Alterity, social suffering and political power in Facebook accounts of oneself on the *SP Invisível* project[1]

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Abstract

The aim of this article is to discuss how images and texts that configure the testimonies of the Project São Paulo Invisible can characterize a political power that drift not only of enunciative possibilities offered by Facebook, but also of the tactics of individuals and groups that refuse being positioned inside established discursive orders. By political power of the statements and enunciation ways displayed by Facebook we are considering the questioning attempts to the absence of a speaking place to subaltern people and the elaboration of "accounts of oneself" marked by social suffering and lack of recognition. We analyzed 17 posts in the Facebook page of the project between 3 and 27 February 2015. We also analyzed the first 30 commentaries to each post in order to know the moral impact of the narratives and to verify if the anonymous portrayed by the project had participated of these exchanges as interlocutors. The analyzed images and stories suggest ways of political subjectivation marked by the search of emancipation and recognition, but frequently constrained by mechanisms of visibility that can oppress, silence and enhance opacity.
Keywords: *SP Invisível*. Facebook. Social suffering. Subordination. Accounts of Oneself.

Introduction

The Project *SP Invisível*, hosted on Facebook social media, came up on March 2014 with the objective of bringing visibility to socially excluded or neglected individuals in the capital city of the State of São Paulo. The project's web page on Facebook presents the proposal to report, in a humanized way[2], the stories of street dwellers, garbage collectors, prostitutes, homosexuals, drug addicts, independent artists and so many others in diverse Brazilian cities. The creators of the project, Vinicius Lima (journalism student) and André Soler (cinema student), young middle class citizens of São Paulo, always present us a photograph (shot by Soler) and a report in first person (edited by Lima) of the "character" to be portrayed[3]. The approach on the streets is usually made in non-premeditated ways, as told by Lima (2014, online): "most people we interview we have just met, that very moment. We are walking on the streets and we think 'let's go and talk to him?'". He also tells that many "anonymous" approached on the streets remain indifferent to the fact of having their stories told on a social media. The posts are usually made of images and "accounts of oneself" (BUTLER, 2015), expressing the experiences lived by such people.

The collection and repercussion of testimonies and images of socially excluded and invisibilized individuals lead us to reflect on the action of "giving voice" to those who are not authorized or do not feel authorized to have one, but may then take on the status of speakers. Lima and Soler, creators of *SP Invisível* claim[4] that they try their best to translate and express, as faithfully as possible, the original narrative, retaining the marks of suffering and ways of existence of the subjects who are actors and observers of their own narratives, and who have accepted, when approached, to tell themselves to others. It is in our interest to observe to which extent one may accomplish an analysis of the textual and imagetic narratives of suffering and of those who suffer based on such reports.

We intend to analyze the way how images and texts that feature the reports/portraits of the project may characterize a political potency which comes not only from the enunciation possibilities available on Facebook, but also the tactics of individuals and

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[2] Reaching almost 200.000 likes and 40.000 visualizations on its Facebook page, the project *SP Invisível* came up due to the will of two students in the sense of "bothering" the visitors of the platform (where, according to them, everything is fake, everyone is made-up as happy and beautiful) with pictures of street dwellers. Assuming that people who live and work on the streets of SP are not "invisible", but in fact their stories are, the creators of the page wished that the interaction with such people ceased to be "vertical" (restricted to charity and donation) and became more just, parity-oriented and value enhancer. Informations available in the interview with Lima and Soler <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z_zmf8O-PF8>, access on 08/22/2016.

[3] The "anonymous" people of São Paulo who accept to be portrayed by the creators of the project evoke their on world in the report, mentioning its rules, norms, habits and desires along the construction of narratives that may either come closer or further from the data one shares, since this work of narrating oneself involves the production of a type of ficcion of the real: a brief representation of oneself (working with one's own language, social, cultural and affective identities) to be, then, converted into a new representation so as to feature as a post on a digital social media.

[4] See: < https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z_zmf8O-PF8>, access on 08/22/2016.

groups who refuse their own position inside established and stagnant discourse orders. By political potency of the enunciation and ways of enunciation provided by Facebook we mean: a) the way how a set of reports features as another kind of discourse on the tension and difficulties of ordinary life and social suffering, one that escapes instituted discourses (politicians, syndicates, educational, religious, moral etc.); b) the attempts to question the absence of a speaking place for the subaltern and c) the construction of "accounts of oneself" as an ethical work of subjective and intersubjective construction in which self-revelation, self-responsibilization and self-transformation feature the agonic game between who speaks and who one speaks to.

Thus, in order to discuss these three political dimensions and their intersections with the reports of the project, our text approaches, more specifically, analyses of around 17[5] reports posted by *SP Invisível* in between February 3rd and 27th, 2015. Such reports were chosen due to the fact that they express experiences of precarious persons[6] and street dwellers[7], which corresponds to our interest in analyzing enunciations (imagetic and verbal) that express experiences of injustice related to socially produced suffering, in specific social contexts, and which deserves to be regarded as a form of inequality or as form of social injustice (RENAULT, 2004).

Each report features Facebook as a post articulated with a series of comments. Thus, a report is not offered on a simple and transparent fashion, yielding, first, from a brief conversation, on the street, with an agent of the project who, afterwards, elaborates a representation in which he attempts to host the word of the subaltern other into his word. What interests us in this complex dialogic construction of reports is the way how the forms of political potency mentioned above are activated or not by the interlocutors. We evaluate the content of the 17 posts, with special attention to the self-description of the speakers. We also regard as part of the textuality of such posts the 30 first comments made to each post. The decision to regard some of the comments produced is justified both by the interest in acknowledging the moral impact of the narratives and in investigating whether there would be, among the comments, responses or reactions by the anonymous speakers on the streets of São Paulo.

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[5] Márcio (02/03), Tamara (02/04), Geralda (02/05), Kelson (02/06), Artur (02/09), Marcelo (02/10), "No Name" (02/11), Ceará (02/13), Bento (02/16), Valdecir (02/17), Anderson (02/18), Bruno (02/19), Francisco (02/23), Roger and Juliana (02/24), Ricardo (02/25), Marcos (02/26) and José Vicente (02/27).

[6] "Precarious" here means not only a social-economic condition of penury, but also a "place in which classifications, designations, identities are mixed up (at the same time artist and precarious, professional and unemployed, sequentially shifting from inside to outside, on the margins, on the edges), the place where relationships, having not yet been codified, are, at one time and in contradictory way, source of political subjection, economic exploitation and also of opportunities to construct the struggles for identities in process of becoming" (LAZZARATO, 2006, p.223). Thus, are precarious: José Vicente (unemployed, benefitted by Bolsa-Família); Ricardo (recycler, collector); Bruno (unemployed); Kelson (unemployed, wheeler); Geralda (ex-prostitute); Tamara (prostitute); Márcio (wheeler). (All quotations have been freely translated from vernacular Brazilian editions. See bibliographic references bellow).

[7] Street dwellers: Roger and Juliana; Francisco; Anderson; Valdecir; Bento; Ceará; "No Name"; Marcelo; Artur.

In this article, it is our objective to discuss (1) not only the question of social suffering that follows the absence of recognition, (2) but also the dimensions of subalternity that hamper the communication constitution of subjects as interlocutors in political scenes, (3) as well as the ways of narrating and expressing oneself, which seem to oscillate between political process of subjectivation and ideological imperatives of saying and appearing, in which the density of the subjects has been emptied.

Ways of visibility that conceal and silence others

It is fitting to anticipate here two kinds of frailty that may be associated to the project and its configuration on Facebook when it comes to political potency. One of them refers to the report itself and has to do with the fact that, when reading the 17 posts analyzed, we perceived a kind of idealization in the description of the experiences related to "being poor" and "living on the streets". Such idealization, or romanticization, features testimonies that remark: a) the freedom of the streets associated to good behavior: "Many people don't believe it, but I don't do drugs, and I don't drink. […] I could even live at my mother's, […] but I'm used to the streets, I can't stay inside a house and I don't like her place. […] If I'm to have a vice, my vice is skate" (Anderson); b) the freedom of the streets and self-accomplishment: "Here [on the streets] I came to know another side of me, the side of art. To spend time, I draw, I compose, I sing. It makes me free." (No-Name); c) the freedom of coming and going: "to live on the streets it to be free. This is my house, I can piss on the square, bathe, you are invading my home. I am a citizen just like you, but I live here at Sé[8]" (Marcelo); d) the respect one earns due to "work posts" on the streets: "I've been on the sidewalk for 41 years. I am very well respected around here, I've been a drug dealer for a long time, I was the best dealer, never got caught" (Valdecir); e) and the street messianic mission: "I'm not sad for being here today, for Jesus was also mistaken for a street dweller. […] When you help someone on the streets, you help Him who's in heaven" (Bento).

Besides, a form of romanticization often present in the testimonies concerns what we call "model poor person", that is, that individual who is portrayed and/or portrays himself as honest, struggler and addiction free: "I pull the wagon when I'm unemployed. […] I have to work like a madman to support my 4 children so that they can study. […] I don't owe a thing, I don't drink, I don't smoke." (Kelson). Testimonies like this (and Anderson's above) are the ones that receive more comments at the page. The content of such comments reflects, in general, compliments for the initiative of the project associated to commotion

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[8]   Public square downtown São Paulo.

and restatement of values such as respect, dignity, resistance bravery and heroism.

The second frailty related to the political potency of the project on Facebook refers to the fact that in none of the 17 profiles does the subject of the profile answer to comments or get engaged in the polemic discussions brought up by the page's visitors. One may question whether showing, revealing, putting the other into words and images – whether all of that may yet mean that the other is not turned into an interlocutor.

Following through such observations, we are aware both of the possibilities and the limitations of technology when it comes to ascribing visibility to such socially nonexistent individuals, as well as the play of light and shadows in this relation of inclusion/exclusion through the speeches and the page itself. (MEIKLE, 2010, p.29). Put another way, the narratives posted on Facebook may ascribe visibility to figures of misery and poverty that conceal and invisibilize the drama and social suffering being enunciated.

The study on the forms of humiliation, social suffering and moral devaluation of the other is covered in difficulty as it usually implies, besides social misery, elements of "de-socialization" and psychic damages that affect the relation of the subject with herself (HONNETH, 2005), giving rise to "a self ever more isolated, deprived of references, contacts, dependent and lost, impotent, disoriented and, therefore, incapable of associating to others" (HAROCHE, 2008, p.169 – Our translation).

As remarked by Renault (2004, p.327 – Our translation), the concept of "social suffering" designates a kind of experience in which, on the one hand, the injustice one suffers may reveal itself so deep that the dynamic practices it arises may turn more contrary to the individual than contrary to the injustice of the situation and, on the other hand, the normative resources do not allow the development of conscience or questioning of the injustice of the situation. The theme of social suffering has been object of detailed reflection by this author, when researching the question on how theory of recognition may presently configure itself as a potent form of criticism to the social and institutional pathologies that produce "mute victims of injustice" (RENAULT, 2004, p.9 – Our translation).

Mutism, according to Renault, characterizes such victims as deprived from the means for giving a testimony on the injustice they suffer – a point similar to the indication of Couldry (2009), in a sense. Deprived of the normative and/or judicial language that would allow them to describe injustice as injustice, besides suffering injury the victims lack the means to provide proofs of the damage done to them. In order to grasp what is perceived as injustice, Renault sustains that ordinary knowledge of the individuals concerning the injustices they face and the social contexts that produce them would enable one to question the dominant normative framework around the understanding of justice, revealing its restrictions for embracing diverse situations of disrespect and humiliation lived by the dominated ones.

It is important to anticipate that our analysis of the testimonies has identified not a

type of mutism due to the inability of enunciating social suffering as injustice, but rather a type of silence related, first, to the way how the creators of the project compose the portrait of anonymous individuals in São Paulo: by constructing a speaking place destined to heroes and heroines of ordinary life, with the intent of "motivating people to develop a more human point of view" (definition registered on Facebook), the project approaches the anonymous in such a way as to extract something (extra)ordinary from their experiences: elements that may potentially generate empathy and wonder/estrangement in the rest of the people. Adds to that the type of framing of the photographs that follow that text of the profiles: they are aesthetically beautiful images, which the visitors often compare to paintings, often highlighting the face of the profiled ones and offering us an image of subjects who look straight to the camera. So, the prevalent point of view is that of the "ones outside", who take a glance in that which they do not know, seeking to see both the exotic aspect[9] of such marginal ways of life, as well as what may be found "good" and "morally valid" on the margins, on the peripheral places of the city. Due to this, the content of the comments also invisibilizes and withdraws the possibility of speech of the profiled ones.

In general, we verify the presence of two main groups of comments (both strongly marked by religious and meritocratic ideologies): one of them consists in messages of empathy (several comments mention crying after reading) or repudiation (accusation, moralist and condemning tune[10] – the presence of insults was detected in the debate between people interacting, but not in reference to the profiled ones) to the narratives posted, based on shared values and moral codes (this group also comprehends the comments with compliments to the project, since they reiterate the extraordinary character of the reports[11]); the other consists on messages supporting the "anonymous people in the narratives", in which we see a single moment in which the visitors speak directly to the profiled ones, encouraging and motivating them[12], but doing so as an advice (what restates the supposedly privileged and "superior" place of those who speak) does not invite the profiled ones to answer but to thank (the expectation for appreciation also features the comments of those people who offer some kind of concrete help – donations or judicial-labor counseling). In our point of view, both the kind of focus chosen for the narratives (unique stories of overcoming) and the answer produced by the visitors reiterate the position of subalternity

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[9]   "There were even some university professors who came to make some studies on me" (Marcos).

[10]   It is interesting to notice how the social ascription of blame influences self-blame: "At the moment I depend on Bolsa-Família [State social aid program]. This month I made no money because I lost my social ID and got suspended. That's what you get when you're an alcoholic, isn't it? I don't deny their reason. They are right" (José Vicente).

[11]   A few examples: "This page is a must-read every night before going to sleep! This page is fantastic. Street dwellers and their stories teach us so much! (Thainá Oliveira, 02/10 at 5:44 p.m.). "I like it even before I read it. This page is sensational!" (Emily Cristina, 02/12 at 1:45 p.m.).

[12]   A few examples: "Anderson, may God bless your steps, you are going to achieve everything you wish, believe and fight!" (Fabrício Linhares, 02/19 at 2:32 p.m.); "Anderson, go on and fight, you can do it, but also fight for studying and making a name, you are young, you will be grand some day! Success! (Necka Pincovae, 02/19 at 9:32 a.m.); "Good luck, Tamara, hang on!" (Simone Tome, 02/05 at 10:42 a.m.); "May God keep on blessing you, Ms. Geralda. And congratulations for getting over the drugs and prostitution. You are worth a lot" (Rosy Lima, 02/06 at 01:42 a.m.).

and social suffering of the anonymous portrayed people.

Renault (2004, p.35) characterizes "social suffering" as a notion that seeks to reveal the main characteristics of experiences of a kind of injustice that can hardly be expressed as such. This kind of suffering is usually psychic, subjectively felt, but has social origins, tied to a situation of absence of socialization (or demeaning social relations) and social death, that is, the destruction of an intersubjectively built nature and the de-institutionalization of existence through adaptation to situations. Such social suffering defines, therefore, a kind of experience in which, on the one hand, the injustice suffered is so deep that the practices supposedly activated in order to deal with it turn out more harmful to the individual than to the injustice of the situation and, on the other hand, amplify the invisibility of suffering subjects who, besides taking on the responsibility when it should be attributed to institutions and government, do not find affective, cultural and political places, places for exchange and value recognition.

Face to different scenarios of expression and articulation of unjust experiences created in the environment of digital media, especially those in which marginalized individuals and groups are able to develop their own language (escaping the mutism of damage) or show it in reports that make way for lines of discussion and conversation, we chose Project *SP Invisível* with the objective of problematizing the production of accounts of oneself on Facebook, acknowledging the asymmetries and power games[13] that pervade the construction of identities and the quest for recognition.

Butler claims that the production of accounts of oneself, to a large extent, occurs when there is a demand for us to trace connections between our actions and the suffering yielding from them, leading us to take responsibility: we are called and urged to "confess" via report, via narrative authority[14] directed to a public with the intent of persuading.

> If I hold responsibility in a set of moral references, this set is first directed to me, by the calling and questioning of the other. In fact, this is the only way for me to come to know this set of references. If I give an account of myself as an answer to such questioning, I am implied in a relation with the other before whom I speak and to whom I speak. This way, I come to exist as a reflexive subject in the context of the generation of a narrative report of myself when someone talks to me and when I am disposed to approach the ones who approach

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[13]   Foucault (1995) defines three distinct concepts in order to speak of power: strategic relations, government techniques and states of domination. The strategic relations constitute a facet of power relations effective among individuals in a family, a pedagogy, communication, and loving relation. They are infinitesimal, mobile, reversible, unstable power games, which allow different partners to trigger and put to action strategies in order to modify situations. They do not have a negative connotation. The states of domination would be the opposite of such practices, as they withdraw the mobility of reciprocal impositions in the fabric of personal bonds. The techniques of the self would be a form of regulating the passages between the two extremes, configuring power as the capacity to structure up a possible field of action for the other. Power is, thus, a way of action over subjects in action and relation.

[14]   "Narrative capacity is the precondition for making an account of ourselves and assuming the responsibility for our actions through it" (BUTLER, 2015, p.24 – Our translation).

me (BUTLER, 2015, p.26 – Our translation).

The scene of the appealing to another's answer, condition of ethical responsibility, allows us to construct reports that may or may not seek to communicate some truth, but yet institute a kind of action on "the schemes of intelligibility that shall determine who is to be the being who speaks, subjecting them to rupture of revision, consolidating new norms or questioning their hegemony" (BUTLER, 2015, p.167 – Our translation). The report is an action focused on, at one time, self-revelation, self-transformation and configuration of the terms and schemes of intelligibility that define who speaks and who one speaks to. Thus, such report reveals an ethical work of subjective and intersubjective construction based on dissensual experience that allows the individual to critically examine her precarious condition face to normalizing discourses, seeking for affirmation of new ways of subjective, political and social expression. Do the reports in the Project itself have the potency of rupture towards dominant discourse orders or are they exemplary reports, published with a certain mythic aura that produces inspiring portraits of overcoming and good will?

For its turn, the political, ethical and normative potency of the notion of recognition offers us a possibility to think over what the current definitions of justice present as social injustices. The quest for recognition involves, according to Honneth (2005) the creation of a collective semantics that enables one to point by the name the disrespects one suffers, involving the act of bringing up the theme and looking over the social experiences that do not fit the current definitions of injustice, but which yet are part of everyday life and of the experience lived and resented by the individuals. The quest for recognition may be seen as one of the dimensions of a broader struggle (one outlined by agonism and by the collective articulation of a social movement), yet one whose intent is to evince what is configured as injustice based on the experience of ordinary subjects.

Subalternity, agency and political subjectivation

In her well known essay *Can the subaltern speak?*, Spivak (1998) advances a question on the possibilities of speech of those she calls "subalterns". The notion is articulated around the conditions of constitution and maintenance not only of the specific condition of a certain group inside society, but also, and with special emphasis, the elaboration of the regime of binary oppositions in which such conditions are constructed and maintained.

Spivak (2006; 2009) points out that the point of her analysis is not to substitute a narrative by its complementary opposite, but to question the way how such oppositions are constructed, to what extent binary categories ("center/margin", "inside/outside", "elite/people") are discursively constructed in the cleavages of social fabric that leave aside other

perspectives that eventually do not fit such established meanings.

According to Spivak (2006), one of the characteristics of groups deprived of power is the privation of speech; the right to the word does not escape – without being fully determined by them – the relations external to the formulation of discourses that, for that very reason, fall prey to an axiological perspective responsible for defining them. The dismantling of a category such as "subaltern", if considered as an immediate and non-problematized classification, assists the observation of the fluidity of such category, constructed in basis of binary oppositions inside a specific situation of speech.

The suppression of the word of such groups, relegated to a discourse that one takes beforehand as "subaltern", leads to a silence that is equivalent to nonexistence recognized as legitimate. The "subaltern" may not perceive her discourse as "subaltern", as an explicit category, but she verifies in practice the social place of acceptance and possibilities of formulation even by shocking with other discourses in which basis it is possible to establish a place of her own. Characterized by immobility, by absence of an identity, in terms of public discursive visibility, once her existence is deduced in a logic that does not contemplate her, the subaltern finds a different definition of the perspective of "domination" or "marginality" (SPIVAK, 2005, p.479).

Such classification is not only responsible for the establishment of perceptions and representations as it places subjects as, say, "central" or "peripheral", but the classification itself features a way of reducing the group of others to an easily graspable dimension – the complexity of a self-assured subject is opposed to the simplicity of alterity reduced to the categories designed by who classifies.

Face to that, before proposing a model for narrative exchanges, Spivak seeks to put into question the way how such narratives are constructed and state themselves inside a social space whose founding elements define the conditions of thought and elaboration of knowledge and power.

Spivak widens the thought on the contemporary conditions of domination and emancipation avoiding reductive perspectives that fall apart due to their own insufficiency in providing heuristic opening for reality. The contemporary subjects' possibilities of action are tensely articulated both with social and historical conditions, in which the social existence of being is given, and its specific intellectual, ethical and affective links, the ones responsible for the elaboration of identities and bonds between individuals, groups and collectivities.

Identity, in its manifold dimensions and its complexity, continuously rests on subjective dispositions, ones composed by rationality but also by affection and desires, either conscious or unconscious, and by the possibilities of reference based on historical

and social conditions that mediate intersubjective relations – in this sense, see the works by Inthorn (2002) or Martino (2010).

The political gesture of "being someone" reveals itself at the moment when one realizes that, in public space, the prerogative is far from being granted, but it is obtained through dissensual articulation with other subjects. In general, one does only observe such need when there is some kind of discrepancy between identity discourses taken as compatible with a certain kind of subject and the demand for a questioning position: put into other words, the subject who does not raise identity issues is one in whom there is an agreement – not always real, it can rather be imaginary of fictitious – between her self-representation and the social discourses on herself; the only subject who does not have identity issues is one who has never been questioned about it, or never had her actions questioned in this basis.

In this sense, it would be possible to establish an elective proximity with the notion of dispositif proposed by Foucault (2003), taken as a heterogeneous set of elements in which basis one outlines a certain kind of disciplinary, discursive or bodily action. Such dispositifs that, according to Agamben (2009), relate to the prerogative of becoming dispositions – the notion, in this case, takes on a sense constructed in the sphere of Law – concerning what should be accomplished by people living under such disciplinary regime. A dispositif is composed of lines of force that promote either opening or closure; lines that constrain, model, conduct and, in this sense, determine the ways of actions, ways of representation and de-subjectivation. In the present text, the dispositifs that matter are those actioned by the creators of the project *SP Invisível* in order to translate into text and image the existences and agencies of precarious individuals and street dwellers.

The potentialities of agency[15] – for creating enunciations and enunciation scenes – cannot be set apart from dispositifs; however, it would perhaps be reductive to deduce that some kind of determinist nature of dispositifs follows; its own apparent heterogeneity implies the elaboration of hetero-vectorial lines responsible not only for the dynamics of dispositifs, but also for their contradictions, in which basis it is possible, for disciplined subjects, to act on intermediary spaces – or, in certain situations, to relate with spaces permanently of momentarily lacking dispositifs.

The subjects' agency refers, among other elements, to the capacities of organization – one of the original senses of the notion of "agency", as a form of organization associated

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[15]   We access here the notion of agency based on Deleuze (2013), according to whom singularities act against a background imposed by institutions (a possible world) and strive for the creation and effectiveness of multiple possible worlds (admitting that they may not cease to dialogue with the institutions). An agency is put to action through a logic of refusal, a position against the rules of representation and the consensual *mise en scène*: refusal is the condition of invention, side by side with the creation of new (collective) agencies of enunciation, which seek to experiment dispositifs and institutions more favorable to the dynamics of creation and update of possible worlds. An agency always emphasizes the multiplicity of worlds, enunciation and subjects and their constituting process.

to certain practices – of individuals in collectivity responsible for the definition of position and, occasionally, actions of general interest. Such constitution of agency evidently does not occur outside the space of dispositifs; on the contrary, it is in permanent tension with them insofar as it is a matter of putting them into question and even leading them to transformation – and, in last case, to the very remotion of such disciplinary dispositifs from inside a specific context in social world.

In this sense, the subjects' desires is the most relevant point for emphasizing the fundamentally articulated and tense nature of the process, pervaded by internal and external contradictions and, therefore, hardly reducible to any kind of determinism seeking to reduce complexities – and, therefore, the richness of analysis – to any kind of univocal notion or condition, for as much interesting and apparently explaining they may be.

In the process of political subjectivation there is a disconnection between the representation of individuals and the view presupposed by people on what concerns their speaking place, and this implies obstacles to the attempts of fitting them in patterns, defining them. They go by diverse names without perfectly fitting any of them, they cannot be rapidly defined. It is a crossing over subject's positions and it lays on a crossing over names: those imposed and those created by the individual.

Subjectivation, in Foucault (1995) and Rancière (2004), names both the process of becoming a subject and the political process of naming power constraints and injustices: it makes visible the gap between somebody's identity inside a given consensual order (in the distribution of roles, places and status) and a given demand for subjectivity through political action. On such aspect, Rancière emphasizes that, by subjectivation one means "the production, by a series of acts, of an instance and capacity of enunciation that were not identifiable in a given field of experience, whose identification is associated to the reconfiguration of a field of experience" (1995, p.59 – Our translation). If the process of political subjectivation redefines the field of experience that used to grant the individuals a pre-defined identity, we must ask how such redefinition occurs.

According to Rancière (2010), if something is singular in politics, it consists in the relation between two contradictory terms that define a subject. If the prevailing discursive order offers just one name for each individual, subjecting her and disfavoring the emergency of her plurality and her capacity for action, the creation of polemic scenes seeks to allow for the emergency of the subject through language. Political subjectivation concerns disidentifications: breaking up with a discursive order that offers each person her place in a given order of things, a place connected to an identity. It is not "recognition of" or the gesture of "assuming an identity", but the disconnection with such identity, producing a gap between the identity offered by the current order and a new political subjectivity (MARQUES, 2011, 2014). Subjectivation is not identificatory or disidentificatory, it is a

kind of subjectivation involving a kind of enunciation play and the way how individuals appear on dissensual public scene.

The specific conditions of the subject as an individual, desiring being, inscribed in affections that she equally inscribes in herself, cannot be detached, except for didactic or methodological ends, from the general conditions of relational existence in which basis one configures oneself as a social being. Conscience of oneself, in this aspect, seems to be equally constructed as conscience of "us" when one looks beyond any dispositif towards wider social perspectives. In such dialectics, the factors and cleavages related to social class, age, gender, ethnic group, time and other dimensions concerning space, inscribe themselves simultaneously on subjects, individuals and collectivities – for example, Wasserman (2005), in a study on media representation post-apartheid in South Africa, shows how specifically ethnical issues mix themselves with class issues, issues that cannot possibly be reduced to one another.

The subject's desire for change seems to demand the possibility of agency groups and communities towards action inside the space of dispositifs, starting, first, by making explicit the existence of dispositifs as such, and so, as elements subject to deconstruction.

One leaves aside, thus, any determinist or dichotomic perspective both on what concerns the subjects and the social elements, at the same time as one emphasizes the existence of dispositifs as formations related to hegemonic dimensions present in social fabric – ones responsible for the constitution of regulatory normativity of dispositifs built amidst tension with the resistance of other groups.

Without losing sight, for a moment, of the social cleavage responsible for the conditions of validity of certain instituted ways of life – one could say "naturalized" ways of life – in the urgency of ordinary practices, one widens the range of perceptions and self-perceptions of the subject by including other frameworks constituting hegemonies and contra-hegemonies or, in Spivak's words (1998), dominations and subalternities. Such cleavages do not escape nor are reduced to bonds of production in the context of a given politics; rather, they engender themselves in the spaces of life of the subject, in the space of her practices and representations.

The constitution of a relational aesthetic perspective, in this matter, seems to be verified also, maybe with special force, in the way of constitution of identitary representations of groups and collectivities addressed to public space. In Spivak's words (2006, p.16 – Our translation) "though inevitably positioned and characterized by her place in the 'symbolic' world of words, the subject nonetheless seeks to touch the 'real' world by constituting object-images or substitutes for it, this is the locus of imaginary".

The presumable asymmetry between representations elaborated in an autonomous or autonomous-reflexive way and those imposed to a certain group by another, usually

connected in a dominant-dominated relation, composes the space of tensions and conflicts – see, for example, the study by McCabe (2005) on the differences between self-representation of feminists by North-American feminists and the image the ordinary public builds on them. In this sense, Curti (2010), Friedman (2001), Tasker and Negra (2007) and Marques (2010), each one in their own way, suggest similar tension between identities and narrative representations.

However, the production of subjectivities and agency are directly related in the constitution of spaces that seek, while expliciting the dispositifs based on the agency of subjects, to express, in a more or less direct way, their demands and points of view on other poles of the whole. The very constitution of a public space of debate, Fraser argues (1990) when reading Habermas, is synchronic and diachronically characterized by the absence of numberless voices featuring the social fabric.

The dynamics of social actions, both on macro scale, in the sense of thinking "society" as a whole, something often hard to apprehend or empirically verify, and on micro scale of interpersonal ordinary relations, do not cease to exist in conditions of possibility responsible for the proposition of parameter elements with which the subjects must relate to one another in order to define themselves, their bonds, their conditions and potentials. In Marx's well known observation (2011 [1858]), human beings create their own history, but they do not know that; in a certain way, such absence of recognition is linked with the apparent de-potentiation of transforming actions insofar as they are not done while the subjects themselves do not realize the possibilities of change.

In the following reflection, we will try to evince that the conscience of oneself, in this sense, does not lack consideration for the fact that it is not only a matter of individual conscience, much less individualist conscience, but the tense constitution of subjects in which, in discontinuous manner, elements of specifically social character and the subjects' desires dialogue.

SP Invisível: political potencies of speech and image

The possibility of narrating and spreading one's own word in the web brings out a perspective of life change for the individual, which may imply, also, changes on what concerns her condition of marginality, even if such condition may not be completely extinct. It is worth mentioning that, transcending virtual visibility, the repercussion of testimonies in *SP Invisível* has already brought changes for some individuals shown on Facebook, such as the formation of a net of lawyers who freely orient the profiled, the solidary mobilization for donation of food and dresswear, professional psychological care, among others (LIMA, 2014)

However, the act of "telling oneself" or "narrating oneself" can only be configured as an emancipating gesture when it contributes to the autonomy and self-valuation of the subjects. In general, when the profiled persons have their stories displayed on Facebook, one observes that the visibility is often addressed to an effort of showing that their lives are not as bad as it seems, describing and justifying their situation as temporary and emphasizing "turnaround" and resistance moments. They figure, mostly, as "examples" (exemplary types of the conflicts, tensions and disparities of society) of overcoming and struggle (whose reports are described by the participants of Facebook as texts that must be daily consulted, due to their enlightening potency), but not as interlocutors.

One notices, in the testimonies, both the presence of binary and dichotomic moral positions (on "right" or "wrong", for example) and the questioning of the hegemonic preponderant logic, as they break expectations on what is a "good" life or the possibilities of a better future. If many testimonies mention religious beliefs (such as the testimonies by Geralda, Ceará, Bento, Valdecir, Anderson, Bruno, Roger and Juliana, Ricardo, Marcos), pointing expectations face to a supernatural power, one can also find traces of a kind of conscience on the individual's own potency of change, either when Ricardo (02/25/2015) characterizes his work as that of a "recycler" and as "common and autonomous", claiming not only that he likes what he does, but also stressing out his ability in the activity he considers the most important for society and environment; or when Marcelo talks of his choice to be free living in the streets or yet when Tamara (Pic. 1) talks of her role of bringing other prostitutes to conscience in the sense of not contracting diseases such as HIV.

Each testimony restates a way of seeing the world, with particular values and perceptions, to an extent. One notices the diversity not only in vocabulary and life experiences, but also in the (re)action face to similar situations, such as the gesture of asking for financial help in the streets or the very fact of lacking a house for living:

> "I don't like to depend on people, so I prefer to stay on the streets" (José Vicente);
> "Thank God, I've been to school and live in a pension […] I have to work hard, to get a house" (Ricardo);
> "Our dream is to go back and own a house to live with our daughter" (Roger and Juliana);
> "I'm ashamed of being here, so I often go without eating […] I'm ashamed of asking. I don't eat so I don't have to bother anyone, because we are not a person, we are trouble" (Francisco);
> "My mission in the world is to beg and share with those who are poorer than me, poor of mind and spirit" (Bento);
> "It is not nice to go on asking and living in other people's homes. […] I thought 'fine for today, but tomorrow, I don't know', some people never expected such situation, I think that's why I can live well" (Ceará).

Picture 1 – Testimony by Tamara on *SP Invisível**

Source: https://www.facebook.com/spinvisivel

When talking of their lives appealing to details, experiences, characteristics, such people refuse to be "only one more in the crowd". They expose feelings, frailties, qualities and try to distinguish themselves, either by refusing the denomination of "street dweller" or "drug addict", for example, or by characterizing the trajectory of their life up to that moment, their plans for the future, rejecting classifications and generalizations of police order (RANCIÈRE, 2000; SPIVAK, 2006; 2009), and evincing new agency possibilities, even if in a projective context of "dream" and desire:

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* "Hey, love, do you have one Real for coffee? I'm needing some help. My name is Tamara, do you know how my story begins? I came from Piauí at 17, to get a silicon implant, because this is the only place where they had the surgery. I'm a prostitute since I was 13, I began in Teresina, I'm 28. My parents love me, I would even go back, but I don't have the money and I want to swear off the drugs first. I don't do many jobs, nowadays, I don't depend on it much. My work is mostly conscience...".

"[...] I want to do better and when I get my ID I'm going to look out some place and get some kind of job" (José Vicente);

"[...] If God allows, to make my dream true, that is to live in San Francisco, in California. One may have high hopes, right?" (Ricardo);

"Our dream is to go back and own a little house and live with our daughter, but for the time she is better being off with my mother" (Roger and Juliana);

"My world came down, but in a month I will get through it and go back to war. […] I'm a 47-year-old warrior." (Francisco);

"I want to go professional on skate, I started skating when I saw the guys in Roosevelt Square, Anhangabaú" (Anderson);

"I wished to get a registered job so I could do more. You have my mobile number, if something come up, you may call. I work on anything!" (Kelson);

"I have to be light 'cause the world is based on malignant" (Geralda);

"At least now, on the 12th, I'm going to a clinic, who knows it will make life better?" (Tamara);

Beyond the discursive expression through written word, the profiles by the project are followed by photographs of the street dweller, which awakens our interest in investigating the ways how they expose the bodies, gestures and faces of such liminary subjects.

The politics of images, according to Rancière (2012), does not use representation for correcting habits, values and actions, but implies distance and suspension towards any determinable relation between the intent of an artist and the glance of a spectator. He emphasizes that it is not enough to portray a social situation of penury and suffering or nurturing empathy for the exploited and unaided ones in order to make it a political image. It is not enough, either, to evince empathy for the subaltern and marginalized ones.

The images, according to Rancière (2007, 2012), are political insofar as they may retrieve dissensus and rupture to homogeneous landscapes, ones of general agreement and subjection. The politics of image is associated, on the one hand, to the way how image may unveil potencies, reconfigurate regimes of visibility and question oppressive discursive orders. But, on the other, there is a politics of images that is most modest: even if one does not reconfigure or overcome such discursive orders, an image may reveal some schemes generally mobilized in order to give shape to that which one may enunciate about the facts it represents.

In this sense, an image is political when it allows one to glimpse at the discursive operations that influence the interpretation of that which we see, that is, the political potency is both in the images (sign materiality) and in the relations and operations that define it. As Rancière claims, "image is not simply what is visible. It is the dispositif through which such visible is captured" (2007, p.199 – Our translation) and the modes of its capture.

The political potency of images is linked to the way how, in the images, operations constitute regimes of visibilities able to regulate and constrain the way how the subjects "show up". As suggested by Picado (2014), if we consider some of the plastic figures of visual discursivity in photography, such as the movement of the bodies, the performativity of physiognomy representation and the way how the glance is directed to the camera, we may unveil some of the elements that may aid one to understand the way how the analyzed anonymous subjects are captured and presentified. Photograph is more than illustration to a text testimony: if we go back to the image of Tamara, we'll see that it was made amidst a speech, an enunciation that implicates us in the universe created by the image. It is not a matter of a body dissolving the landscape, a poor body composing the scenery of poverty (as eventually featuring some images), but a body whose gestures and expressions detach from a blurry background.

In Marcos' case, (Pic. 2), the relation between suffering and the way how it is enunciated "implied the admission of the powerful appeal that the presence of physiognomy may exert on us, given such inclination for feeling called by its prominent manifestation" (PICADO, 2014, p.136 – Our translation). When reflecting on the discursivity of a human portrait on photojournalism, Benjamin Picado draws our attention to the fact that the representation of suffering "gives rise to a discursive conduction around the image […] based on a possible vector of immersion of the spectator into the universe of the testimony" (2014, p.135 – Our translation). We are more specifically interested in the way how human physiognomy in photographs representing poverty and the poor person reveals features of the operation that translates a singular individual, based on parameters of recognition associated to the portrait. A portrait may both iconically represent its referent (by saving traces of likely/probable similarity) and also bring into "play the structure of simulations through which we build up an appearance as part of the strategies of our societary insertion" (PICADO, 2014, p.140 – Our translation). When it comes to building up an appearance, we also have to take into consideration the possibility of the portrait allowing one to see the masks being used for highlighting a set of qualities that aid one to attribute special distinction to someone. The Project *SP Invisível*, by producing portraits of anonymous people in the city, configure a kind of "ethics of the portrait", associating our possible apprehension of such profiled characters based on the features of their presence in image. Put another way, the portrait may convoke our empathy, solidarity, pity, reverence or rejection, since it utilizes human presence (and its gaze towards the camera) in order to conduct our moral feelings and the possibilities of creating communication bonds with the portrayed individual (this movement characterizes pragmatic reciprocity through the impression of a direct conversation). "The whole communication of the individual's *ethos* (her character, her ideology, her way of being) depends on making one believe that we are face to the most authentic incarnation

of such marks, due to the simple fact of the front presentation of the subject in the image, emulating the nearness of direct contact with her interlocutors" (PICADO, 2014, p.151 – Our translation).

In this sense, the images of the project waver between two kinds of portrait: the first one, fed by portraits that reproduce certain protocols for "picturing social types" (that's the case of Marcos' image, pic. 2, which has received many compliments in the comments, due to its aesthetic quality and its closeness to what the commentators associated to the idea of a legitimate street dweller"; the second kind refers to the production of portraits in which some element of the body being represented (gaze, posture, face) are capable of pointing to a kind of resistance to the erasement and vanishment of the subjects in narratives that only "fit" individuals in previously architected discursive frameworks, capturing their gestures, routines and bodies with consensual operations, constraints and all kinds of submission (which is the case of Tamara's portrait, pic. 1).

Picture 2 – Marcos' testimony on *SP Invisível*[16]

Source: https://www.facebook.com/spinvisivel

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[16] "Look, I don't like to talk about myself much, so I stay out of polemic. I don't like interviews, but you can take my picture. My name is Marcos, I'm 62, if you wish to know more about me there are some reports published, there are even some university professors who came over to make some studies on me. Have a great day, God bless".

One may also mention that the portraits following the reports we analyzed recall a reflection by Butler (2011) on precarity and the ways of figuration of physiognomy in image. She claims that we are all precarious subjects, once we depend on other anonymous people in order to be apprehended, regarded and recognized. Our condition of precarity and vulnerability supposedly lays on our dependence. According to Butler, precarity of life may manifest itself above all in the way how spaces of appearance (often marked by media images and frameworks) produce different ways of distributing vulnerability, causing some populations and groups to be more often subject to violence than others. In such spaces of appearance[17], those who remain faceless, or whose faces are presented as symbols of inferiority, are usually regarded as worthy of recognition.

Summing up, through the political movement and gestures of exposure connected to "appearing", the individuals may either turn into subjects with a face (one with moral appeal, subject to implicating interlocutors in a reciprocal relation of listening), or into subjects reduced to types, to enunciation and demonstrative classifications that cannot manage to reconfigure the relation between the visible and the sayable, between words and bodies. If, as claimed by Butler, the dignity of the human being is constituted through a gaze that listens to the face (the shout that expresses suffering), the image in the portrait may be a suitable mediation for shortening the gaps with alterity, while at the same time it grants a kind of separation: if it "produces a bond between separated subjects, between subjects of disconnection, it grants the distance separating them, preserving them from any identifying of massifying fusion" (MONDZAIN, 2011, p.124 – Our translation). However, one needs to ask how is such mediation established when it comes to portraying materially and economically deprived individuals with the intent of, in their assumed inhumanity, perceiving vestiges of something that may be considered human.

Final considerations

To become a partner of interaction is something fundamental in the process of acquiring visibility and recognition, as well as the constructing moral authority for dialogue, once the value attributed to a subject is configured in the game of attaching certain characteristics/abilities to the exchange partner in specific moments of communication interaction.

However, speaking is not simply to spread words by addressing them to supposedly interested ears, but it is to activate another's answer, it is to establish a speech act, a communication act. "Since I'm speaking, I'm pointing to a transaction between speaker and listener. And even an incredible effort for speaking, using one's own words, may not fulfill the requests for an act of speech" (SPIVAK, 1996, p.289 – Our translation).

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[17]   The space of appearance in Butler is artificial, created by man and materializes whenever there are subjects reunited in action, constituting discourses and creating possibilities for emitting judgment.

To "talk about" is not the same as to "talk to". Thus, when reading the stories told on Facebook and the following comments, we realize that none of the portrayed people answers to the remarks, provocations and reactions there registered (usually such reactions are ones of commotion, solidarity and support to the yearnings of the profiled ones).

They make use of words (they are convoked, incited to do so), they testimony, tell, speak of themselves, but hardly speak to others. "Usually, nobody speaks to me... by the way, what are you doing here, speaking to me?" – one of the profiled questions.

If visibility depends on direct, intersubjective communication, on reading and interpreting meaningful gestures, the confirmation of social value implied in such interaction is hardly accomplished whenever the portrayed ones do not establish with their virtual readers a potent relationship of exchange. There are here two dimensions of visibility which need to be highlighted: to become visible is to be able to speak (to express oneself and be heard in an enunciation) and to become visible is to be able to answer the calling of speech partner(s), becoming an interlocutor. On this second point, Honneth (2005) does not link invisibility to physical absence, but rather to social and communicational non-existence. In this point of view, our analysis has identified many forms of ascribing visibility to individuals who remain bonded to invisibilized and silenced existences.

Beyond the configuration of scenes of dissensus (RANCIÈRE, 2000) related to the authors of the analyzed testimonies, we recurrently notice dis-identification with what is imposed on them. The excess of words in the reports such people make of themselves shows that, beyond receiving the names of garbage collectors, street dwellers, prostitutes, they construct speaking places in which they are fathers, mothers, children, workers, dreamers, immigrants, potential political subjects. Thus, the images and testimonies taking place reveal ways of political subjectivation and ways of "being in the world" marked by the quest for autonomy, emancipation and recognition. We argue that the capacity to construct and conduce our own history is not something to be isolately pursued. Autonomy is not related to individualism or to self-sufficiency, nor can it be thought in detachment from cultural and socializing aspects. Instead, its construction is intersubjective and requires us to think about: a) power relations[18]; b) elements tied to values, practices and ways of subjectivation; c) experience[19] (BIROLI, 2013); d) communication competences with origins on interactive networks people establish with one another[20]. Thus, in order to be autonomous, one needs

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[18] "The focus on hierarchies and asymmetric power relations makes it the case that the choices are seen not only as a factor of interaction between the individual and the socially available alternatives, but as a complex unfolding of socialization patterns, unfolding of relations in which the individuals are positioned and of the way how, given such positions and patterns, their ambitions, the horizon of possibilities of action and, to a broader sense, their capacity of self-determination is configured" (BIROLI, 2012, p.16 – Our translation).

[19] According to Biroli, one needs to "recognize and valuate experiences that are not contained in domination and which could, thus, be revealing of dominated individuals – in that which escapes precisely the socially established standards and patterns, with their restrictive effects" (2013, p.102 – Our translation).

[20] The autonomous individual is usually taken for self-directed and self-creator, that is, she must be capable of seeing herself as the author of her own story and of her constructions of personal identity.

to be recognized as a partner in the debate and as an emancipated individual, supported by a system of fundamental rights that protects individuals in their integrity, promoting the necessary conditions for them to enter the process of public judgment as equals.

Though we have found questionings on the dominant logics, we constantly notice that many testimonies still lay on an idea of binary opposition (inside vs. outside; inclusion vs. exclusion; value vs. non-value; rich vs. poor). The opposition between social center and margin is still a strong one, but it is interesting to notice that it seems to get stronger inside the many possibilities of being on the margin: there are the ones who prefer to live on the streets, but most of the speeches by the characters of *SP Invisível* we analyzed present the street dweller as being further on the margin than other equally marginalized individuals, and the street dweller who does illicit drugs seems to be the most extreme of such marginal position.

There is the possibility, face to so many things that have been denied in their social living, that such people have nothing to lose as they feed (and try to accomplish) dreams and desires, even as a way of resisting a system that attempts to simplify their lifes and reduce them to generalizing denominations.

The idea of social suffering refers more precisely to the way how an institutional context condemns the needs of the self (attached to forms of relation positive in themselves which relate to psychophysical integrity and to personal identity) to remain unsatisfied. Institutional and routine forms of violence (invisible symbolic order) produce social suffering, bringing to sight what is at stake in certain experiences of injustice: the unsatisfaction of normative expectations anchored in certain non-attended needs of the self.

The way how the characters analyzed in *SP Invisível* refer to themselves and characterize themselves signals to the lenses and perspectives perceiving the world that they occasionally underpin hegemonic discourses by social institutions, and occasionally contest them, refusing the places to which they are destined. Such features of subjectivation, expression of desires and demands, as well as conscience (or denial) on what constitutes them as persons, may be related to creative agency (though embryonic), modifying the situation of suffering, social spaces in which they act generating reflections on the actions of others who live with them.

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