

Corporations and the Brazilian civil-military dictatorship: the editorials of *Folha de S. Paulo* newspaper from a historical perspective

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Abstract

In alignment with historical organizational studies (Decker, Hassard, & Rowlinson, 2021; Maclean, Harvey, & Clegg, 2016) and seeking a geographical (re) orientation, more to the Global South, to historical research in organizational and management studies (A. S. M. Costa & Wanderley, 2021; Wanderley & A. Barros, 2019), the article aims to understand the ideological positioning and the political-discursive performance of the newspaper *Folha de S. Paulo* in the early period of the Brazilian civil-military dictatorship (1964-1985). A theoretical framework was built, supported by two historiographical currents (Business and Dictatorship; History and Press) and by the concepts of discourse, ideology, and power articulated by critical discourse analysis. In terms of documental sources, 112 daily editorials were collected, published from January to June 1964, and available in the historical archive of the researched company. The theoretical and methodological contribution of Norman Fairclough's (2016) three-dimensional model and its proposed use by J.B. Thompson's (2011) model of analysis of strategies of ideological constructions were used. As a result, it was possible to identify three different moments in the discursive trajectory of the positioning of the *Folha de S. Paulo* newspaper concerning the military coup of 1964 in Brazil: (1) significant contribution to the destabilization of the democratic government of President João Goulart, (2) strong alignment with the military coup and its immediate unfoldings; and (3) support for the subsequent Castelo Branco government, but already with the enunciation of some reservations. Finally, it is possible to affirm that this journalistic organization acted strongly not only as an instrument of information but mainly as a producer and reproducer of specific discourses in favor of a particular social group and its subsequent dictatorial acts. Against this background, historical research into the political and socio-economic relations between business, government, and society over time and their unfolding today is becoming increasingly necessary.

Keywords: Military dictatorship. Discourse. Ideology. The press. *Folha de S. Paulo*. Historical organizational studies.

Empresas e ditadura civil-militar brasileira: os editoriais do jornal Folha de S. Paulo em uma perspectiva histórica

Resumo

Em alinhamento com os estudos organizacionais históricos (Decker, Hassard, & Rowlinson, 2021; Maclean, Harvey, & Clegg, 2016) e buscando uma reorientação geográfica mais ao sul global, no foco nas pesquisas históricas e em estudos organizacionais e de gestão (A. S. M. Costa & Wanderley, 2021; Wanderley & A. Barros, 2019), este artigo tem como objetivo compreender o posicionamento ideológico e a atuação político-discursiva do jornal *Folha de S. Paulo* no período inicial da ditadura civil-militar brasileira (1964-1985). Para tanto, construiu-se um referencial teórico sustentado por duas correntes historiográficas (Empresariado e Ditadura; História e Imprensa) e pelos conceitos de discurso, ideologia e poder articulados pela análise crítica de discurso. Em termos de fontes documentais, foram coletados 112 editoriais diários, publicados de janeiro a junho de 1964 e disponíveis no arquivo histórico da empresa pesquisada. Para a realização da análise dos dados coletados, foram utilizados o aporte teórico-metodológico do modelo tridimensional de Norman Fairclough (2016) e a sua proposta de utilização do modelo de análise de estratégias de construções ideológicas de J. B. Thompson (2011). Como resultado, foi possível identificar três momentos na trajetória de construção discursiva do jornal *Folha de S. Paulo* em relação ao golpe militar de 1964 no Brasil: 1) significativa contribuição para a desestabilização do governo democrático do presidente João Goulart; 2) forte alinhamento com o golpe militar e seus desdobramentos imediatos; e 3) apoio ao posterior governo Castelo Branco, mas já com a enunciação de algumas ressalvas. Por fim, é possível afirmar que essa organização jornalística atuou fortemente não apenas como instrumento de informação, mas, principalmente, como produtora e reprodutora de discursos específicos em prol de determinado grupo social e de seus atos ditatoriais subsequentes. Diante desse quadro, tornam-se cada vez mais necessárias pesquisas históricas sobre as relações políticas e socioeconômicas entre empresas, governo e sociedade ao longo do tempo e seus desdobramentos na atualidade.

Palavras-chave: Ditadura militar. Discursos. Ideologia. Imprensa. *Folha de S. Paulo*. Estudos organizacionais históricos.

Empresas y dictadura cívico-militar brasileña: los editoriales del diario Folha de S. Paulo en perspectiva histórica

Resumen

En consonancia con los estudios organizativos históricos (Decker, Hassard, & Rowlinson, 2021; Maclean, Harvey, & Clegg, 2016) y buscando una reorientación geográfica más hacia el Sur global, en el enfoque de la investigación histórica y en los estudios organizativos y de gestión (A. S. M. Costa & Wanderley, 2021; Wanderley & A. Barros, 2019), el artículo pretende comprender el posicionamiento ideológico y la actuación político-discursiva del periódico *Folha de S. Paulo* en el período inicial de la dictadura cívico-militar brasileña (1964-1985). Para ello, se construyó un marco teórico apoyado en dos corrientes historiográficas (Empresariado y Dictadura e Historia y Prensa) y en los conceptos de discurso, ideología y poder articulados por el análisis crítico del discurso. En cuanto a las fuentes documentales, se recogieron 112 editoriales diarios, publicados de enero a junio de 1964 y disponibles en el archivo histórico de la empresa investigada. Para llevar a cabo el análisis de los datos recogidos, se utilizó el aporte teórico y metodológico del modelo tridimensional de Norman Fairclough (2016) y su propuesta de uso del modelo de análisis de estrategias de construcciones ideológicas de J.B. Thompson (2011). Como resultado, fue posible identificar tres momentos en la trayectoria discursiva del periódico *Folha de S. Paulo* en relación con el golpe militar de 1964 en Brasil: (1) contribución significativa a la desestabilización del gobierno democrático del presidente João Goulart, (2) fuerte alineamiento con el golpe militar y sus desdoblamiento inmediatos; y (3) apoyo al posterior gobierno de Castelo Branco, pero ya con la enuncianción de algunas salvedades. Finalmente, es posible afirmar que esta organización periodística actuó fuertemente no sólo como instrumento de información, sino principalmente como productora y reproductora de discursos específicos a favor de un determinado grupo social y sus subsiguientes actos dictatoriales. En este contexto, la investigación histórica sobre las relaciones políticas y socioeconómicas entre las empresas, el gobierno y la sociedad a lo largo del tiempo y su desarrollo en la actualidad es cada vez más necesaria.

Palabras clave: Dictadura militar. Discurso. Ideología. Prensa. *Folha de S. Paulo*. Estudios organizativos históricos.

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INTRODUCTION

The companies' and the business community's political action in collaboration with authoritarian governments appear discreetly in the research agendas in organizational and management studies. In most cases, these studies deal with corporate social responsibility, business ethics, business and human rights, or corporate historical responsibility (A. Barros, 2018; A. S. M. Costa & M. A. C. Silva, 2018; Linstead, Maréchal, & Griffin, 2014; Maritan & Oliveira, 2022, Schrempf-Stirling, Palazzo, & Phillips, 2016). We believe that one of the possible ways to expand this debate is by engaging more researchers in historical research in organizational studies. In other words, studies aimed at looking to the past to understand organizations (and their trajectories) in a specific socio-historical context, and that can be grouped – depending on the convergence of sources, methods, and knowledge – in the area that Maclean et al. (2016) call historical organizational studies.

However, in addition to the historical method, organizational research can, and should, engage in different historiographical lines (a set of historical research that, in permanent dialogue, provides the theoretical and empirical basis for a thematic approach). On the one hand, historical research shows (as a source of data and/or methods) power relations inherent to the dominant ideological reproduction that tend to naturalize organizational thinking and action, demonstrating the political commitment of the intertwined relationship between the company, government, and society (A. S. M. Costa, D. F. Barros, & Martins, 2010; M. A. C. Silva, Campos, & A. S. M. Costa, 2022). On the other hand, the engagement in historiographical lines reinforces the theoretical and analytical potential (concepts, categories, and questions) of organizational history research (Decker et al., 2021). This article addresses two historiographical lines already well established in the history of contemporary Brazil: 1) history and press and 2) businesses and dictatorship.

In line with the first historiographical line – history and press – we argue that the political-discursive actions of organizations in society become even more complex when they are journalistic companies or the mainstream press. The current dominant newspapers' discourse – channels that are, par excellence, neutral, balanced, and not politically positioned when it comes to their daily organizational practices – is that “opinion pieces are restricted to editorials that express the newspaper's point of view, and to columns that show the views of their authors. The intention in the news articles is to convey a balanced perspective” (Mello, 2020, p. 181, our translation). For Luca (2006, p. 138, our translation), this neutral view is the result, from the 1950s onward, of a series of transformations introduced with the professionalization of daily newspapers, among them the consolidation of the idea that the newspaper fulfills the role of informing readers what happened, “respecting the truth of the facts rigorously”.

At the same time, the theme's vast historiography demonstrates that newspapers, “in addition to being information vehicles, had – and some continue to have – an important role as opinion makers, and were characterized as instruments of manipulation of interests and intervention in political life” (Capelato, 2014, p. 303, our translation). The fallacy of balance/neutrality in newspaper companies somehow masked the fact that the press selects, organizes, structures, and narrates “in a certain way, what was elected as worthy of reaching the public” (Luca, 2006, p. 138, our translation). Thus, newspapers create their own narrative when attributing meaning to specific events (Abreu, 2005; Capelato, 2014; Smith, 2000; Taschner, 1992).

Regarding the second historiographical line – businesses and dictatorship – there is a significant academic production about the role of the mainstream press in moments of social and political disruption. The use of the Brazilian press by business people to put forward their political and economic interests, ideas, and values is not new¹.

¹According to Campos (2018b, p. 5, our translation), an “example of businesses supporting the press – in this case, a large media group – was the relationship between Assis Chateaubriand's media companies, the *Diários Associados*, and the Light Group. In the 1920s, this Canadian company apparently helped Chatô [Assis Chateaubriand] buy *O Jornal*, the starting point in the creation of his media empire, which included connections with politicians and business people. [...] This coincides with other reports that point out how the interests of businesses could condition or determine a newspaper's news articles, editorials, or its entire orientation. On the other hand, there was a company strategy of using the press to achieve certain ends.”

However, this recurrent and historical use of the press developed into something more complex during the civil-military dictatorship when some business groups acquired media corporations in the country².

For example, Perlatto (2019, p. 83, our translation) points out that the role of the press “has been privileged by studies dedicated to understanding the military coup of 1964 and the dictatorship established in the country”. In general, this historiographical line highlights the role of connections among the Brazilian military, the US government, and Brazilian business people (Dreifuss, 1981; Napolitano, 2011; M. A. C. Silva, 2018) while pointing to the strong participation and collaboration of large companies with the Brazilian civil-military dictatorship that occurred from 1964 to 1985 (Abreu, 2005; Campos, Brandão, & Lemos, 2020; Dias, 2012, 2013; Smith, 2000). This study adopts this historiographical line, supported by a group of researchers who have developed complementary arguments (such as Campos, 2018a, 2020; Capelato, 2014; Lemos, 2016, 2020; M. A. C. Silva, 2018; Smith, 2000; Taschner, 1992) and seeks to emphasize the discursive role of the Brazilian press in the country’s politics.

Thus, the main argument of this article is that the deposition of Brazilian President João Goulart by the military at the end of March 1964 was encouraged, corroborated, and legitimized by the action of the mainstream press, making it essential to understand the ideological aspects that interconnect the press’ discourse and the political context. Therefore, this study aims to understand the ideological position and the political-discursive actions of the newspaper *Folha de S. Paulo* (FSP) in the Brazilian civil-military dictatorship (1964-1985) by analyzing the discursive strategy presented in its editorials before, during, and after the 1964 coup d’état.

BUSINESSMEN AND DICTATORSHIP

The historiographical line businesses and dictatorship is one of the main confrontational lines that seek to fully understand the Brazilian military coup of 1964 by grouping a series of events related to the political and economic performance of large business groups (M. A. C. Silva, 2018). Supported by René Armand Dreifuss’ (1981) theoretical-analytical apparatus, this line highlights the connection between businesses and the military and the role of the coordination that gathered right-wing civil groups based on the Brazilian business community, and involved the Brazilian military, multinational and associated capital, and the US government and resulted in the deposition of then President João Goulart (Napolitano, 2011; M. A. C. Silva, 2018). Based on Antonio Gramsci’s thoughts, Dreifuss (1981) presents the multinational and associated power bloc as composed not only of influential shareholders and company directors but also of its executives and a technobureaucratic network of influence within the state apparatus.

Thus, this historiographical line understands that the coup d’état that disrupted the Brazilian democratic regime in 1964 had the participation of different segments of society in addition to the military, with special involvement of business owners (A. Barros & Taylor, 2020; Campos, 2018a, 2020). Dreifuss (1981) analyzed the actions of businesses before the 1964 coup, investigating these agents’ role in the destabilization of President Goulart’s government. The author analyzed documents from the Institute of Research and Social Studies (Ipes) and pointed out that the business community, particularly businesses associated with foreign capital, not only offered support but actively participated in the movement to take over the government in 1964. The business community offered an evident class profile to the coup, “creating conditions to set up a business order in post-1964 Brazil” (Campos et al., 2020, p. 18, our translation).

Ipes was founded in 1961 by groups of business owners organized in several Brazilian cities, mainly in Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo. The institute promoted an intense media campaign against President Goulart’s government. Articles were published in newspapers, books, and leaflets; films were produced, and courses, seminars, and public conferences were organized (Bortone, 2014, 2018; Spohr, 2020). Ipes prepared and executed an “orchestrated effort” to destabilize President Goulart’s government. The activities included “funding an anti-communist propaganda campaign, supporting anti-government public demonstrations and backing, also financially, opposition or extreme right-wing groups and associations”

² As an example, we highlight the case of the newspaper *Correio da Manhã*, acquired in 1969 by Mauricio Alencar and Frederico Gomes da Silva, and which “after the acquisition the contractors [...] it resembled an official channel for publicizing the government and the business interests of public works builders” (Campos, 2018b, p. 17, our translation). Another case was that of construction entrepreneur Henry Maksoud who, in 1974, “[...] broadened his activities by purchasing the publishing group *Visão*, responsible for *Visão* magazine, the group’s flagship, in addition to the periodicals *Dirigente Construtor*, *Dirigente Rural*, *Dirigente Industrial*, *Quem É Quem*, *Dirigente Municipal*, and *Perfil*, the last two focused on public administration” (Campos, 2018b, p. 7, our translation).

(Schwarcz & Starling, 2015, p. 441). Ipes raised funds from business owners, managers of multinational companies, and other international sources (Bortone, 2018), such as the US government, which supported activities through the US Embassy (Starling, 2019). Ipes' purpose was to produce a new consensus in Brazilian society on the nature and goals of economic activity and the organization of society (A. Barros & Taylor, 2020).

In this context, Ipes operated as a closed space where business owners and other pro-capitalist social elites could build a shared ideological program on economic policies. Thus, as an ideological institution of the 1964 coup, Ipes brought together the military, business people, journalists, intellectuals, and publicists, among other segments of the ruling classes. These groups worked to build an understanding of the Brazilian reality and disseminate it anonymously through the press, which was these groups' most effective arm. Ipes propagated its ideology and shaped public opinion through its special relationship with the most important Brazilian newspapers³.

Thus, the business-military nature of this alliance for the coup is explained by two main interests: "preserving the internal capitalist order in the face of supposed communist threats and adjusting the state system to the dynamics of world capitalism" (Lemos, 2016, p. 3, our translation). The international context in which the business-military alliance developed was marked by the period after the Second World War (1939-1945) and can be identified by the traits of militarism and anti-communism (Lemos, 2020). According to Lemos (2020), the intensification of the class struggle between 1962 and 1964, in a context of general crisis in Brazilian society, led the business sectors that still defended a reformist nationalism to an approximation with the political-military sectors opposing President Goulart's government. This alliance was so representative that many intellectuals from the associated multinational bloc were part of political bodies established to promote "both the modernizing-conservative interests and the overthrow of the national-reformist government of João Goulart" (Dreifuss, 1981, p. 95, our translation).

At the same time, military officers shared ideological principles common to business owners who were invited to give conferences at the Escola Superior de Guerra (ESG) (the Brazilian war college), a practice that promoted a closed system of ideas in favor of capitalist industrial development (Lemos, 2016). A threat of communist subversion had been disseminated in this space since the 1950s fueling anti-communist feelings and an approximation between businesses and the military (Lemos, 2020). In this context, the 1964 military intervention was described, conducted, and perceived as "an 'action of salvation' legitimized by the national security doctrine disseminated largely by the ESG" (Dreifuss, 1981, p. 142, our translation).

As mentioned earlier, historians, political scientists, and organizational theorists have carried out some studies along these lines in recent years (Campos et al., 2020). Research on the relationship between the military dictatorship and businesses are examples: Bortone (2014, 2018) researched the case of the pharmaceutical industry, Campos (2020) explored the case of public works contractors, M. A. C. Silva (2018) and M. A. C. Silva et al. (2022) discussed the participation of Volkswagen do Brasil, and C. L. Silva (2005) studied the behavior of the Brazilian press during the dictatorship. Lemos (2020) addresses the convergence between the military and business owners, highlighting the role played by the ESG in the pre-coup. Spohr (2020) analyzes the relationship of the Alliance for Progress with Brazilian business owners in the 1960s, while Wanderley and Bauer (2020) use decoloniality and the geopolitics of knowledge to show how much the Alliance for Progress was reflected in management education in Brazil. Also, new studies were stimulated by the debates about the establishment of the *Comissão Nacional da Verdade* (CNV) (National Truth Commission) to investigate crimes and human rights violations that occurred in Brazil, particularly during the 21 years of dictatorship (1964 and 1985) and the publication of its final report in 2014 (Campos et al., 2020; A. S. M. Costa & M. A. C. Silva, 2017, 2018). Finally, an important work encompassing Brazil and Latin America is the book edited and published in 2021 by Victoria Basualdo, Hartmut Berghoff, and Marcelo Bucheli, *Big business and dictatorships in Latin America: a transnational history of profits and repression*. It is worth reinforcing that one of the elements privileged in the literature is the role of the press, understood as a political-business actor operating as a source of consensus-building (Capelato, 2014), as discussed in the following section.

³ *Folha de S. Paulo* was one of these newspapers. FSP was part of the media group owned by Octávio Frias de Oliveira (Dreifuss, 1981; Pereira, 2013), who oscillated his professional life between business activities and the stability of the public service. He acquired FSP in 1962 in a partnership with businessman Carlos Caldeira Filho (Kushnir, 2022). The study by Dreifuss (1981) mapped economic links among Ipes' prominent leaders and members and identified Octávio Frias and FSP among members in the state of São Paulo in the period pre-1964. He maintained a direct relationship with other Ipes leaders such as João Baptista Leopoldo Figueiredo (Dreifuss, 1981), Paulo Ayres Filho (Dreifuss, 1981; Moreira, 2019), and Golbery do Couto e Silva (Abreu & Lattman-Weltman, 2003; Dreifuss, 1981). Therefore, the Frias family was one of the surnames linked to Ipes-SP that achieved great prominence after 1964 and has been part of a consistent trajectory in the history of Brazilian capitalism (Moreira, 2019).

HISTORY AND THE PRESS: THE 1964 COUP AND *FOLHA DE S. PAULO*

The political, social, and economic context of President João Goulart's government (1961-1964) was unusual and complex. Goulart took office as the Brazilian President amid a political crisis after the resignation of Jânio Quadros on August 25, 1961, and his term had a parliamentary and a presidential phase. At the same time, the country was going through a series of reforms (land, urban, banking, electoral, university), high inflation, devalued wages, and a rising cost of living (Schwarcz & Starling, 2015).

Goulart was the president of the Brazilian Labor Party (PTB) and the political heir of former Brazilian President Getúlio Vargas. His activities had marked him as a politician with left-wing ideological tendencies and a promoter of strikes and the participation of communist leaders in unions. Part of the Brazilian political elite, conservative and right-wing oriented, considered Goulart an agitator incapable of governing the country (Abreu, 2005; Dreifuss, 1981). The fact that João Goulart took office as president contradicted the expectations of multinational and associated businesses and the right-wing military. This dissatisfaction emerged since Goulart went against the privileges of foreign capital, focusing on improving the general population's living conditions, proposing income distribution through salary increases, and allocating part of public resources to education and free medical care services (Dreifuss, 1981).

The situation was radicalized after three successive events. The first was the so-called *Revolta dos Sargentos* (Sergeants' Revolt), on September 12, 1963. It was started by corporals, sergeants, and non-commissioned officers of the Brazilian Navy and Air Force, against the rule that prevented sergeants from running for elective positions in the legislative branches of government. The second was the *Comício da Central* or *Comício das Reformas* (Reforms Rally) on March 13, 1964, promoted to reinforce the government's decision to implement basic reforms. Finally, the *Marcha da Família com Deus pela Liberdade* (March of the Family with God for Freedom), on March 19, 1964 (Ferreira & Gomes, 2014). The sequence of strikes, the intense criticism of the government's economic policy, and the mobilization of right-wing groups led to a climate of significant political and economic instability in the country. When President Goulart decided to promote rallies in the main cities to mobilize the population in favor of the proposed grassroots reforms, "newspapers, politicians, the Church, and business people attributed a connection between the rally and communism [...] [and] the news, the declarations of politicians, public personalities, and the military on the 'communization' of the country intensified" (Abreu, 2005, p. 18, our translation). The events were related to an accusation against President Goulart for being "irresponsible." According to Dreifuss (1981, p. 141, our translation), "he, a landowner and politician formed within the populist tradition, was condemned by the bourgeoisie as a traitor to his class." Thus, the associated multinational power bloc engaged the public opinion in a campaign against "chaos and stagnation, corruption and subversion" (Dreifuss, 1981, p. 143, our translation).

After the 1964 coup, the Brazilian civil-military dictatorship went hand in hand with the process of modernization of the country's mainstream press, in which the military government assumed a role of an important ally, both by offering credit and by advertising in the newspapers (Abreu, 2005; Dias, 2012). However, it was not a one-way relationship; on the contrary, "the idea of modernizing the press was essential as a political-ideological strategy of the military to guarantee a situation of national security" (Dias, 2012, p. 45, our translation). Dias (2012) pointed out that the press was strongly committed to disseminating principles considered nationalist and democratic and order and the rule of law, being a key actor in the fight against the alleged communist threat – considered one of the main justifications for the military intervention at that time.

At first, "the landowners and journalists defended the formal principles of the democratic regime, gave space to speeches favorable to the maintenance of the regime, and the newspapers formulated arguments in favor of obedience to the Constitution" (Abreu, 2005, p. 13, our translation). However, this initial scenario changed as ideological mobilization and the country's economic situation intensified. In other words, at the moment when the government approached the radical left groups and lost the support of groups in the center of the political spectrum – especially when the political-economic crisis aggravated – the newspapers modified their discourse, elaborating and following the direction of the groups favorable to the deposition of President Goulart (Abreu, 2005). In this context, the associated multinational power bloc raised the level and quality of the class struggle through the military intervention, "imposing solutions to the crisis, controlling political society and producing a realignment in the relations of dominion through an authoritarian military form of government" (Dreifuss, 1981, p. 143, our translation).

The case of the newspaper *Folha de S. Paulo* is an example of the trajectory described above. The newspaper *Folha* was established in 1920, and although it had many owners who put forward different orientations, it always had a relevant political-discursive performance (Capelato, 2014). In 1948, José Nabantino, the owner before the acquisition by the business

group Frias-Caldeira, defined the newspaper as a “business vehicle aimed at the middle class” and launched the *Folhas* Action Program, in which he explained the newspaper’s intention to radically separate opinion from the information (Meneses, 2014, p. 238, our translation).

In 1962, Octávio Frias de Oliveira and Carlos Caldeira Filho bought *Folha*, which published three daily editions. President Goulart was already in office when the entrepreneurs replaced the three daily editions with one, *Folha de S. Paulo*, transforming it into one of the leading newspapers of the Brazilian mainstream press (Capelato, 2014; Dias, 2013). This strategy was the start of a large business complex; although the business logic was already dominant in the organization, Frias and Caldeira Filho were responsible for consolidating the enterprise (Taschner, 1992). While the country was in a delicate moment, undergoing a process of transition and great instability, the company was in a financial-administrative restructuring process. About that political moment, Dias (2012, p. 99, our translation) pointed out that “under a parliamentary government that effectively undermined his powers and prevented him [João Goulart] from implementing the planned reforms, an atmosphere of uncertainty arose in the nation that feared his most radical proposals.” This tension increased in 1963, when Goulart finally took office, under substantial pressure, in a presidential regime.

The first moments of the newspaper’s stabilization with the new owners were remembered as “much more economical than political” (Dias, 2012, p. 58, our translation). On the other hand, this effort “to ‘modernize’ the company and to offer a lighter image to the newspaper, did not, however, lead to supporting President João Goulart” (Mota & Capelato, 1981, p. 189, our translation). For Dias (2012, p. 99, our translation), “the conservative right, the big businesses – a group to which *Folha* belonged and was identified – and the opposition saw that moment of tension in Jango’s [João Goulart’s] government as the president’s attempt to get closer to the communist left’s radical principles.” *Folha* aligned with a large part of the national business community, which saw the Goulart’s government as extreme left and heading toward communism. For Capelato (2014, p. 310, our translation) “the FSP supported the coup, celebrated the victory, but took a more reserved stance regarding the new regime.” During this period, FSP maintained important links with the government established afterward as this new administration was buying advertising spaces in the newspaper (Dias, 2012, our translation).

According to historiography, at the time of the coup, the optimism of FSP reflected the image of a company that no longer feared the future (Dias, 2013; Santos & A. S. M. Costa, 2019, 2021). For the authors, it was as if radicalization was about to end thanks to the military’s intervention, as if Brazil was moving forward, moving toward progress, and *Folha* was confident to support the nation on its new path. Pires (2008, p. 122, our translation) corroborates that “in an even more intense way than other communication vehicles, the company collaborated with the installation and maintenance of the military dictatorship, as well as with its repressive methods.”

This relationship resulted in the fact that FSP had significant profits, and the company went through great technological expansion, precisely in the so-called “years of lead,” or the most repressive moment of the dictatorship. However, in the second half of the 1970s, *Folha* sought to establish its political-editorial project more notably. “With its debts remedied and greater financial independence, the company begins to practice a policy of ‘going forward and backward,’ assuming a more critical and less silent stance in relation to the military government” (Dias, 2012, p. 59, our translation). Motta (2013, p. 69) stated that the newspaper “defended the importance of elections and ‘freedom.’” For this reason, *Folha* became the newspaper that “supported and needed the military regime for its restructuring and consolidation,” but took the role “of resistance, a kind of ‘spokesperson’ for the needs of civil society in the re-democratization period” (Dias, 2012, p. 62).

Against this backdrop, we understand that FSP shifted according to its interests, acting strategically in the political and marketing field. Thus, “by offering a diversified product line (newspapers), Grupo *Folha* consolidated its empire, having a product ready to be activated for each political or market tendency” (Sequeira, 2004, p. 13, our translation). This is exactly what happened: when the company realized that the changes in the political field had no turning back and all social segments wanted the return of democracy, it also assumed this discourse.

In addition, from the 1980s onward, studies that focused on the relationship between language and organization emerged (Westwood & Linstead, 2001). These researchers stopped looking at language as a simple communication mechanism and started understanding it as a carrier of meanings and a means of representing organizations (Chia & King, 2001). Thus, the discourse produced by newspapers reflects the social construction of reality (Santos & A. S. M. Costa, 2019, 2021) and significantly interferes with it, which highlights the importance of understanding the discursive strategies used by FSP to take an ideological stance, as we will discuss in the following section.

DISCOURSE, IDEOLOGY, AND POWER

Research using critical discourse analysis (CDA) as a methodological theory requires understanding the concepts of discourse, ideology, and power that support the comprehension of the observed phenomenon. Therefore, discourse is a complex set of interrelated linguistic acts that manifest in and through social fields of action. Van Dijk (1997) argues that discourse is the central means by which members of an organization create a social reality capable of shaping a sense of who they are, but not only that, when considering that organizations are not isolated from society. Organizations can be understood as a social collective of production, reproduction, and transformation through communication practices (Mumby & Clair, 1997).

Fairclough (2016) develops a theoretical-methodological proposal where two concomitant aspects support the use of language as a form of social practice: discourses are built based on connections, and they can also build relationships, social identities, and systems of knowledge and belief. This dual relationship brings us to the concept of ideology. Fairclough (2016, p. 122) incorporates the concept of J. B. Thompson (2011) in his social theory of discourse and defines ideology as “significations/constructions of reality (the physical world, social relations, social identities), which are built into various dimensions of the forms/meanings of discursive practices, and which contribute to the production, reproduction or transformation of relations of domination.” Thompson (2011, p. 79) proposes to conceptualize ideology “in terms of the ways in which the meaning, mobilized by symbolic forms serves to *establish and sustain* relations of domination: to establish, in the sense that meaning may actively create and institute relations of domination through the ongoing process of producing and receiving symbolic forms.” For the author, ideology requires investigating the social contexts within which these symbolic forms are employed and connected to maintain (or not) systematically asymmetrical power relations.

According to Thompson (2011), there are at least five possibilities of a non-exhaustive ideological operation linked to strategies of symbolic construction and how meaning can be mobilized in society: 1) legitimation: relations of domination that are sustained as legitimate and fair and that occur through rationalization, universalization, or narrativization; 2) dissimulation: relations of domination built based on concealing and/or denying. It occurs through displacement, euphemization, and trope (figurative use of language); 3) unification: relations of domination in which collective identity is built that links individuals, disregarding divisions that can separate them. It occurs through standardization and symbolization of unit; 4) fragmentation: relations of domination in which groups that could be a threat to the dominant group are divided. It occurs through differentiation and expurgation of the other; and 5) reification: relations of domination in which a transitory situation is portrayed as permanent, natural, and timeless, reinforcing relations of power and domination isolated from their social and historical character, and which occur through naturalization, eternalization, and nominalization/passivization.

Box 1 below summarizes the possibilities of ideological operation by presenting the strategies of symbolic construction already incorporated and used by Fairclough (2016) in his theoretical-methodological framework.

Box 1
General modes of operation of ideology

General modes of operation of ideology	Strategies of symbolic construction
<p>Legitimation Relations of domination are represented as legitimate.</p>	<p>Rationalization – a chain of reasoning seeks to justify a set of relations. Universalization – specific interests are presented as general interests. Narrativization – claims are inserted in stories of the past, so they legitimate the present.</p>
<p>Dissimulation Relations of domination are concealed, denied, or obscured.</p>	<p>Displacement – terms and expressions are displaced from the context. Euphemization – positive valuation of institutions, actions, or relations. Trope – synecdoche, metonymy, metaphor.</p>
<p>Unification Symbolic construction of a collective identity.</p>	<p>Standardization – a standard framework proposed as a shared foundation. Symbolization of unity – construction of symbols of unity and collective identification.</p>
<p>Fragmentation Fragmentation of individuals and groups that might challenge the dominant group.</p>	<p>Differentiation – emphasis on characteristics that <i>dis</i> unite individuals and groups and prevent them from challenging existing relations. Expurgation of the other – symbolic construction of an enemy.</p>
<p>Reification Represent a transitory situation as permanent and natural.</p>	<p>Naturalization – a social and historical creation is treated as a natural event. Eternalization – socio-historical phenomena are presented as permanent. Nominalization/Passivization – concentration of attention on certain themes to the detriment of others, deleting actors and actions.</p>

Source: Ramalho and Resende (2011, pp. 27-28); adapted from Thompson (1995).

It is noteworthy that, for the critical analysis of discourse, language is not powerful by itself. It acquires relevance through the use social actors adopt. In this sense, Fairclough (2016, p. 126) argues that “discursive practices are ideologically invested in so far as they incorporate significations, which contribute to sustaining or restructuring power relations.” Adopting the same line of reasoning and assuming that, as Brandão (2004) shows us, discourse is one of the ways in which ideological materiality is concretized in the social world, Thompson (2011, p. 16) points out that research requires “[...] that we investigate the social contexts within which these symbolic forms are employed and deployed; and it calls upon us to ask whether, and if so how, the meaning mobilized by symbolic forms serves or does not serve to maintain systematically asymmetrical relations of power.”

Fairclough (2016) emphasizes that his concept of discourse is linked to the concept of hegemony, a central piece in Antonio Gramsci’s analysis of western capitalism. According to Fairclough (2016, p. 127), hegemony is the “power over society as a whole of one of the fundamental economically defined classes in alliance with other social forces, but it is never achieved more than partially and temporarily, as an ‘unstable equilibrium.’ In other words, the author points out that hegemony is the construction of alliances for the domination of subaltern classes through concessions or ideological means to obtain consent.

In this context, hegemony is a focus of constant struggle to build, maintain or break alliances and relations of domination or subordination evident in economic, political, and ideological ways (Fairclough, 2016). For this reason, the interest of the CDA lies in analyzing the relations of power and control manifested in language, as is the case of this research, which is concerned with evaluating which discursive strategies the newspaper *Folha de S. Paulo* used to position ideologically before, during, and after the 1964 coup, understanding the importance of this vehicle in the dissemination of ideas and beliefs that serve to maintain hegemony.

METHODOLOGICAL PROCEDURES

The research falls within the field of historical organizational studies. It adopts the critical discourse analysis (CDA) approach to explore the relationship between discourses and sociopolitical changes, providing researchers with an approach to analyze text and context more deeply. This approach considers context an integral part of theory and analysis. Thus, this epistemologically interpretive and critical research considers that phenomena are socially and discursively constructed according to historical interactions between the different social agents (Wodak, 2004).

In line with Ybema (2014), we understand history as a symbolic place of discursive struggles because how newspapers decide to enunciate and record political and social events highlights their choices about what to write and what to erase. Thus, analyzing *Folha de S. Paulo's* discourse allows us to understand how it conceived the 1964 coup and how it took a political stance during the period studied.

Concerning historical organizational studies, several possible research frameworks seek to reconcile history and the use of its methods, sources, and historiographical lines and organizational and management studies (Coraiola, A. Barros, Maclean, & Foster, 2021). Some examples are a) the study by Usdiken and Kieser (2004) offers three perspectives – supplementarist, integrationist, and reorientationist – on how research in the field of management incorporates history; b) the research by Rowlinson, Hassard, and Decker (2014), which points out three dualisms and four research strategies for the area of organizational history, namely corporate history, analytically structured history, serial history, and ethnographic history; and c) Maclean et al. (2016), who propose four conceptions of history in organizational studies: history as evaluating, explicating, conceptualizing, and narrating.

However, this research has more adherence to the category of historical organizational studies proposed by Decker et al. (2021). The convergence toward this proposal is based on three points. First, due to the concept of *historiographical reflexivity*, created and defined by the authors “as an engagement with history as a source of theorizing as well as a repertoire of methods for researching the past” (Decker et al., 2021, p. 124), we agree that historiography can provide researchers with significant empirical and theoretical contributions. Second, we share the importance the authors attribute to the differences between memory and history. Although the two are complementary, and one feeds on the other, they are different forms of representation of the past and need to be contemplated considering their specificities (A. S. M. Costa & Saraiva, 2011; Hodge & A. S. M. Costa, 2021).

Finally, we adopted the analytical framework with four modes of inquiry proposed by Decker et al. (2021), which are supported by the answers to two questions: how can we conceptualize the past? And how can we research the past? The authors' modes of enquiry to address these questions are 1) historical organization studies; 2) retrospective organizational history; 3) historical organizational memory; and 4) retrospective organizational memory. Therefore, by answering these questions and fitting the proposed analytical scheme, historical organizational studies reconstruct the past through historical reports from a) archival documentary sources, preferably social documents and/or public documentary sources, and b) from historiographical lines already developed, as in the case of this research. We conceptualized the past as history and researched the past through two historiographical lines well established in the area of history and sources from the archive of the newspaper *Folha de S. Paulo*.

Historical documentary research was used to select and collect sources. This method presupposes a constant concern with the procedures of the historical operation and with the historical context of document production, i.e., with the specificities of the analysis conducted when the researcher works with a source: the internal and external criticism of the documents. This includes verifying the document's authenticity and the contextualization of the source, investigating validity and credibility, always inquiring about the conditions of creation and the purpose of such a document, and being “aware of the impossibility of neutrality of documents” (A. S. M. Costa & M. A. C. Silva, 2019, p. 13, our translation). Thus, to understand the ideological position and the political-discursive performance of the FSP in the initial period of the Brazilian civil-military dictatorship (1964-1985), editorials from January to June 1964 were collected in the newspaper's⁴ digital archive.

⁴ The collection of the newspaper *Folha de S. Paulo* is available at <https://acervo.folha.com.br/index.do>. It is possible to access the digital version of all the newspaper's editions since 1921. The editorials can be found using filters such as date, keywords, and content, and subscribers can access and download pages in PDF format.

Editorials have been an important source of data in organizational historical research (Tumbe, 2019) since they express the newspaper’s political and ideological alignment, enabling a greater understanding of specific social phenomena (Bowie, 2019; Mello, 2020).

A preliminary reading of the selected editorials was carried out, which addressed topics related to the more macro-social field of the country’s political context in the period. In this collection and selection process, many terms were repeated, such as “*Governo Federal*,” “*Goulart*,” “*comunismo*,” “*crise*,” “*desordem*,” “*reforma*,” “*presidente*,” “*democracia*,” “*povo*,” “*legalidade*,” “*Forças Armadas*,” “*empresas*,” “*revolução e ordem*” (federal government, Goulart, communism, crisis, disorder, remodeling, president, democracy, people, legality, Armed Forces, companies, revolution and order), among others. For January 01 to June 30, 1964, 112 editorials were selected for analysis, as shown in Box 2 below. Although there were 182 days in total, three days the newspaper did not publish an editorial, ten editorials were illegible in the collection, and 57 did not refer to the country’s political context.

Box 2
Sources – editorials of *Folha de S. Paulo*

Months observed	Number of editorials analyzed
January 1964	20
February 1964	15
March 1964	17
April 1964	25
May 1964	17
June 1964	18
TOTAL	112

Source: Elaborated by the authors.

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) was used to analyze the sources. CDA is considered a robust source to support qualitative analyses that seek to evidence processes of construction of meaning in specific social and organizational contexts. Furthermore, CDA “is not only focused on the notion of struggles for power and control, but also on intertextuality and the recontextualization of competing discourses” (Wodak, 2004, p. 236). This is because language appears as a resource that can be used to establish and sustain relations of domination and to contest and overcome such issues (Ramalho & Resende, 2011).

The analytical scheme used for the CDA was the three-dimensional model by Norman Fairclough (2016), which considers discourse not only as text but also as a discursive and social practice. This choice is justified for three reasons: 1) the model presents an analytical framework capable of mapping the links between power relations and the linguistic resources selected, in the case of this research, by the newspaper (Resende & Ramalho, 2004); 2) the model allows filling gaps in the analysis of multidisciplinary themes, to contribute to the development of critical paradigms concerning the study of organizations (Chouliaraki & Fairclough, 2010) through categories, in a structured way; and 3) the model seeks to identify the social practices behind the discursive formations.

Regarding the first dimension – textual – Fairclough (2016) states that texts are generally ambivalent and open to different interpretations. However, there are four sets of relationships around which textual analysis can be organized: vocabulary, which deals with individual words (such as neologisms, lexicalization, overexpression, relationships between words and meanings); grammar, which refers to words combined in sentences; cohesion, which concerns the connection between clauses through reference mechanisms, words from the same semantic field, close synonyms and conjunctions; and text structure, which deals with the organization of texts (the order in which elements are combined).

The second dimension of the model – discursive practice – is constituted both conventionally (which contributes to reproducing society) and creatively (which contributes to transforming society). This dimension involves processes of production, distribution, and text consumption, which vary in different types of discourse according to social factors since texts are produced, distributed, and consumed by different social contexts.

In turn, the third dimension – social practice – has economic, political, ideological, and cultural aspects. More specifically, discourse as an ideological practice “constitutes, naturalizes, sustains, and changes significations of the world from diverse positions in power relations” (Fairclough, 2016, p. 98). Also, in this dimension, the explanatory strategies of Thompson’s theoretical framework (2011), adopted by Fairclough (2016), were used to analyze symbolic constructions of ideology operation.

SOURCE ANALYSIS

The analysis of the documentary sources indicated three moments in the discursive trajectory of *Folha de S. Paulo*’s positioning concerning the 1964 military coup in Brazil. First, the editorials of January, February, and March marked a significant contribution of the newspaper to the destabilization of President Goulart’s government. The second moment refers to the editorials published in April, showing the newspaper’s alignment with the military coup. Finally, the third moment reveals FSP’s support granted – with reservations – to the subsequent government of President Castelo Branco, marked by the editorials of May and June 1964. It should be noted that, due to the space limitation of this text, only a part of the analyzed material will be presented.

January, February, and March: “Repulsion to Subversion” and “Communist Danger”

The FSP’s editorials of January, February, and March of 1964 reveal a significant contribution to the destabilization of President Goulart’s democratic government. Given the **text** dimension, the editorials of these first three months used the following categories: a) *transitivity*, when, at different times, the newspaper affirms or denies being part of society. This can be observed in statements using the expression “*nossa pátria*” (our homeland) when referring to the role of the Armed Forces; b) *evaluation*, by pointing out the negative effects of President Goulart’s actions, always relating him to communist tendencies; and c) *ethos* when constructing the Armed Forces as “cores of discipline,” as can be seen in the excerpts below:

*It is certain that the Armed Forces **will not play the role** of demolishers of democracy; **they have been the bulwark of this regime in our homeland**. What is even more certain is that these Forces, necessary to maintain the country’s integrity and ensure respect for the Constitution, **will not turn against the people**, whose tendencies and political philosophy are well known and profoundly **anti-communist** (Folha de S. Paulo, January 17, 1964, emphasis added).*

*Hope lies in the **cores of discipline** that will not allow the country, unlucky given the many crises, to throw itself into confusion. And these nuclei can be found, **obviously, in the Armed Forces** [...] (Folha de S. Paulo, February 14, 1964, emphasis added).*

Regarding the second dimension, **discursive practice**, it was possible to identify some elements in the editorials, such as the constant use of *interdiscursivity*, which affirms and legitimizes the discourse. For the newspaper, for example, two fundamental problems of President Goulart’s government were its administrative inefficiency and the relationship with communism. To discursively and ideologically construct these two issues, the FSP used the terms “*subversão*,” “*desordem*,” “*radicalizações*,” “*agitação*” (subversion, disorder, radicalizations, agitation) always related to the danger and the “communist activities” attributed to the Goulart government, as in the excerpts below:

*The state has been so often put at the service of the interests of others that **no one believes in its recovery anymore**. [...] The political struggle is thus well characterized, where party politics should not be considered but the service of the worker’s interests. [...] Through some of its spokespersons, sometimes making **clearly subversive propaganda**, the government in power is essentially a labor government (Folha de S. Paulo, January 03, 1964, emphasis added).*

*The **radicalization** of political positions in Brazil is approaching **extremely dangerous limits**. [...] No illusions can be entertained about the harmful **activity of communism** in this country, or of those sectors that, allied with it, serve its purposes [...] There is a fight for the so-called basic reforms, totally uncharacterized and transformed as a pretext for **agitation and subversion of the order** (Folha de S. Paulo, March 06, 1964, emphasis added).*

In the dimension of **social practice**, the following strategies of symbolic and ideological construction were identified, according to Thompson (2011): a) *unification/symbolization of the unit*, in which, after all the criticisms listed, observed in the excerpts above, FSP constructed a notion of collective identity in “the democratic forces of the nation” and “nobody believes in its recovery anymore” when referring to the state; b) *legitimation/universalization*, when approaching the so-called Family March with God for Freedom not as a social practice of specific interests of those who were on the march, but as a general interest, of the whole society, as indicated by the expressions “the civic traditions of the Brazilian people [that São Paulo is just a sample]” and “people, just people”; c) *reification/naturalization*, in which the newspaper presents a social construction as a natural event when, in addition to naming the people present in this march as “that human sea,” it highlights that this event would have occurred “spontaneously”:

Left-wing radicalism deserves criticism more often than right-wing radicalism. It [left-wing radicalism] is more aggressive, more provocative, more harmful to our country. [...] Every day it becomes more daring in attacks on the private sector, for example, whose destruction would also mean the ruin of democratic government (Folha de S. Paulo, March 06, 1964, emphasis added).

Rarely has one seen in Brazil such a large crowd on the street to orderly manifest a common point of view, a feeling that belongs to everyone, like the one that filled the center of the city of São Paulo in the “March of the Family with God and for Freedom.” [...] There was the people themselves, the people, the people, constituted by the gathering of all the groups working for the greatness of the homeland, proud of their traditions and beliefs and aware of their democratic destiny. [...] That human sea was formed spontaneously due to the natural flow of several streams, from neighborhoods and the interior, born in the most diverse fonts (Folha de S. Paulo, March 20, 1964, emphasis added).

There is only one lesson to be learned from the event: the civic traditions of the Brazilian people are still alive, of which São Paulo is a sample [...] People, just people, we said in a first editorial on the subject, took to the streets for the “March of the Family” (Folha de S. Paulo, March 21, 1964, emphasis added).

This march was held on March 19, organized and led by female religious groups, convened to demonstrate the militancy of the middle-class opposition to Goulart (Ferreira & Gomes, 2014). There were many banners with legalist and anti-communist messages, such as slogans defending the Constitution. The excerpts above showed other symbolic constructions used by the newspaper: d) *fragmentation/expurgation of the other*, in which people in government are placed in the construction of an enemy, as, for example, when stating that the radicalism of leftists was “more harmful to our country”; and e) *legitimation/rationalization*, by presenting a chain of reasoning to justify the relationship between the actions of President Goulart’s government and the country’s state of crisis.

April: “no going back”

The editorials published in April 1964 reveal a second moment of the newspaper’s strong alliance with the military coup and its immediate consequences. On the day of the coup, the newspaper’s editorial reinforced the polarization between the optimistic and pessimistic readers and built a dichotomy between those who trusted in the country’s future and those who thought Brazil could not develop.

Three main elements were identified in the discursive construction when considering the dimension **text**: a) *ethos*, because when analyzing how a social actor is elaborated, the newspaper constructs the military as responsible men who “acted promptly” to save the country; b) *evaluation*, given that, at different times, the editorials use terms such as “fortunately” to show its way of seeing – the newspaper’s opinion – the fact that Brazil has changed course with the political intervention of the Armed Forces; and c) *textual cohesion*, by carrying out a discursive construction in an attempt to convince readers that the deposition of President Goulart was the only alternative to rid the country of communist dictatorship. This is observed in the excerpt below and repeated throughout the editorials.

Fortunately, the nation returned to the regime of total legality that was practically suppressed in the last years of the government of former president João Goulart. And this was done, it should be noted, with minimal trauma, thanks to the discernment of our Armed Forces, which acted promptly to contain the excesses of a politician [...] (Folha de S. Paulo, March 04, 1964, emphasis added).

The discursive construction of “*revolução*” (revolution) is a textual practice in which FSP seeks to offer a positive meaning to the military movement that took power, using a term that brings the idea of a complete transformation for the better. This action can also be understood as a **discursive practice**. The term is evidence of how FSP faced the new regime and is linked to an inter-discourse propagated by Ipes to name the moment of President Goulart’s deposition. The newspaper also used the term “*premonição*” (premonition) to refer to the content of a special section published on March 31, 1964, as observed in the excerpts below. This 44-page booklet, called “*64 – Brasil Continua*” (64 – Brazil keeps going), was published the day before the coup and chronicled a future period of growth, progress, and political and economic development⁵.

The booklet presented a very positive diagnosis of the moment the country was in, despite having spent the last few months pointing out its crisis (Santos & A. S. M. Costa, 201). As seen in the excerpt below, the newspaper recommended that readers look to the future with “optimistic eyes.” In addition, when using the term “let us look,” the newspaper inserts itself in the place of the nation, passing on the idea of being together with the people through its verbal choices.

Within the framework of legality, confident in the democratic process, and hoping that they will return to the right path, politicians occasionally diverted from their serious responsibilities toward the people and the nation; let us look to the future with optimistic eyes and say with complete conviction the phrase that served as the title of the supplement that, almost as if a premonition, we published together with our edition of the 31st of last month: BRASIL CONTINUA [Brazil keeps going] (Folha de S. Paulo, April 03, 1964, emphasis added).

In the third dimension, **social practice**, it was possible to identify two strategies of ideological symbolic construction: a) *legitimation/universalization*, when speaking on behalf of the people when saying that “the feelings of the Brazilian people clearly repel communism” and b) *unification/symbolization of unity*, in which the newspaper uses the terms “general conviction” and “that inspires confidence in everyone” building a collective identification.

*Popular trust in better days for the country is manifested in several ways, [...] And we have already vehemently stressed that the **revolution cannot mean a setback** in the field of social achievements, and truly democratic measures in favor of the people perhaps already adopted. That’s the general expectation. There is no lack of trust. The disappointment would be irremediable if such promising prospects were lost (Folha de S. Paulo, April 08, 1964, emphasis added).*

When talking about Marshal Castelo Branco, the newspaper states that “the people” welcomed him and “no one” can admit failure. In other words, it was seen by the newspaper as “disappointing and hardly justifiable” if the then president did not bring about improvements in the country’s economic, political, and social structure, as noted in the excerpt above.

May and June: “two months: one result”

The third moment is identified based on the editorials published in May and June 1964, after the start of President Castelo Branco’s government. This moment is characterized by the expression of reservations about the movement that took over the Brazilian presidential office. Particularly at the beginning of June, FSP expressed concerns about the first Institutional Act (AI-1) deadline and the content of article 10 of the act – which gave President Castelo Branco the power to revoke mandates and suspend political rights.

Thus, it is possible to identify two categories in the dimension **text**: a) *evaluation*, by pointing out the need to trust the Armed Forces, making a positive assessment of those who understand why the “revolution” occurred. Also, FSP’s expressions “*sereno trabalho*” (serene work) and “*indiscutível autoridade*” (unquestionable authority) evaluate and reinforce the new president’s legitimacy and his government. However, the newspaper was clearly against the government’s measure of revoking mandates, stating that this practice should end; b) *metaphor*, by considering the coup d’état a “remédio heróico” (heroic remedy) offered to a “patient who could almost be considered already condemned.” Both constructions can be seen in the excerpts below:

⁵ The analytical division of editorials (and their discourses) into three distinct moments should not be understood as something linear without spillovers from one moment to the next. The special section “64 – Brasil Continua” (64 – Brazil keeps going) is a good example of the continuities that permeate this analytical division. As the adverts published were commercially organized in advance and were different from the adverts routinely disseminated by FSP’s regular customers, the section introduced, over the previous months, the discourse of alignment with the subsequent civil-military government.

*The evil government. Castelo Branco starts practically from nothing; thus, **its balance can be considered positive**. [...] The easiest way to achieve this objective is to honor the president, support his **serene work** and wait for his **undisputed authority** to be definitively imposed [...] (Folha de S. Paulo, May 27, 1964, emphasis added).*

*The intervention of the Armed Forces and of the civil groups that allied with it to depose the old power had the character of a **heroic remedy**, applied in desperation of cause, **in a patient who could almost be considered already condemned** (Folha de S. Paulo, May 28, 1964, emphasis added).*

*The Revolution had just completed two months, and the result of what happened in that period **showed positive and negative aspects to be recorded**. Among the positive, undeniably, **the restoration of the government's climate of respectability**, almost completely wasted in the last months of the previous administration. [...] **Unfortunately, the new Brazilian situation has negative aspects, which are impossible to hide**. [...] And if it is possible to say that the **fight against subversion** has been developed with rigor – sometimes exaggerated – it is also true that the **repression of the corrupt was not carried out on the same scale and with the same speed** (Folha de S. Paulo, June 03, 1964, emphasis added).*

Regarding the analysis of the dimension of **discursive practice**, FSP uses intertextuality when presenting Castelo Branco's speech corroborating the newspaper's view that the revolution had not yet ended, reinforcing that Brazil was not yet free from the communist ideology. However, it should be noted that the cancellation of mandates and the suspension of political rights of parliamentarians, intellectuals, diplomats, and members of the Armed Forces, without prior authorization from Congress, provided for in AI-1 (C. M. L. Costa, 2004), were a concern for the newspaper. Thus, when presenting its fear regarding such measures, FSP presents, for the first time, the statement that "those with nothing to hide have nothing to fear," which is a discursive construction used until the present day by certain social groups to defend that those who suffered in the civil-military dictatorship had done something wrong. Furthermore, the newspaper continues to define the military's seizure of power repeatedly as "revolution," and terms such as "paz," "ordem," "esperança" (peace, order, hope) were found in statements referring to the new government's actions, as observed in the excerpts below:

***The president said that the Revolution is not over**, because the communist ideology has not yet been extirpated. [...] Let us, however, ward off **pessimism** and [illegible] for our **hope** [...] less through weapons than through determined work, **within peace and order** (Folha de S. Paulo, May 10, 1964, emphasis added).*

*We would like to repeat that those with nothing to hide have nothing to fear. Unfortunately, however, some notorious **injustices** of the previous lists do not allow the great number of people that solace. If, on the one hand, there are reasons **to trust the criterion of President Castelo Branco** – who is responsible for the final decision – on the other hand, **there are justifiable reasons for reservations regarding the criteria that have been used** by the bodies in charge of gathering data to inform that decision. With the **summary investigations** that have been carried out, the **investigations conducted more or less in a rush**, the denial of the right of defense to the accused, no one can feel safe from injustice. [...] For this reason, the whole country is anxiously awaiting the 14th, when the exceptional power to revoke mandates and suspend political rights, attributed by the Institutional Act to the head of the nation, will cease (Folha de S. Paulo, June 12, 1964, emphasis added).*

Finally, the analysis of the dimension of **social practice** revealed four ideological operation strategies (Thompson, 2011). Among them, the *unification/symbolization of unity* stands out – in which FSP returns to talk about the basic reforms pointing out that the government is working to serve "all Brazilians" as if the government responded to everyone hegemonically and did not only serve the interests of a few individuals:

*The last ministerial meeting was yet another confirmation of the current government's intentions of, when considering **the expectation of all Brazilians**, decisively forwarding the basic reforms required by the country. Criticisms are often heard regarding the slow pace with which the current government is acting in this sector. However, these criticisms do not reflect the oppositional purposes of certain groups, resulting from the **natural anxiety of public opinion** toward practical measures of a clearly reformist nature. [...] It is, therefore, necessary to have enough **common sense** to put the problem of reforms in their proper terms without getting involved in the intrigue orchestrated by the opposition or impatience. [...] The government, therefore, seeks to provide an adequate response, in the administrative sphere, to the **terrible challenges that the current situation presents**, living up to the credit of confidence gained from the most varied sectors of public opinion (Folha de S. Paulo, June 08, 1964, emphasis added).*

In addition, in the same editorial, it is possible to observe the ideological operation strategy of *reification/naturalization*, in which the newspaper delegitimizes the criticisms of the new government by suggesting they are a factor of “natural anxiety of public opinion,” naturalizing a social construction. The *legitimation/universalization* appears in the FSP statement referring to the issue of a possible extension of President Castelo Branco’s government instead of holding new elections immediately: “at last, the nation would admit the absolutely indispensable postponement, which could not exceed one year” (Folha de S. Paulo, June 21, 1964). Thus, the newspaper reinforces that this one-year postponement would only be allowed if:

*The Institutional Act established that the terms of the current president and vice president end on January 31, 1966, which means that their successors must be elected a few months earlier, on the previously scheduled date. [...] However, **time may be short for cleaning up the Brazilian electoral process** so that it continues to present the gaps through which the unworthy and corrupt insinuate themselves before the constituents – always with many possibilities of being elected, thanks to their own indignity and corruption. Under these conditions, and **at last, the nation would admit the absolutely indispensable postponement**, which could not exceed one year (Folha de S. Paulo, June 21, 1964, emphasis added).*

*No one can, in good faith, believe the government is evil. Castelo Branco intends to use the illiterates as a mass for electoral maneuver or to base on them **a desire for continuation or any other less democratic intention** (Folha de S. Paulo, June 24, 1964, emphasis added).*

The newspaper *Folha de S. Paulo* takes up, in its editorials, the theme of elections and raises the question of a possible extension of President Castelo Branco’s government. Thus, it uses the strategy of ideological *dissimulation/trope* operation by using the term “sanitization of the electoral process” to hide the relations of domination constructed through figures of speech. In other words, FSP advocated the need to achieve a clean and healthy electoral process, so there is no more corruption, reinforcing the newspaper’s trust in Castelo Branco’s government. It reinforces the argument by legitimizing, once again, that no one can believe in President Castelo Branco’s “desire for continuation or any other less democratic intention”.

DISCUSSION

The analysis evidenced three main points. The first is the discursive construction of “communism” in the editorials from January to March 1964, marking what we identify as a moment of significant contribution of the newspaper to the destabilization of President João Goulart’s government. This discursive construction was relevant for the following events, given that the business-military alliance that developed in the pre-coup had anti-communism as its fundamental trait (Dreifuss, 1981; Lemos, 2020). In line with Abreu (2005), these sources revealed that the press acted as one of the vectors of the construction and reproduction of the so-called “ghost of communism,” which was used as one of the main justifications for the overthrow of Goulart’s democratic government, and it was one of the topics heavily worked on by Ipês. Furthermore, in the process of convincing the reader, the newspaper adopted patterns and repetitions, observed through the use of the terms “*comunista*,” “*subversivo*,” “*ideológico*” (communist, subversive, ideological). Thus, the newspaper *Folha de S. Paulo* was clearly aligned with the national business community, and its editorials engaged the public opinion in a campaign against communism and the subversion of values.

The second point concerns the discursive constructions of criticism toward Goulart’s government as opposed to the exaltation of the actions undertaken by the military. The constructions published in the editorials marked what we identify as a moment of FSP’s strong alignment with the military coup. As noted in the first point raised in this discussion, the terms subversion, disorder, and agitation were attributed to President Goulart’s government, whereas terms such as “*disciplina*,” “*confiança*,” “*respeito*” (discipline, trust, respect) were used to describe the military coup plotter. Also, the relativization of the interruption of a democratic government through a coup was also constructed. This narrative was based on a supposed potential growth of the country justified by another economic development model (to the detriment of the focus on overcoming social issues). In other words, FSP disseminated the idea that removing Goulart’s government was the “victorious military leaders” only alternative to “prevent Brazil from marching toward complete comunization, which the past government [led by President Goulart] took to great strides” (Folha de S. Paulo, April 05, 1964).

As highlighted by Dreifuss (1981), the military intervention was described, conducted, and perceived as “a saving action” legitimized by the doctrine of national security, disseminated and propagated by military institutions and the newspapers of the mainstream press, and, as analyzed in this study, by FSP editorials. This political-discursive performance of the newspaper is explained by the fact that the main interests of this corporate-military coup are the preservation of the capitalist order and the state system adjusted to the dynamics of world capitalism (Lemos, 2016). Following Fairclough’s (2016) concept of hegemony, it is possible to argue that *Folha de S. Paulo*, as part of this business-military alliance, acted strongly to maintain relations of domination by publishing editorials to influence its readers. This discussion reinforces the understanding of discourse as a social practice that – together with other actions such as those undertaken by Ipes in disseminating the social values mentioned above – can promote social changes.

Finally, this section’s third and final point emphasizes the third moment, when FSP supported President Castelo Branco with reservations. The newspaper started to express negative aspects about the newly established government, especially about the developments of the first Institutional Act (AI-1), instituted on April 9, 1964. The Act had a strong repressive impact on various sectors of society by determining that the heads of the three Armed Forces could suspend political rights for ten years and revoke federal, state, and municipal legislative mandates (Lemos, 2018). Thus, the editorials evidence the newspaper’s concerns with arbitrary measures that could be adopted by authorities to meet private interests. However, despite this concern, the newspaper kept showing support and optimism for the new direction of the nation.

Given the above, it is worth mentioning, again, that, for critical discourse analysis, language alone is not that powerful but becomes relevant when used by social actors (Fairclough, 2016). Thus, FSP was highly influential, considered a significant representative of the mainstream press and one of the leading media groups in Brazil at the time of the 1964 coup, with nationwide distribution. Considering that editorials express the political and ideological alignment of newspapers (Bowie, 2019; Mota & Capelato, 1981; Luca, 2006; Mello, 2020), through this analysis, it was possible to a) understand the trajectory of the ideological position of FSP throughout the first half of 1964 and b) identify signs of convergence with a capitalist industrial development model defended by the multinational and associated power bloc (Lemos, 2016).

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

Wanderley and Barros (2019) proposed decolonizing the agenda of the historic turn through organizational and management studies by analyzing the different ways in which organizations have traditionally supported military regimes in Latin America. Likewise, this study aimed to understand the ideological position and the political-discursive performance of the newspaper *Folha de S. Paulo* in the initial period of the Brazilian military dictatorship (1964-1985). As a result, we identified three different moments in the discursive trajectory of the newspaper’s positioning: 1) significant contribution to the destabilization of President João Goulart’s democratically elected government, marked by the editorials published in January, February, and March of 1964; 2) strong alignment with the military coup and its immediate aftermath, marked by the editorials published in April; and 3) support for the subsequent government of President Castelo Branco, expressing reservations as observed in the editorials published in May and June.

These moments were identified based on analyzing the discursive constructions that permeated the months before and after the 1964 coup. They observe the prevalence of terms such as “incapacity,” “communist infiltration,” “subversion,” “disorder,” and “lack of order” in the editorials, linking the country’s crisis with the reformist policies put forward by President Goulart’s government. Other terms such as “discipline,” “trust,” “respect,” “order,” and “revolution” are identified in the editorials published in the period, reinforcing a) justifications to remove President Goulart from office; b) the designation of the military as agents responsible for maintaining democracy in Brazil; and c) categorizing as enemies of the new government all those who were pessimistic and could not see the “promising future”.

Most of the time, media organizations try to be neutral by providing a space for public discourse. Despite this assumption, like any other organization, they are not exempt from political positions manifested in more or less explicit ways. The media construct and legitimize stories. It uses a series of strategies designed to draw readers' attention, producing and reproducing ideologies and beliefs, turning it into a powerful tool of domination that influences the world in all its dimensions. Therefore, it is possible to affirm that FSP acted strongly not only as an instrument of information but, mainly, in the production and reproduction of specific discursive constructions of everyday politics.

In line with historical organizational studies (Decker et al., 2021; Maclean et al., 2016) and seeking a geographic reorientation further to the global south, focusing on historical research in organizational studies (A. S. M. Costa & Wanderley, 2021; Wanderley & A. Barros, 2019), this research reinforces the potential contribution of history to organizational and management studies. This is because both the two historiographies discussed and the discursive analysis of the editorials provide us with empirical and theoretical subsidies for a better understanding of these complex events, enhancing organizational research (Decker, 2016).

The results show the importance of historical organizational research on political and socioeconomic relations over time between companies, government, and society and their current developments, particularly from a discursive perspective. At the same time, the use of newspapers as a source of research in organizational and management studies (Nicholson, 2013; Tumbé, 2019) has been growing in recent years. However, few studies seek to understand the archives and collections of newspapers and their organizational discourses as an object of interest (Bowie, 2019). As also argued by Coraiola et al. (2021, p. 3, our translation), historical archives and the companies' historical archives are still little used as an option for empirical research, and most research in the area "failed to fully understand the potential of archival and historical research." Therefore, this article contributes to the advancement of knowledge in the area of historical organizational studies by analyzing the discursive performance of a newspaper of the great national press and its consequences in the political scenario of Brazilian society.

As a limitation of this article, we highlight the option to provide further focus on Thompson's (2011) ideological operation categories instead of deepening the two dimensions (textual and discursive) developed by Fairclough (2016). Finally, as suggestions for future research, it is crucial to analyze the discourses of other mainstream newspapers in the same period to observe similarities and differences.

During the Brazilian civil-military dictatorship, the press did not act discursively in the same and/or equivalent way. There were several vehicles opposing the regime. Comparing the results of this research with an alternative newspaper of the time, for example, can be a relevant way to analyze the differences and disputes in the discursive construction and, consequently, in the ideological positioning of the different newspapers. Finally, it is worth conducting a longitudinal analysis of FSP's editorials to identify the nuances of their discursive constructions and their ideological positioning in the face of different political and social contexts. Reflecting on the political-discursive performance of journalistic companies over time allows us to problematize the current place of memory and history attributed to the media: a place of the social construction of what must be recorded, reported, and transformed into a memorable fact.

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