper.

As for the interpretation of ideology, the author proposes, at the level of socio-historical analysis, that it is about the relations of domination that are defined in the circumstances in which symbolic forms are produced and received. Within this perspective, socio-historical analysis, when used to interpret ideology, has to take into account the relations of domination that determine social institutions and the fields of interaction.

Thus, he suggests that the aforementioned notions of mode of operation of ideology be used to analyze the structural characteristics of symbolic forms in relation to the interpretation of ideology. These concepts will be used later in this work in an effort to elucidate the ideology of *O Comercio*.

Thompson suggests that the analysis should begin from the structural characteristics of symbolic forms to try to indicate these characteristics as stages of strategy or a specific method of symbolic construction. This should take into consideration the fact that, in particular situations of construction and reception of these symbolic forms, construction strategies tend to be related to ideological issues. In this way, "to interpret ideology is to explain the connection between the meaning mobilized by symbolic forms and the relationships of domination that this helps to establish and sustain" (Thompson J., 2000, p. 379).

When associating symbolic forms with relations of domination, the interpretation seeks to demonstrate how these symbolic forms can work as ideology in specific socio-historical situations. Thus, interpreting a symbolic form as an ideology can bring possibilities for criticizing other interpretations, as well as the very situation in which individuals find themselves. Going further, the author states that the interpretation of ideology has two functions: to creatively explain the meaning and present a concise argument of how this meaning is employed to establish and maintain relations of domination.

For Thompson J. (2000, p. 393), mass communication has a threefold focus: The first focus is on the production and transmission or diffusion, in which he suggests socio-historical analysis in an effort to define, for example, the attributes of the institutions in which messages are produced and by which they are disseminated. The second focus is on the construction of the communicative message, in which he focuses on formal or discursive analysis, and conceives the message as a symbolic construction that has an articulated structure. The third focus is on the reception and appropriation of communicational messages, which suggests a socio-historical analysis combined with ethnographic research to verify the conditions for receiving the message.

This last focus will not be addressed in this article, since we cannot precisely ascertain the recipients of messages from the newspaper *O Comercio*. Therefore, we will focus on the socio-historical analysis and construction of the message as a symbolic construction, with focus on the characteristics of symbolic forms and their strategies that indicate relations of domination and, consequently, an ideology.

Within this perspective, we can claim that the theoretical ideas presented are useful for this work, insofar as they will form the foundations that will help to interpret and understand the newspaper *Comercio*, as well as the historical-economic context, of the emergence of rice farming in Cachoeira do Sul. The concepts of worldview, symbolic power, the field of ideological production and ideology within the perspective of belief and values, plus the concepts distributed in structural characteristics of symbolic forms and their consequent stages of strategy or specific method of symbolic construction in regard to the relations of ideological domination are assumptions that will be addressed and used in the interpretation of the newspaper.

O *Comercio*, in the period under study, as a commercial newspaper, tried not to connect with political parties (something whose coherence we will measure later in this article). It nonetheless identifies itself with the public or with ideological lines. According to Carvalho M. (1999), the inaugural newspaper, in Cachoeira do Sul, was the republican *Cachoeirense* (1879–1884). The newspaper O *Comercio*, in turn, is a business newspaper that began its operations on Jan 1, 1900, founded by Henrique Möller Filho. It ran every Wednesday until 1966.

It was written by Guilherme Antônio Möller. João Antônio Möller served as a typographer. It was therefore a family newspaper. According to the author, the newspaper had “guidelines for impartiality, political and journalistic independence, austerity and served the common good” (Carvalho M., 1999, p. 63). This is something that is going to be addressed in this article. Up until 1905, the newspaper was printed in two languages: Portuguese and German. It was 50×35 cm.

Characterized as a family newspaper run by businessmen/communicators, O *Comercio* has as its main figure its founder, Henrique Möller Filho, who was the son of German immigrants, born in São Leopoldo, in 1866. He had been a typographer since he was 13 years old in his hometown. He moved to Cachoeira in 1897, the year he opened a typography company; three years later, he founded the newspaper. In 1922, he and his brothers Guilherme, the newspaper’s editor, and João Antônio, a typographer, held the position of Municipal Councilor. They all acted as a kind of ambassador for the ideological discourse for agriculture and rice farming.

In this scenario, some selected articles from the newspaper O *Comercio* will be analyzed. The interpretation will rely on the concepts listed in the assumptions of the authors under study, in an effort to identify the ideological discourse embedded in their rhetoric. For this reason, it will be necessary to address the conceptualization of news, since the period under study is the beginning of the 20th century. It is evident that the way of building a journalistic story has changed over time with the introduction of new technologies. Thus, O *Comercio*’s use of selection standards, when verifying and addressing the facts, are associated with its time. We found some definitions of news that we believe will help conceptualize this journalistic product.

Alsina M. (2005) sees events as social phenomena and are, therefore, defined historically. Throughout history, knowing what happened was a privilege of the hegemonic classes, which, in order to establish their domains, needed information. Before the invention of print publication, European merchants and bankers, as well as the aristocrats, got information about maritime traffic conditions to political events through manuscripts. With the emergence of the press, due to the large number of illiterate individuals, the dominant classes were the ones that had access to information. Ordinary people would get information from rumors or be informed of local events.

Furthermore, events involved a temporal issue: they would only reach the public much later than their actual occurrence. Thus, the beginning of the press was a factor in the development of culture and commerce. It later became an instrument of political struggles. As an example, we have the Bible, the first book that was ever printed. When gaining political relevance, the information started to be controlled by the religious and civil powers. Not only was it subject to censorship, but it was also used for the construction of convenient events. With technical advances,

the spatial-temporal issues of events would have been diminished, but political circumstances have increased.

Alsina sees that, in the middle of the 19th century, in developed countries, mass communication was a topic that emerged because the press became the main source of information/transmission of events for citizens. “In addition, in the face of social events, the press takes a more active stance; it is no longer a question of receiving the information and commenting on it, but of discovering the event” (Alsina M., 2005, p. 67).

For the author, in order to differentiate news from an event, it is necessary to establish a point of reference, because what is news in one process can be an event in another. Thus, he defines an event as a received message, while the news would be a message sent. That is, the event would be a phenomenon of perception of the system, whereas the news would be the phenomenon of generating a system: “That is to say, every social fact is potentially an event for the media and every piece of news is potentially an event for society.”

The mass media, in this context, use, on the one hand, social events as raw material and, on the other hand, produce and transmit products that may become a social event.

Muniz Sodré (2009) incorporates the Kantian notion of fact as a definition for objects from which reality can be proved, as well as in which there is a possibility for the receiver to give their sense/meaning to what happened. Thus, for the author, it is necessary to find another word for the social representation of a fact, which for him would be the term “event”. This, in his perspective, can be seen as synonymous for a socio-historical fact, but, while said event is guided by the here and now, the fact is an “intellectual elaboration” (Muniz Sodré, 2009, p. 33).

In addition, Sodré proposes that the communication of the event through an informative organization system could aim to influence or control more than actually inform. We must also take into account that life occurs beyond the discourse. In this case, the groups involved in the fight have more affective force than the rational way of events. Considering that everyday facts are worth reporting, marking the fact would unify the unforeseen news and the everyday facts.

Sousa, 151 in an attempt to analyze Peucer’s ideas (2004), points out that the latter sees that news would be something in the form of exposure and writing, for which language is used. It deals with singular facts, and is chosen among many other forms of possible reports according to its importance for those who receive the news. Finally, the news is subject to conditions such as time.

In this sense, by understanding that Brazilian journalism has been massively influenced by American journalism, we look back at the history of news in the United States as brought by Michael Schudson (2003), who sees news as a socially constructed form: “[...] A statement made by state or ordinary commercial agencies, comprising news professionals, who report that an event is noteworthy” (Michael Schudson, 2003, p. 31). Then, the news broadcast by the mass media would be “a representation of each event in the world” (Michael Schudson, 2003, p. 131).

According to this author, in his country, the first institutional and cultural characteristics of contemporary news date back to 400 years ago, when people were paid to write true stories about current events, which lasted for around 250 years. Those stories were mainly about political affairs. The idea that these journalists should try to write non-partisan and professional news would have been developed only around the 20th century.

Schudson reports that, in the colonial United States, businessmen were the ones who actually served as printers rather than journalists. They made money by printing advertisements for weddings as well as various products. These individuals’ newspapers were initially designed to be advertisements for their printing business.

Over time, a more common model was applied to theirs, which include a range of local advertising, short paragraphs of local gossip and large room for European politics and economics taken directly from London

newspapers. The policy of other colonies rarely appeared and the local one was non-existent. They did not think of their newspapers as a political tool or as a news agency, they just printed what came to them.

However, in the first 50 years of American journalism, between about 1690 and 1760, there is a small indication that newspapers would become a central forum for political speeches. Although colonial newspapers escaped controversy, preaching neutrality in their printouts and printing foreign news to avoid complaints and accusations of defamation, the conflict with the British in 1765 made it uncomfortable for print to be neutral, when people were compelled to take sides. During this period, American newspapers began speaking for parties and factions.

Subsequently, the 1798 Alien and Sedition Act prohibited criticism of the government, making it a criminal offense to publish anything against the American government. With the victory of Thomas Jefferson's president in 1800, the Alien and Sedition Act expired and the political opposition was accepted. This enforced the First Amendment of the American Constitution of 1791, which made it unlawful to curtail freedom of expression or the press. Schudson¹⁵⁷ reports that, in the first decade of the new nation, newspapers were identified with an editorial voice contained in them.

Over time, information gathering became the central function of a conventional daily newspaper, and journalism has slowly differentiated itself from politics, thus becoming more commercial. In this context, around 1920, American journalists were working on the rules for their activity, grounded in professionalism and ethics of objectivity. Between 1922 and 1923, the first major professional association of the category was formed: the American Society of Newspaper Editors. In this association, the code of ethics of "sincerity, reliability and precision" was adopted, in addition to that of "impartiality".

In the newspaper under study, there was still no editorial or wide dissemination of the opinion article¹. Signed articles were rare, as we know in modern journalism. As we have seen over the course of history, in the American case, the questions of impartiality and objectivity only appeared in the 1920s.

However, although paying to tell local stories is not something new and the circulation of North American printed material, at first, reported gossip and foreign news, it cannot be denied that the issued, disclosed and told fact could be understood as news. In this way, as news, any fact that can be proven, as an event, disclosed and issued (Alsina M., 2005) by the journalists responsible for a newspaper will be regarded as such. We consider that, in such cases, these professionals are highly selective when disclosing it, but they also engage in a form of "intellectual elaboration" (Sodré M., 2009, p. 33), "a representation" (Schudson M., 2003, p. 7) of the event. However, we will analyze the key articles from the newspaper *O Commercio*, using the John Thompson's aforementioned methodology (Thompson J., 2000).

We begin with the following article, which was published under the title "Agriculture" in December 1905.

Agriculture

Even though we have discussed this topic massively, we understand, however, that it is worth all of our attention, our advertising and our protection. For this reason we want to provide a service to the public in general, mostly to the conservative classes [...] (This text has been translated from Portuguese into English). (This article has been translated from Portuguese into English).

¹ Genre: Opinion: It is an argumentative genre, where the author's opinion is allowed. These texts do not rely on lines such as "I think" or "it has to be like this". Rather, they focus on arguments fostered in specializations. E.g.: Chronicle, article, editorial. (Felix F. Gênero jornalístico informativo, opinativo e interpretativo. In: ACADEMIA do jornalista. [s.l.], 2019. Available on: <https://academiadojornalista.com.br/producao-de-texto-jornalistico/genere-jornalistico-informativo-opinativo-e-interpretativo>. Access Date: 21 mar. 2019.).

Reflecting on the excerpt of the aforementioned article, in view of Thompson's (2000) theory, we can see that the newspaper *O Commercio* is in the socio-historical context of development of the massive circulation of newspapers in Brazil from the beginning of the Old Republic, as it shows incipient traits of capitalism. With regard to this author's line of thinking, we can see that this and other newspapers in Cachoeira do Sul indicate that machines have been used to print them. We can also see institutional devices for their organization, with the space-time gap between the transmission of the symbolic form and its production. This can be taken as a characteristic of massive communication, different from oral communication.

Taking this socio-historical context into account to interpret ideology, according to Thompson (2000), it is necessary to analyze how symbolic forms act as ideology in the relations of domination that appear in the message described in *O Commercio*.

In this situation, he suggests starting the analysis from the structural characteristics of symbolic forms as strategies. It is clear that he attempts to legitimize the discourse with the use of symbolic construction strategies, such as the strategy of universalization and rationalization.

In the beginning of the article, the effort to make the message as being of interest to the entire community — in fact, of interest to some individuals — is clear. When doing something for the general public, especially the conservative classes², we are referred to the concept widely used in the Old Republic. As can be seen in the newspaper's speech, it shows what part of society it represents, despite the universal discourse employed.

We can also perceive the world view of the newspaper, in the sense that is brought forth by Bourdieu P. (1990, pp. 149–168), which it addresses and seeks to represent. By the time the news is sold in the form of merchandise, it is already an ideology offered as a product/worldview to the reading audience. This worldview is perceived as ideologically aligned with the agricultural cause, to the so-called conservative classes and to the Republican Party.

In a broader sense of the field of ideological production, the newspaper tries to convey a more legitimate view of what is relevant to the community of Cachoeira do Sul. This goes hand in hand with Thompson's notion of legitimization, as it is based on Max Weber's assumption that the relations of domination can be established or maintained because they are represented as legitimate, that is, worthy of support.

Similarly, we can see that, in the following parts of the aforementioned article, the strategy of rationalizing the discourse appears in a sequence that shows the argument that agricultural production can be as advantageous as cattle raising:

Being cattle raising the most common commercial activity in Rio Grande do Sul, we mistakenly understand that it is its only source of wealth. Because the state is keen to develop it, one can assume that private and public wealth have been taken care of. But this is a major mistake. We have to seek the material development of our land in all ways, especially when we recognize, as it is true, that we have resources of great value and which can perfectly provide a reason for us to achieve material wealth and put ourselves in a unique position. (This article has been translated from Portuguese into English)

Regarding the interpretation of the structural characteristics of symbolic forms as strategies, we can see an attempt to legitimize the discourse through the symbolic construction strategy described by Thompson J. (2000), as rationalization. It is a process in which the creator of a symbolic form conceives a chain of reasoning that seeks to defend or justify a sum of social relations or institutions and, through this, persuade the audience that it deserves to

² The expression "conservative classes" is extremely frequent in public speeches and newspapers in the Old Republic (Brazil, 1889 to 1930). It generally refers to three "classes": farming, industry and commerce, which would be responsible for the conservation of the social order (Sarmiento S. N., *A raposa e a águia: J. J. Seabra e Rui Barbosa na política baiana*. Salvador: Edufba, 2011.).

be supported.

Thus, the article develops the argument that it was thought that cattle raising was the only form of wealth. However, this would be a mistake, since the development of all possible forms should be considered, since the state had resources for this. We can see the attempt to rationalize the narrative seeking support from the audience for the diversification of agricultural cultures, something that was associated with the polyculture policy of the Republican Party³.

A defense of the rice culture and of the “class” associated with it, the new rural entrepreneurs, an attitude typical of an initial journalistic environment, but that defends politician stances and interests, seeking to make its point of view the most legitimate in space society’s broader conflicts.

In another section of the article, one can also allude to Eagleton’s (1997) thinking when he affirms that ideology equips individuals with modes of values and beliefs. In the case of the newspaper, this is evident when he tries to sell the ideas he believes in. Among the views in Thompson’s postulates, from which it is possible to highlight another structural characteristic of the symbolic forms indicated by him, is fragmentation. It would occur when domination relations can be sustained not through the unification of the people of a society, but rather of the segmentation of individuals and groups that could offer a challenge to dominant groups or directing action to those who are considered bad or fearful and with whom they disagree.

One of the symbolic forms mentioned by the author is the differentiation strategy, that is, the emphasis given to generate the feeling of distinction from the other; in the aforementioned section, this happens in relation to the producer who chooses to raise cattle instead of devoting himself to various agricultural crops. Thompson J. (2000) suggests that, in this situation, it is possible to see how these symbolic forms can act as ideology/domination.

It can be said that there is, in the section of O Commercio, an attempt to differentiate between traditional farmers, cattle farmers, defended by the Federalist party, and a new dominant group in the city, which seeks to establish itself, in which the new rice entrepreneurs.

Agriculture, for example, in Rio Grande do Sul, is still lagging behind: nobody can expedite its development. Except for everyone’s needs for consumption, agricultural development in our State is scarce. Owners of large fields are limited to populating them with good-quality cattle, certain that only in this way will they be able to enjoy their properties [...].

(This article has been translated from Portuguese into English)

The rest of the article presents some form of unification, a characteristic of the symbolic forms pointed out by Thompson, 176 once it seeks to standardize either the behavior of that society as a whole in terms of agricultural practice or lack thereof in Rio Grande do Sul or the advances technological developments in this area. The newspaper’s worldview is clear, and so is its attempt to sell it to the reader, producing values and beliefs in favor of the agriculture it defends. Livestock becomes a dominant economic activity, and efforts for a more comprehensive practice, which the newspaper’s owners consider appropriate, are made. Also, in terms of ideological production, one can find the dispute from the most legitimate perspective in the conflict space of symbolic productions of that community in a more comprehensive way.

We don’t study agriculture: we almost don’t know about it at all; we do not send our children to study it, nor do

³ Rio Grande do Sul Republican Party (PRR) was Political party of motivation republican of the state of Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil, that contributed to the political formation of that state. The time was divided between two political factions: the Republicans (PRR) and the Federalists of the Federalist Party of Rio Grande do Sul.

we follow the progress that science makes in relation to the agricultural industry [...] The discovery of new instruments has been extremely helpful for agriculture. With such resources, the amount of manual labor that used to be spent for such an enterprise has been greatly reduced; so much so that today we can easily get twice as much as we used to get before, without the need to spend great natural forces. We tend to [...].

(This article has been translated from Portuguese into English)

In 1906, another news report stood up for agricultural production. But a trend that would become evident in *O Comercio* started to emerge: that of naming Cachoeira do Sul the major rice producer in the state. The ideological characteristics of the story are evident when the newspaper expresses its worldview, its values and beliefs, here understood as an expression of ideology, as its position in relation to economic policy reflects values, principles and concepts of the newspaper. These positions, values, principles and concepts are related, for instance, to the Republican Party policy on the cultivation of polyculture and incentives to colonial farmers or the “defense of the cattle” (Hammerschmitt Alini, 2019) by the Federalist Party.

The economic issue is only one of the facets of the newspaper’s point of view, of its ideological concepts, which we can observe in this work. The newspaper started to encourage rice production by stating that, despite the good results obtained by then and the favorable geography, rice culture had been neglected by the farmer. Its ideology is made clear and so is its position in the space of disputes for the most legitimate view in the field of ideological production.

Rice Farming

Everyone will know, and accept, the satisfactory results that have been achieved, especially in our municipality, in the realm of rice culture, one of the agricultural problems that, more than anything, has grabbed the attention of our peasants and industrialists. It is precisely because of the river banks that we have in the municipality, interspersed with rivers and streams, that rice culture has been very popular among us. It is sad that in view of the results achieved, this culture is yet to be fully developed and yet to receive the attention it deserves from our men. Not long ago, our State collected the largest numbers in terms of rice production. Importation records show that the results of that agricultural activity have completely satisfied the aspirations that could be nurtured in this business.[...] (*CULTURA do arroz. O Comercio*, 7 fev. 1906) (This article has been translated from Portuguese into English).

In this excerpt, we can see an attempt for unification and standardization. The same is observed throughout the entire article, as posited by Thompson J. (2000) in its characteristics and strategies of the symbolic form, when it seeks to standardize the behavior of that society, as a whole, on the activity of rice cultivation in Cachoeira.

In the newspaper’s view, the help of nature was expected. Not much effort was put in improving techniques or risking its capital in rice production. Rather, money was to be invested in the bank. The text continues to bring a criticism to imported products, considered to be of terrible quality, which for a long time supplied the market at the time. On that line, national products were preferred, something that, for the newspaper, would be a joyful hope. Then, the report again addresses propaganda, regarding its point of view, as it states its burning desire to see more capital being invested in agriculture.

It is sad that we have to confess that, first of all, we have the habit of speculating whether the results achieved come from our work: once we do that, we get stuck in our actions, and ignore them. In this sense, we would be solely relying on nature as our greatest helper. It is the fear of risking the money that we may have; in our view, it is always more appropriate that they are still unproductive in a bank at the rate of 4% or 5%, than exposing them to an industrial setback. We forgot the other side of the story. We keep in mind that we may fail and it is always what we choose. We always forget that we can be extremely successful and that industrialists can, by reaping the fruit of their great work, double their earnings. Our markets have always been filled with imported

goods, sometimes of very poor quality which, according to some people, are vectors for bubonic plague. These times, however, they have been devoted to the consumption of the national products, a consumer's favorite. This, of course, gives up some hope and if we have a burning desire to give agriculture in Rio Grande do Sul the greatest conceivable impulse, there is no justification for us to be and keep our arms crossed, and not invest the money that could boost our greatest agricultural development! (CULTURA do arroz. O Commercio, 7 fev. 1906).

(This article has been translated from Portuguese into English)

In the remaining part of the article, another municipality is cited as an example, which provided fiscal incentives for rice production — an experience that the newspaper considers advantageous. The newspaper compares the situation with that of Cachoeira, where, in addition to the public taxes, a new tax on firewood began to be charged. It was heavy for the industry, which added risk to those who wished to invest in rice. Thus, even though the city was in an excellent geographic location for rice production, there was no support from the government. Several statements show tensions between the municipal authorities and the new class of entrepreneurs of which O Commercio was beginning to become a supporter. We can see that, in view of Thompson's (2000) postulates, that the symbolic construction strategies, which he named, in a more general way, the symbolic forms, are used to guide relations of domination. This involved struggles in the symbolic fields, with regard to the newspaper's role in the discussions in the society of Cachoeira at the time, related to the field of ideological production.

We are certain that the municipality of Monte Negro reckoned that it would be helpful in expanding this industry. For this reason, it exempted rice as well as the peeling and preparation factories from the export tax. In this way, industrialists could fearlessly earn their income, the profits that would good for the public coffers, to have a better land to grow and better channeling. In short, farmers would be absolutely free of the heavy public contribution that, truth be told, sometimes has a huge impact on industrial budgets. Let us look at ourselves now, that is, at our present time: we will see factories in a difficult position. On the one hand, the public contribution, on the other, the new and heavy tax on firewood, a cruel and pernicious burden that comes to affect and compromise the action of our industries. All this added to the fear of industrialists who were afraid to expose their earnings. This, nonetheless, is harmful for the industry that needed to be developed, for our good, for the well-being of the people and the progress of the municipality. We cannot believe that mirroring the practice of Monte Negro would create difficulties; a light study, a quick comparison of data, would give immediate proof that, without making a sacrifice, our municipality could compete to give valuable support to the rice culture. What we have to do, we fear it has been accomplished, as we are confident in our deeds [...] (CULTURA do arroz. O Commercio, 7 fev. 1906).

(This article has been translated from Portuguese into English)

In the article dated May 16, 1906, the newspaper's worldview is made clear again, as well as its beliefs and values. It stated that, long before the good results appeared in advertising — that is, in an effort to symbolically influence and present the most legitimate vision in the field of ideological production - they already defended agriculture and rice farming, giving opinions and even offering advice.

The Rice

We did not expect that satisfactory results would come to the fore in advertising, to show ourselves off as [illegible] of local interests: we have long been concerned with such a subdivision of the agricultural industry either by showing its advantages or giving our opinion and offering our advice (CULTURA do arroz: O Commercio, 7 fev. 1906).

In the same ideological line of defense and encouragement of rice production, the news mirrors the statement that rice “could be, in the future, for us, what coffee is for São Paulo” (O ARROZ: O Commercio, 16 May 1906).

Again, symbolic strategies are used to try to establish a relationship of dominance in disputes between the various fields of symbolic production. Regarding the discussions on issues related to Cachoeira, which involve the owners of the newspaper and rice investors, there is an attempt to define the agenda of society and establish its domains.

As we validate the increasing role that *O Commercio* had been getting as a reference for a section of society in Cachoeira, on Jan 1, 1907, as a result of the newspaper's seven-year anniversary, a poem addressed to Henrique Möller Filho was published, whose content praises the newspaper. It was written by a reader, Waldomiro Taborda, who, according to information from the Historical Archive of Cachoeira do Sul, was a figure present in moments of community meetings. One of the verses reads: "Sagrado defensor do nobre Povo (Holy defender of the noble People)" (*O COMMERCIO*, 1 jan. 1907).

O COMMERCIO (*O COMMERCIO*, 1 jan. 1907)
To Henrique Möller Filho.
There we see the January sun
And here goes another year for this newspaper
Today is its happy and cheerful anniversary
A vivid lighthouse from society.
Wearing gala, full of pleasure
Come festive and triumphant to the party,
To receive the genuine gift
From its unprecedented effort!
O Commercio' leaves light traits...
Marching into the vanguard full of hope,
Looking vividly into the future...
Sacred defender of the noble People,
To the rise of this New Year,
Happily I will send you these verses.
Vaccacahy-Mirim, 1-1-1907.
Waldomiro Taborda⁴.

The verses of Taborda praises the newspaper as being "Da sociedade, vívido phanal (A vivid lighthouse from society)" (*O COMMERCIO*, 1 jan. 1907). that is, its role is to guide the community. In other excerpts, again we see the idea that the newspaper is responsible for illuminating the community — "Deixa, O Commercio" um rastro luminoso (O Commercio leaves light traits) ..." (*O COMMERCIO*, 1 jan. 1907) and, even more, inspire it to bring the lead of progress — "Marchando na vanguarda bonançoso (Marching into the vanguard full of hope)" (*O COMMERCIO*, 1 jan. 1907).

Here we can see the consonance with Bourdieu's (1990, pp. 149–168) thought in relation to the attempt, by glorifying the newspaper, to exercise symbolic power through words, by creating symbolic capital and modifying society's worldview. According to the author, symbolic power constitutes groups or provides means for groups that already exist to consolidate themselves.

This new group of rice entrepreneurs of which the newspaper shows up as an ambassador finds resonance in the verses of Taborda. This orientation is solidified and differentiated in relation to the other newspapers in the city at the time, which tend to be more political or advertising-oriented, seeking to exercise their influences in the field of ideological production. In this sense, there is a dispute for the most legitimate vision among the various fields of symbolic production with relation to the guidelines of the society in question.

⁴ The poem has been freely translated from Portuguese into English.

3. Final Remarks

For everything that has been described so far, starting with the theory and method, as well as the approach of socio-historical concepts of the press in general and of the newspaper O Commercio specifically, it has been found that some news reports are key to understanding the ideology of the newspaper according to the thought and concepts listed by Bourdieu P. (1997), Eagleton T. (1997) and Thompson J. (2000). Here, for example, 4 news reports from 1905, 1906, 1907, from the newspaper O Commercio, were brought in full to illustrate the application of Thompson's Hermeneutics in the case of the historical press.

By employing the theory that supports the application of the method, it was possible to observe the concepts of Thompson and Eagleton, anchoring the intended domination in that society, encompassing Bourdieu's concept of the ideological production field and using the symbolic power to establish his vision of the world.

We intended to showcase the applicability of John Thompson's Depth Hermeneutics method in the case of the historical press, which, from the analyses presented in this article and also in my doctoral thesis, we can claim to use such hermeneutics to analyze the press of the past.

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