

Lessons from the front: Rio's war against drug trafficking, participatory culture and new media paradigms for Brazilian soap operas

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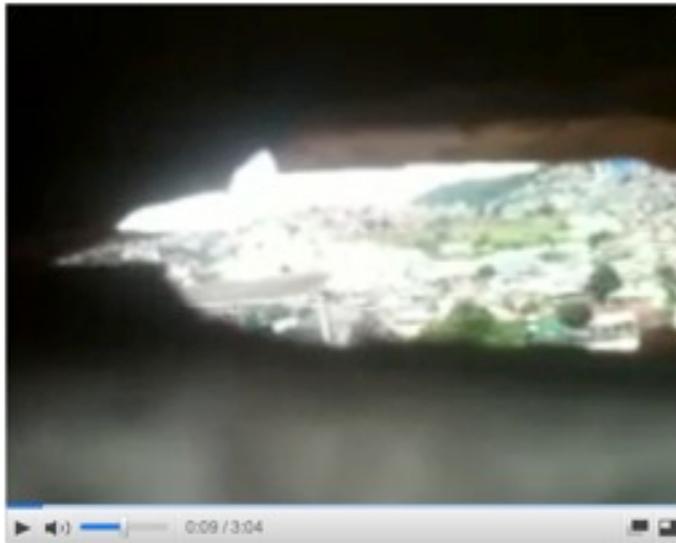
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ABSTRACT

In the master's research we have been conducting for the last two years, we have proposed a set of guidelines that might lead to the conception of a new media platform that could support world-famous Brazilian soap operas. Along the way, however, an episode of significant social impact in Brazil has come out in Rio de Janeiro, reaching international repercussion: state police forces reconquered a slum territory called “Alemão” complex, historically considered the largest drug trafficking bunker in the city. The episode – which included several violent actions in different points of the city – took place in December 2010 and lasted for 5 days, directly affecting the lives of thousands of local residents, and mobilizing the entire city. We examined this episode in light of the research debates and theories developed by authors such as Jenkins, Murray and Manovich, among others, and we raised several important issues about media arrangements and mediation practices, specifically the dynamics through television, Twitter, major media coverage and amateur content producers. It was a sample of a real and tangible way of how cyber-culture is changing the media ecology, and also useful as foundation of some research assumptions, such as those concerning the role of the author, narrative forms, participatory culture, and user behavior on social networks. Therefore, the paper reports those findings, describing what that episode was about, what conclusions were reached upon its analysis and how worth it was in terms of creating a new model of Brazilian soap opera.

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Introduction: searching for a new Brazilian soap opera platform

The world is undergoing a period of dramatic changes in its communication media. Television, considered the primary and most accessible media, faces the growth of the so-called new media, which influences the established media order through changes in technology and logic of production and consumption. In Brazil, where the accessibility of television is even more evident, we observe three phenomena related to new media. First, the high acceptance of social networks, which can be seen as strong social communication and interaction means. Second, Brazil tops the ranking of users connecting time³. Third, the major companies that hold the traditional media market are paying attention to those movements, and investing to achieve a prominent presence in this area, via creation of content web portals which already reach some of the top national audience numbers in their segments⁴. However, despite these high investments and initiatives, companies are still under the challenge of how to transfer their main traditional resources/assets, especially from television, to this new logic of production and consumption.

³ <http://www.folhadoestado.com.br/0,,Folha6033>. April, 2011.

⁴ IBOPE report (2011). March, 2011.

There are a number of studies⁵ which aim to investigate in depth the issues and phenomena that emerge of these new media, as well as how they could interfere in the way that we traditionally consume and produce media. However, we can observe that most studies are limited to a single phenomenon or aspect of new media, analyzed through a group of products and consumption scenarios. In this research, the approach was to focus deeply into the study of transposition of a single product, the Brazilian soap opera, in its most varied aspects of transformation.

Soap operas in Brazil: “the narrative of the nation”

The expression “narrative of the nation” was created by Lopes (2009) and may be a very interesting definition for this world famous product, with major importance and influence in the Brazilian culture and television history. As Sadek (2008) points out, the Brazilian television fiction is not just a media product, but it rather is a narrative that is undeniably the most relevant genre of drama, with a great cultural, political and behavioral influence in the lives of Brazilian people. Besides that, as the author suggests, given the contemporary nature of this serial form of narrative, in relation to the literacy process in Brazil, is "reasonable to think that Brazil got literate while reading serials" (2008, p. 31). And he adds:

In the Brazilian society, the soap opera takes the space that the popular theater was never able to do. It reaches millions of people from virtually all classes and groups, communicates with a huge number of spectators, influences them and meet their social and dramatic demands (SADEK, 2008, p. 41).

Another soap opera characteristic is that it is already a result of several transpositions suffered throughout its history, since its origin as serial. Each new format achieved more success than previous versions, thus maintaining its position as a massive product. In this way, it was able to follow all developments

⁵ Cannito (2009), Capanema (2009).

held by media and technology, and remain in harmony with imposed changes in consumption aspects.

Moreover, the Brazilian soap opera can be regarded as a specific genre. This is justified by the combination of its dramaturgical and fictional narrative ingredients⁶ added to the product industrial modeling shaped by the decisions and investments made by Globo television network in the late 60's. Today, the Brazilian soap opera differ significantly from its predecessors, which gave rise, for example, to the American and Latin American soap operas. The Brazilian soap reaches around 60 million Brazilians⁷ and is also exported to several countries around the world.

However, the current soap opera is still produced strictly to television, slowly incorporating some isolated initiatives of new media extensions, which do not cover the significant changes in consumption and product design. Therefore, our research discusses the evolution of a new model, in which we could successfully maintain the effective aspects of the product and incorporate, at the same time, changes to adapt it to the new media characteristics, recognizing that the impacts of such changes are irreversible.

Our results may provide guidelines to direct the implementation of a new model that holds a future *cyber soap opera*, in which the TV version would no longer be the major product, but a by-product of a larger and more complex one. Therefore, the logic will be reversed: the product should be conceived and structured to new media, such as web platforms and other applications on computers or mobile devices, which will become the central focus of mediation, and TV shows should be a consequence of that. In this way, we propose the following guidelines to implement a new model: 1) convert the soap opera narrative structure and design to the computers way of representing the world, 2) produce TV attractions that are a consequence of the variability principle, originated from full experiences, 3) come up with new ways to tell stories, which should be deeper and even more fragmented, 4) construct narratives open to audience participation and collaboration, instead of the current model based on

⁶ Costa (2000) defines the Brazilian soap opera as genre.

⁷ Ferrara, Chong, Duryea (2008). "Soap Operas and Fertility: Evidence from Brazil".

strict and passive attendance, 5) discuss ritualization, the “hook” and serialization under new perspectives, 6) consider new levels of connection between fiction, reality and illusion, and new roles for authors, and 7) reflect about the impacts of those changes on the production model.

The research path and the challenge in observing and deeply understanding the current changes

The objectives of the study were four-fold: 1) characterize Brazilian soap opera, 2) organize and describe relevant phenomena related to the context of current transformations in media, in which Brazilian soap opera is included along with other attractions conceived and produced for television, 3) describe examples and propositions for such transformations, and discuss contemporary actions for the evolution of television fiction, 4) analyze critically the interrelation between the object and the transformation scenario, which will help to develop guidelines to direct a transposition.

During the research, we faced a challenge especially in the task of identifying, understanding, organizing and describing the characteristics and transformations of the so-called new media. Instead of a historic review, the aim of this study was to summarize present transformations, whose main aspects, phenomena and theories are sadly scattered in the literature. In this way, such information does not form a homogeneous, logic and concise panorama that could serve to the study purposes. Besides, the existing examples in the literature present a few intersection points and were seldom carried out with media objects from Brazil, such as the Brazilian soap opera.

Fortunately, we found a group of authors whose ideas and interpretations of those transformations proved to be of great complementarity. Although studies of several authors contributed to our research, the ideas of McLuhan (1969), Manovich (2001), Murray (2006), Jenkins (2006) and Santaella (2007) formed the main background to construct a panorama of transformations in course. However, due to the time when those studies were completed, they lack more modern examples and deep discussions of phenomena such as social networks, especially

analyzed under the Brazilian perspective, where this phenomenon presents several particularities.

Lev Manovich (2001) points out the importance of the emergence of a new group of conventions, since the characteristics of the revolution in new media are unique in history. According to several authors, including Marshal McLuhan (1969), the interplay between people and the world they live in will always be affected by the media which they are subjected and the cognitive repertoire acquired is shaped by the experience with several media and social practices that are established by these leveraged. In this way, each new media also changes the relationship between people and the previous media. Even if audience is not adapted to this new repertoire, people will tend to incorporate it, and such incorporation will determine the familiarity, acceptance and consumption of media products displayed, are those made and offered on new or old media.

Social media and a new order in the communication dynamics

When we examine the changes in media, it's clearly that social networks and social media behaviors achieved a relevant status among all information and communication new technologies.

In January 2010 the Nielsen Group⁸ released an overview on the social networks in the world between 2007 and 2009. Year's time spent on social networks jumped 82% to over 5 hours. Brazil tops the charts with the highest percentage (86%) of Internet consumers visiting a social network⁹. Also it ranks third in the list of access to social networks in unique visitors, and achieves the mark of 4 hours 30 minutes in average time spent. The company that owns Twitter also reported usage recent data and in September 2010 they reached the milestone of 95 million tweets (the so-called messages posted on Twitter) a day, which would represent roughly 2.8 billion in a month (in January 2009 was less than

⁸ <http://blog.nielsen.com/nielsenwire/global/led-by-facebook-twitter-global-time-spent-on-social-media-sites-up-82-year-over-year/>. April, 2011.

⁹ http://blog.nielsen.com/nielsenwire/online_mobile/social-media-accounts-for-22-percent-of-time-online/. April, 2011.

200k). ComScore's data for August 2010¹⁰ showed that Brazil ranks the second place in the percentage of tool penetration in the universe of active users. Around 25% of *tweets* include web links and about 29% generate some kind of reaction¹¹ which can be either a response to the author of that message, or a *retweet* (kind of message that includes a quote from the text posted by another user). *Retweets* account for about 20% of total reactions. But far beyond the mere expression of volume of use of these resources, it is interesting to think about the dynamics involved and how it represents to the media ecology a strong distinction from the consumer and public reaction point of view to all information and narratives that they experience.

The reconquest of Penha and Alemão by Rio de Janeiro's police

On November 20th, 2008, once the Pacification Police Unit (UPP in Portuguese) was placed in the area known as Santa Marta, it started a unprecedented security program in Rio de Janeiro, held by the state government¹². It consists in gradually restoring the public order and state law in city areas long dominated by organized crime, mainly drug trafficking. In summary, the police raids these areas to arrest criminals, then occupy them to control, search and seizure all weapons and drugs. So permanent posts of community policing are established, and public investment programs of economic and social assistance take in action to full reintegrate the area to the city, with basic guarantees of life and citizenship.

This program, still underway, has already reached 17 communities from the beginning, and over 200k residents. But still needs to reach many others, including those considered the most populous and largest bunkers of drug trafficking in the city. Among these are some well-known slums, such as Rocinha and Vidigal, and also were the Penha and Alemão complexes.

¹⁰ http://www.comscore.com/Press_Events/Press_Releases/2010/8/Indonesia_Brazil_and_Venezuela_Lead_Global_Surge_in_Twitter_Usage. November, 2010.

¹¹ <http://sysomos.com/insidetwitter/engagement/>. November, 2010.

¹² <http://www.upp.rj.gov.br/>. April, 2011.

In November 2010 a number of violent attacks came out throughout the city¹³. The state authorities linked the attacks to a drug dealers action to intimidate people and the authorities in reprisal for the advancement of the security program. In the midst of decentralized police reactions, on the Thursday November 25th, in the morning, the government decided to surround and invade an slum area in the Penha neighborhood, integrating state police forces and the army. Lasting all day, the operation end was marked by images of the hundred criminals escape at the top of a hill, broadcasted live on television. All these criminals were going to the neighboring area of slums, in the Alemão complex.

In the day after the siege was intensified and there was suspicion of more than 300 bandits hidden there. The hours and days that followed were of expectation for the outcome of the operation. The final occupation began in the late morning of Sunday, November 29, at the same time that no more violent attacks were registered in the city.

Media coverage, Twitter and new dynamics of communication: Voz da Comunidade and other examples

Newspapers and TV gave significant coverage to the events that occurred, with free-to-air TV (at least for the state of Rio de Janeiro) maintaining special live coverage for hours. But it was not the TV coverage that achieved the most notoriety, but rather that from a 17 year old boy, a resident of Morro do Adeus. Rene Silva dos Santos, who for five years has kept up a newspaper called Voz da Comunidade ("Voice of the Community"), made use of his counterpart account on Twitter to narrate what was happening along with two other collaborators. From 180 followers it went to 23,000 in little more than 24 hours, it was a complementary coverage supplied by TV and newspapers, even in their online versions, becoming a fundamental mediator in the media ecology that took shape around what was happening. Alongside that coverage, made through so-called citizen journalism, where a story is narrated by a witness of the facts who is not a professional journalist, another initiative was also noteworthy, also in the Twitter

¹³ <http://g1.globo.com/rio-de-janeiro/noticia/2010/11/cronologia-dos-ataques-no-rio.html>. April, 2011.

by Extra newspaper. It was an extension of a blog – Caso de Polícia ("Police Case") – which provided a valuable service against disinformation, investigating and reporting what was rumor or truth.

Below are excerpts taken from the account given by the user Voz da Comunidade, via Twitter, on what was happening, in an example of citizen journalism, a subject discussed by authors such as Dan Gilmore (2006):

11/27/2010

vozdacomunidade: Muitas rajadas!!! (many burst of gunfire).

vozdacomunidade: Moradores e crianças em meio ao fogo-cruzado. (residents and children in the middle of the crossfire).

vozdacomunidade: Cadê a água bombeiros? (where is the water, firefighters?).

vozdacomunidade: Não temos informações de que a invasão começou ainda!!! (we don't have any information about invasion having begun yet).

vozdacomunidade: Traficante "mr. M" acaba de se entregar no alemão!!! (Mr. M drug dealer has just surrendered).

vozdacomunidade: tudo calmo neste momento (everything quiet right now).

vozdacomunidade: Comunidade está CALMA! Boa parte com LUZ e ÁGUA! (the community is quiet. we have light and water again).

11/28/2010

vozdacomunidade: Intenso tiroteio neste momento no complexo do alemão gente!!!! (intensive shooting here right now).

vozdacomunidade: O helicóptero acabou de chegar neste momento!!!! (the helicopter has just come out).

vozdacomunidade: Acabou de chegar mais um blindado!!! (another tank has just arrived).

vozdacomunidade: O helicóptero está passando baixo aqui na comunidade!!! (the helicopter is flathatting here).

vozdacomunidade: Assista um vídeo exclusivo do #vozdacomunidade feito hoje pela manhã: <http://migre.me/2y5MT> (watch an exclusive video made by us this morning) (image 1).

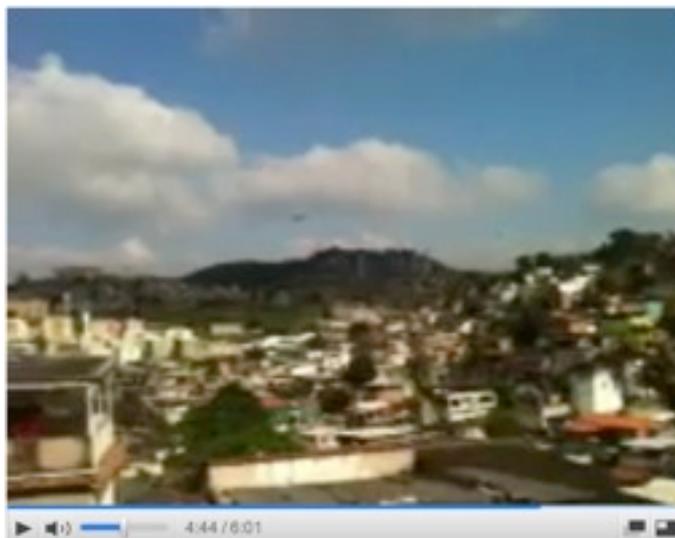


Image 1: overview on video made by Voz da Comunidade Alemão's

vozdacomunidade: A comunidade está um silêncio total! Nem parece ser domingo... (the community is under an absolute silent. it doesn't even seem like Sunday).

vozdacomunidade: Essa foto é do policia beto chaves coordenador do @papoderesponsa ha 3 minutos atras no complexo <http://yfrog.com/0e2w2t0j> #vozdacomunidade (picture of policeman Beto Chaves, @papoderesponsa coordinator. it was taken 3 minutes ago) (image 2).



Image 2: policeman Beto Chaves

vozdacomunidade: Acabaram de prender o traficante que matou o Jornalista TIM LOPES! O zeu!!!! (they have just arrested the drug dealer who had killed journalist Tim Lopes! The Zeu).

vozdacomunidade: Clima tranquilo neste momento na comunidade! (peaceful atmosphere right now).

vozdacomunidade: Eu sugiro: Conseguimos ouvir os grilos! (I do suggest: we can hear the crickets!).

11/29/2010

vozdacomunidade: Moradores tiveram uma noite tranquila e sem tiros! (residents had a calm night without shots).

vozdacomunidade: estão revistando moradores que sobem a comunidade! #vozdacomunidade <http://twitpic.com/3bdy7u> (they are frisking residents who come to the community) (image3).



Image 3: residents being frisked.

11/30/2010

vozdacomunidade: Equipe do @jornalextra esta colocando mensagens de moradores e de internautas em uma corda aqui na Grota <http://twitpic.com/3blbco> (the team from newspaper Extra is putting messages from Internet users on a rope).

vozdacomunidade: há policiais no interior da comunidade revistando casas. (there are policemen inside community searching the houses).

vozdacomunidade: Alvorada continua sem energia elétrica (Alvorada is still out of electricity).

vozdacomunidade: Sem luz em boa parte do complexo do Alemão <http://twitpic.com/3bpstd> (most of community without electricity).

In addition to citizen journalism, the case brought to light very significant examples of the changes and new dynamics of communication studied in this

research. We then decided to examine the case in order to extract from it something that would both contribute to the illustration of concepts and phenomena, as well provide an important foundation for some of the propositions, despite the significant differences of these two contexts (journalism and the fiction drama).

From the day the operation began, and throughout the weekend, some TV stations stopped broadcasting their normal programming in order to provide non-stop coverage of the event, and doing so within the limits that the television media imposes, in an extremely satisfactory manner. There were a large number of dedicated professionals both in the studio and doing street reporting, monitoring the events in the locale. Relevant information, even in some cases pending confirmation, was transmitted to the public; interviews gave different points of view of the story, and captured opinions and repercussions extending beyond a merely descriptive perspective of the facts. However, at a certain moment, television limited itself to the repetition of striking scenes that had occurred minutes or hours before, recounting the facts clearly giving place to the redundancy needed to capture the disperse attention of the television audience. Apart from that, it stopped considering any repercussions that existed beyond what their journalists and commentators brought to the fore, which caused an impression of paralysis and being behind, in the measure that through other channels one had access to certain new information that was not being covered or was late. On the Internet, the extension channels of these same companies were exploiting the resources of the medium, complementing the experience that was on the television. However at the same time it could be noted that, even though possessing new media and technologies, they operated, in the handling of information and the organization of supply, according to the paradigms for doing television. In this case, failing to explore more sophisticated means for the retrieval, pursuit and organization of the information gathered, with varied forms of representation and visualization, and proceeding with few or too closed and controlled spaces for interaction and conversation. Very little of the repercussion that lay beyond the control boundaries of the company was explored, and the maintenance of the same rules of editing and authorship could be clearly seen,

which prove to be extremely limiting when confronted with the easily accessible practices that were emerging from the production and consumption of information outside of its borders.

This degree of exhaustion in relation to the expectations of the audience wherein stories arrive or tend to arrive while confined to the TV, restricted to the consumption format and way of operating of television, can also be compared to the soap operas.

Thus, we believe that some of the issues surrounding the confrontation of these two models coincide with those that were put forth in the research. Reflecting upon taking soap operas to the new media, and based on the observation of these examples, some analytical approaches were made, which even without the depth needed for a case study, were very valuable for enriching and illustrating the research discussions, in the pursuit of indicators for a possible future *cyber soap opera*.

Narratives such as shared and participatory conversations

The soap opera has its origins in the so-called serial style narrative (COSTA, 2000). Despite all the transformations it has undergone in its history has remained faithful to a structure where the narrative is an individual creation, written by an author, who has authorship and authority over the direction of the plots and characters. Two other features that characterize soap operas, especially the Brazilian soap opera, are to some degree in opposition to this authority, but by no means alter the fact. They are: the fact that the soap opera is a collective endeavor, where producers, directors, set designers and actors influence the final outcome of what will go on air; as well as being a *narrative of the nation* (LOPES, 2009), in the sense that while it is at the same time fictional, it is also realistic, elevated to a *communication resource* and point of self-reference for the Brazilian nation. It can be said that in the latter case there is a high interpenetration between fiction and reality, and between those who create and the public which consumes and, although affected by this, the author continues to wield full authority, and any

intervention only emerges in the interpretation of that which is observed by the author.

During the event of the Alemão takeover, both the users Voz da Comunidade and Caso de Polícia, already mentioned above, had in common the establishment of a shared and participatory narrative, made possible from the resources of Twitter, and the logic and structure of the Internet network.

Caso de Polícia sometimes used the messages of the users themselves, retweeted, and then added the hash tags **#truth** or **#rumor**. Apart from that, as in the case taken from the example below, they communicate to the audience that an action was taken based on the messages that also came via Twitter.

casodepolicia: #verdade q policiais do 41° BPM disseram que patrulha vai à Rua Jangada, Vila Cosmos, checar denúncia de nossos internautas #CASOSDEPOLICIA (#truth that police said they are sending a patrol to check occurrences informed by our Internet users).

Below is an example where a user that is accompanying the account from Voz da Comunidade sends a public message addressed to the author with a question, which is readily answered in the form of reproducing the question with the answer added and that becomes public for the entire network that is accompanying this user.

Thus, the conversation, which is public, not only strengthens a channel of dialogue with the audience, but instantly feeds the narrative, and whose pieces may also be echoed other times in other networks, adding comments, opinions or even additional information that can be generated or only used, and then re-echoed by Voz da Comunidade itself.

filipivc: @vozdacomunidade vocês estão dentro do complexo agora? (are you inside the community now?).

vozdacomunidade: Moramos aqui filho! RT @filipivc @vozdacomunidade vocês estão dentro do complexo agora? (we live here, son!).

The conversation itself often becomes the focus of the experience, which in the examples shown below combine stirring the attention of the audience with self-promotion of the experience and reinforcement of the engagement. An

engagement, which also results from the satisfaction and recognition of the network itself in terms of the conversation created.

vozdacomunidade: Quem está atento as notícias do #vozdacomunidade no Twitter, da Retweet! (who is paying attention to the news by #vozdacomunidade on Twitter, retweet!).

This message got 382 retweets. Below, the campaign for the hash tag #vozdacomunidade to go under trending topics from Twitter, which is promptly answered:

vozdacomunidade: Vamos colocar #VozdaComunidade nos trends? A cada vez que vcs falarem com alguém digitem: #vozdacomunidade !!! Divulgueem! (let's put #vozdacomunidade on TTs? Every time you talk to someone, write: #vozdacomunidade! Spread it!).

guiwerneck: RT @vozdacomunidade: Vamos colocar #vozdacomunidade nos trends ? @vozdacomunidade

hervaljunior: Vamos colocar o @vozdacomunidade nos TTs ? Retuita aí ! #vozdacomunidade

beahein: E isso q vcs querem? Colocar @vozdacomunidade nos trends? Entao vamos #vozdacomunidade

caribe: 90% da minha timeline ja esta retuitando o @vozdacomunidade #vozdacomunidade

vozdacomunidade: Ficaria muito feliz se entrasse para o TTbr o hastag #vozdacomunidade mas será um pouco difícil! (I will be so happy if #vozdacomunidade appears on TTs, but I guess it will be so hard to do it!).

refazendoesq: Vamos manter a #vozdacomunidade no TTbr . @vozdacomunidade meninos de 10 a 17 anos dando show de jornalismo.

vozdacomunidade: Conseguimos!!!! Colocar #vozdacomunidade no TTbr! Obrigado à todos que ajudaram!!! (we got it! thank you all).

marcospontolima: Missão cumprida #vozdacomunidade no TTbr. Posso dormir com pelo menos uma Gr de satisfação, pena q a conquista é por causa d algo tão triste (mission accomplished. I can go to bed with a bit satisfied at least. shame that this achievement is because such sad stuff).

And in this last example, the Voz da Comunidade user expresses his anguish at the fact that it won't be possible to keep up with the amount of contributions and discussions that arise.

vozdacomunidade: 300 mentions em um segundo para o #vozdacomunidade, como vamos responder? #fail (300 mentions in a sec. how is it possible to reply?).

Below are examples of echoes of information received for its own network that were originally posted by Voz da Comunidade, and once again only having the resource of retweet. Without adding any information, these users only place themselves as new medium connected to a network that is not necessarily linked to the primary transmitter:

luargolo: RT @vozdacomunidade BOPE tá se preparando pra subir o Complexo. Todo mundo de cara pintada. #vozdacomunidade (the police special operation unit is preparing to invade the Alemão. Everybody with painted face).

taw: RT @vozdacomunidade A bala comendo e ainda tem gente na janela... aff... #vozdacomunidade (intensive shooting and there are still people on window.. aff!).

A meta-narrative that was based on recognition, promotion and discussion of citizen journalism also shared space parallel to the reports of the event itself. Many times, Rene Silva, author of Voz da Comunidade, did not add in his own text in such discussions; however he did endorse and nurture these plots, using retweet to include them in the streaming.

vozdacomunidade: RT @mirellinha O menino tem 17 anos e faz o #vozdacomunidade desde os 11: <http://bit.ly/6wxXeo> Além disso, arrecada doações no Natal: <http://bit.ly/ggsDfk> (it's a 17 year old boy, and he owns #vozdacomunidade since he was 11).

vozdacomunidade: RT @rosieli_leal_x Parabéns ao Bonde de meninos (as) do #Vozdacomunidade que dá Show de informação em real time, de dentro do Complexo do Alemão!!! (congrats guys of #vozdacomunidade. they are doing very well sharing real time information from inside the community).

vozdacomunidade: RT @fabiomalini "A paz sem voz não é paz, é medo"... #vozdacomunidade (peace with no voice it's not peace it's fear).

vozdacomunidade: RT @fabiomalini #vozdacomunidade expressa a potência de todos como narradores da história, mas tb precarização de quem faz mídia comunitária livre. (#vozdacomunidade expresses the power of the people as History storytellers, but also the precariousness of those who do citizen journalism).

Below is an example of an action of the community itself to try and direct the constructed narrative:

rosieli_leal_x: @vozdacomunidade O papel no TT do #Vozdacomunidade é INFORMAR em real time não DENUNCIAR! Pra isso existe o Disque-Denúncia. (the role of #vozdacomunidade on Twitter is to inform real time, and not to denounce! for that purpose there is Disque-Denúncia).

All of these examples and the dynamics that can be observed while they occurred illustrate some of the assertions in regards to the opportunities that arise, such as using the tools of personal publishing and social media to construct narratives that are *participatory* and *collaborative*. Murray (2006) and Ryan (2004) comment on these types of interaction suggesting that they can be explored in the development of fictional narratives for the new media, or as Murray makes reference, in the production of *cyberdramas*.

Narrative as stories to be explored and not only watched

Another opportunity we must be attentive to, as Murray (2006) and Manovich (2001) suggest, is the narrative as a navigation or exploration of a given information base and structure. There is no control by the user of that which is produced, but whose storytelling is an interactive activity, made possible on the basis of a visible and understandable structure and organization for access, composition and consumption of these endless pieces of information that make up the story. It is not possible for television to explore different viewpoints beyond those offered, or even to delve more deeply into one of them. The story and the information which make it up are much more extensive than what can be delivered by television, given the limitations first of the technical aspects of the medium (such as time and attention), but also of the production structures of this

content when formatted for this medium. Television imposes its narrative, time for exploring information and the limits as far as approach and depth. There are opportunities to provide forms for the public to be able to assemble and reassemble the story, move forward and backward on the time line and explore in detail points that arouse interest, connecting different sources, volumes and formats of information consumption.

It seems natural that, with the multiplication of media, there are expectations that information related to the stories being told will also proliferate, as well as the resources and ways to get to them. However, this seemingly chaotic environment is the nature of the Internet, just like a behavior of consumption that works on the composition of these knots and the continual investigation of different sources or pieces of information. In this case, an excellent example of an initiative was the Twitter initiative resulting from the Caso de Polícia blog, of the newspaper Extra. They perhaps achieve the right balance between providing the information bank and organization of the story, together with the freedom of the user to manipulate this (and once again this was only possible through the social media - Twitter). A team selected and investigated information from different events and published a service on Twitter to combat disinformation, where the text with the news was preceded by the *hashtags* "rumor" or "truth", on the basis of which it was possible to follow these verifications, as well as to search and filter. Following are some examples taken from that time:

casodepolicia: #boato que tenham ateado fogo no supermercado Zona de Sul, no Leblon. Policiais do 23° BPM disseram que foram lá e estava tudo tranquilo (#rumour that someone set fire to Zona Sul supermarket in Leblon).

casodepolicia: #boato que aja problemas, arrastões e veículos incendiados em Niterói e São Gonçalo, segundo o 12°BPM. #CASOSDEPOLICIA (#rumour that there are problems and burned cars in Niterói and São Gonçalo).

casodepolicia: #verdade Muitos tiros no Alemão. Imprensa está abrigada entre dois ônibus da polícia. Não há luz no local (#truth lots of shooting in Alemão. Journalists are hidden between two police buses. there is no electricity there).

casodepolicia: #verdade As escolas municipais e estaduais do Rio funcionam amanhã. As diretoras podem suspender as aulas em localidades de risco. (#truth the public schools will be open tomorrow, although principals may suspend classes in dangerous locations).

casodepolicia: #verdade que um homem foi preso por policiais do 1º BPM (Estácio) tentando atear fogo em um veículo no viaduto ao lado do Sambódromo. (#truth that a man was arrested trying to set fire to a vehicle near Sapucaí).

In addition to this, they also produced and disseminated via Twitter bulletins in video that gave a summary of the last period of these investigations. And the videos, which can be accessed up until the present (image 4), are a collection of records that can be reviewed, recounted.

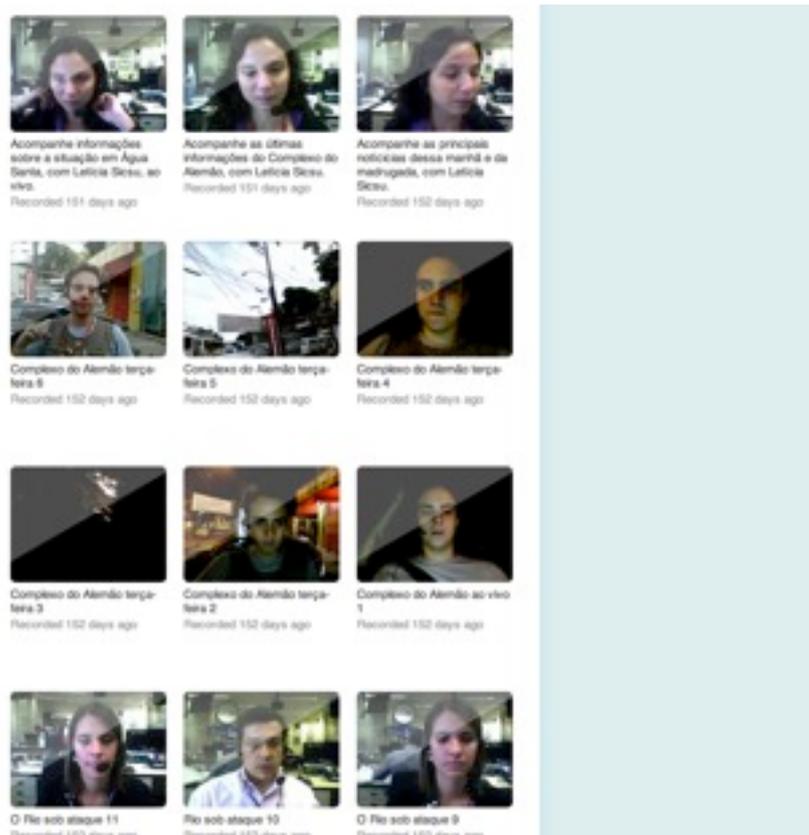


Image 4: Caso de Policia's profile on Twitcam¹⁴, with the video archive.

¹⁴ <http://twitcam.livestream.com/user/CasodePolicia>

Authorship and Authority: the author as the hub

Voz da Comunidade, in the role it played in the communication dynamics that were established, cannot have its producer classified in terms of roles such as "correspondent", "amateur journalist", "microblogger", "narrator" and "author" or other categories that would apply to conventional structures of mass media. We suggest it be understood, instead, as the practice exercised through the concept that can be taken from the meaning of the term hub. It is conceivable that the author, over and above the creative authority granted to him, must be perceived as being connected, whose primary function is to interconnect, by receiving and redistributing pieces of information that arrive to him via democratic links that he possesses. On the basis of what we are suggesting, carrying out the role of hub will, then, pervade and reframe the role of the author and the actual construction of the narrative which Voz da Comunidade is inserted into and was a centralizing agent for.

Although having a function of transmitter of information, being in this case a type of amateur correspondent who witnesses and textually reports what he sees, he is connected to a vast group of other people via Twitter. This network interacts with him in the same way as a narrator, recounting events so that he will echo them, as well as sending all kinds of messages of support, congratulations, criticism, questions and suggestions. He, in turn, reacts to this content by either responding or directly citing (retweeting), thus resulting in all the people who follow him receiving not only the account he produced, but also that generated by all those who are connected to him, and who are not necessarily linked to each other. The result, therefore, is a story whose narration is the junction of his view of the facts coupled with the network of other views, in the form of accounts and narratives that connect to this hub, having this direct intervention or not in the message that is echoed. And they were very similar to the functions exercised by the Caso de Polícia.

Conclusion

In the last few years, there was an increase in the number of studies discussing the connection between the following subjects: cyberculture, narrative, social networks, entertainment, television, interactivity, participation and fiction on TV. Henry Jenkins (2006), who coined the term transmedia storytelling, is surely one of the major contributors in this area. In his book, called *Convergence Culture*, he defines transmedia storytelling as a model of creation and management of stories, which is proper to deal with the phenomenon of participatory culture and convergence. His theoretical background lies on studies about the relationship between fans of American franchises and respective productions, through experiments derived from internet and cyberculture.

In Brazil, Jenkins (2006) is referred to in most of the recent discussions that pose the issue within the reality of national TV fiction. Médola and Redondo (2009) discussed the transposition of such theories to Brazilian reality, especially the issue of interactivity, which is crucial, although polemic in definition. They assume that interactivity are processes which involve users, but considered as its media processes and their social effects. In this way, interactive initiatives should be those that not only allow the audience to participate by changing levels of dialog between the emitter and the receptor or the contact between history and fictional universe, but also that could really influence the structure and model of production. Although the technological conditions for these changes are available, there is no guarantee that changes will take place in an adequate manner to absorb the deep changes occurring in the networks, such as the examples that shed light to our reflection.

The phenomena reviewed in our study may contribute to improve and turn more tangible some deep alterations regarding consumption dynamics of communication means related to new media. The ways in which the public reacts and expects to get involved with the stories that are told today, and also in terms of the creation and authority over these stories, differs from the way that, in most productions, audiences are still required to behave.

It is no different with Brazilian soap operas. A profound transformation in the structure and logic of production and consumption of media products (especially TV attractions) are necessary, along with a rejection of the current paradigm, even taking into consideration that upon getting on television the format of the attraction will probably remain the same. However, changes in how the narratives are created and produced, and alterations in the role and relationships between the author (or authors), audience and stories must take place, otherwise the initiatives to increase product interactivity will become superficial or disconnected to what is already real. Therefore, from what can be seen from the cases reviewed here, we suggest that a new model for serials could effectively consider these new resources and opportunities, through a joint story management by a dialogic dynamic. In this model, authority over the creation would be diluted by adding to the work the flow of contributions and conversations from the network (which, actually, already occur regarding soap opera chapters). Hence, instead of centralizing in a single author, one or more author hubs would contribute to the story, acting as network connectors of the hub, legitimized not only by economic and production determinants but also by the audience itself.

To conclude, below are illustrations of the relationship of Voz da Comunidade with the mainstream media, that despite a certain irony, like in the first example, proved to have been perfectly harmonious, producing echoes in both directions and that integrate and strengthen both narratives:

vozdacomunidade: Pensei q fui eu RT @showdavidia Repórter da TV Globo é a primeira a transmitir imagens do alto do morro. <http://bit.ly/fg2Xbr> #fantastico (**showdavidia:** TV Globo reporter was the first to broadcast images from the top of the hill. **vozdacomunidade:** I thought it was me!).

vozdacomunidade: RT @jornalnoticias: Adolescentes do Complexo do Alemão #vozdacomunidade vencem batalha das notícias no Twitter <http://bit.ly/ehNSao> #rio (teenagers from Alemão #vozdacomunidade win the news battle on Twitter).

vozdacomunidade: RT @crisjacobs: @TheEconomist young reporters who live in a Rio favela, use twitter to broadcast real time info about Rio's war @vozdacomunidade.

miriamleitaocom: Vcs fizeram por merecer RT @vozdacomunidade: Obrigado @MiriamLeitaoCom por nos citar em seu blog!!! Vejam e retweetem: <http://bit.ly/hWnxVC> (vozdacomunidade: thank you @miriamleitaocom for mentioning us on your blog! see it and retweet it! miriamleitaocom: you earned it).

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