

Literary Journalism: conceptual review, history and new perspectives

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Abstract

The aim of this paper is to propose a reflection on the historical roots, concepts, practices and processes of Literary Journalism. The main conclusion is that it is a field in progress, whose wealth is precisely its diversity. The results of the study point to three possible improvements. The first one is to reinforce the connection of Communications with other fields of knowledge, such as Sociology, Anthropology, and Psychology, since the in-depth treatment of this kind of text demands broad and consistent epistemological and methodological approaches. The second is the need to form efficient networks of researchers, since there is already a considerable amount of research that has been carried out in Brazil. Finally, the third issue would be the necessity to build bridges linking the international academic community to the local one, which would increase the visibility of Brazilian studies.

Keywords: Communication. Narratives. Journalism. Literary Journalism. Life stories.

The context of the modality

The aim of this theoretical work is to synthesize the reflections on Literary Journalism developed by the author over the last 25 years. After reviewing the research conducted in the past quarter century on this topic, the author posits that the only certainty we have thus far in this field of knowledge is that – fortunately – it is still under construction. In fact, the wealth of Literary Journalism studies lies in its plurality of voices, sometimes in agreement, sometimes in dissonance.

From a historical point of view, studies in Brazilian Literary Journalism naturally share the same delay of three centuries as those of Journalism. The importation of typographies in the then-Portuguese colony was only authorized in 1808, with the arrival in Rio de Janeiro of the Lusitanian court in its attempt to flee from the Napoleonic invasion. The first printed newspaper in Brazil, *Gazeta do Rio de Janeiro*, would be released only on September 10, 1808, but as a pro-government journal and not as an independent publication (BARBOSA, 2013, p.39). It was a late implantation, if we take into account that there were already typographies in Spanish America by the sixteenth century. Even in Portugal, typographic ateliers did not require a license to operate, although the printed material needed prior approval by the *Conselho Geral do Santo Ofício* (General Council of the Holy Office), the *Conselho Ordinário da Diocese* (Ordinary Council of the Diocese), as

well as the representatives of *Desembargo do Paço*'s kingdom. "The typography extended to several Portuguese colonies of Asia and later of Africa. But not to Brazil" (MOLINA, 2015, p.35 – Our translation). By comparison, freedom of expression in the media of United States dates back to 1776, the year of its independence, which for some authors could be related to the capitalist system (SODRÉ, 2011). Brazil's feudal colonial past can be considered a restrictive factor, as the management of the immense Brazilian territory being in the hands of monarchs that bequeathed their hereditary captaincies to the nobles in their confidence (SODRÉ, 2011). For Melo, who studied this subject in his doctoral thesis, this delay was also due to the convergence of various social, political, historical, economic and cultural factors, including widespread illiteracy, a lack of public universities, and a weak internal commerce owing to the vast expanses and poor mobility between Brazilian cities (MELO, 2003).

At any rate, even after Brazilian Independence in 1822, and the subsequent creation of its Empires, a continued ebb and flow of freedom of expression and repression of the media was palpable – which naturally impacted this field of studies. It should be noted that freedom of the Brazilian press was much greater during D. Pedro II's Second Empire (1825-1891). The Emperor was an enthusiast of communication technologies – he encouraged the practice of several techniques, such as photography – and admired the American system of democratic political management (CARVALHO, 2007, p.167). Evidence of this can be found in the publication of Francisco Souza Martins's 1846 article on communicative processes, "Progress of Journalism in Brazil", in the *Revista do Instituto Histórico e Geográfico Brasileiro*. The Brazilian Empire, though, with its eight thousand kilometers of coastline, six thousand five hundred of which boarded the Atlantic and one thousand five hundred the Amazon River, felt isolated from its capital, Rio de Janeiro. Land communications had to be made by horseback, actually mule trains. "And travel along the country's few navigable rivers was often hampered by the many waterfalls and rapids" (HALLEWELL, 2012 - Our translation).

Inspired by the heavily politicized French press, the Brazilian press – still in a consolidation process – faced significant difficulties at moments of great political crises, namely those led by military dictatorships: 1) the Old Republic, which began with the coup of the declaration of the Republic (1889-1930); 2) the New Republic (1930-1964), in particular the era of Getúlio Vargas (1930-1945); and finally 3) the dictatorship (1964-1985) (SCHWARCZ; STARLING, 2015), perhaps the most covered period in Brazilian journalism studies probably because the Brazilian researchers of the 1970s and 1980s suffered the military regime's severest restrictions to their academic freedoms. The next generation of researchers, who started their studies in the 1970's and worked during the 1990s, may have faced, to a certain extent, similar restrictions during their formative years, but this generation was emboldened by the movements of re-democratization of the 1980s,

either through their study of the media publications of the era or through their contact with those professors who were devoted to these contents.

The founding of the *Instituto de Ciências da Informação* (Institute of Information Sciences), or Icinform, in 1963 by Luiz Beltrão (1918-1986) is considered by some to be a watershed in the history of theoretical research in Brazilian Journalism (MELO, 2015). Despite this pioneering moment, Communication research as a field would only be constituted in Brazil in the 1970s. In this context of late media deployment and restrictions in the freedom of expression, it is not surprising that research on Journalism and, consequently, Literary Journalism in Brazil has been relatively late in developing. Another striking feature in the specific case of Literary Journalism in Brazil is the predominant focus of studies on the interface between Journalism and Literature (LIMA, 1990). As the cultural journalist Daniel Piza (1970-2011) has rightly noted, the “two genres [are] separated by the same language” (CASTRO; GALENO, 2005, p.133 – Our translation). Given all this, Brazilian journalistic literary studies usually address specific analytical method (BORGES, 2013), or focus on the question of the writer “dressed as a reporter” (BULHÕES, 2007, p.62), that is, an author who works as a journalist to earn a living to support his or her literary productions and aspirations. Making a living from one’s fictional work alone has always been more difficult for Brazilian writers in comparison to those in the United States due to lower literacy rates and readership interests.

In general, concerns of the professional writer as journalist return to the fore when the media system experiences a moment of crisis, such as during the 1950s, when, after World War II, the influence of the French media paradigm – considered more opinionated – declined in favor of a more informative and concise American model. The managers of the journalistic media systems of the time advocated the implementation of new technological and normative processes, such as in-house styles, and would be characterized by such prominent voices as Nelson Rodrigues (1912-1980), one of the many “idiots of objectivity” (COSTA, 2005, p.124 – Our translation), evidence that paradigmatic changes are not usually accepted willingly by certain communities (KUHN, 1982), nor that they necessarily bring about improvements.

A second significant crisis occurred in the late 1990s, with the development of the Internet and, by extension, digital media and environments, which brought about an unprecedented transformation in practice and journalistic management models. At first, the challenges and potentials of this configuration were unclear, and theoretical reflection assumed an apocalyptic perspective, which put the very conception of journalism at risk (MEYER, 2007). It would take decades before the journalistic institutions realized that their market no longer included the sale of paper editions but of news content, and that their public sought and was willing to pay for the credibility afforded by the traditional techniques practiced by its professionals – such as the in-depth investigation of the facts.

And these media organizations had to learn new ways of dealing with change, such as adopting the pay wall system, in which only part of the content is released online for free. “Loyalty is not achieved exclusively by the inclusion of forms of interactivity, but mainly by providing quality content, and also by attracting the audience in a participatory news project” (MASIP et al., 2015, p.248).

The precarious universe in which the journalist was immersed (PAULINO; NONATO; GROHMANN, 2013) announced the end of the big newsrooms and the emergence of a professional profile linked more than ever to entrepreneurship and innovation, which evidently had implications in the praxis of Literary Journalism, a form of writing that, as representative of a genre that values narrative voice and structure (CASTRO, 2010), generally needs more time to produce.

What is Literary Journalism after all?

Apparently, all attempts to define Literary Journalism have thus far failed (CASTRO, 2010), as there is no definitive consensus on this term, neither in Brazil nor abroad. For argument’s sake, we can propose that it is precisely Literary Journalism’s conceptual porosity that is the secret behind its success in praxis and theory. Back in 1995, the American journalist and researcher Mark Kramer illustrated that, until then, literary journalism had been a “you-know-it-when-you-see-it” form, meaning that even in the United States it was in the process of systematization (KRAMER, 1995).

Not surprisingly, this form would be known in both countries by various names, such as Narrative Journalism, Literature of Reality, and Creative Nonfiction Journalism (LIMA, 2016 – Our translation), among others. In Brazil, there is a current trend that characterize this modality as part of a diversional genre (MELO; ASSIS, 2010), not in the sense of entertainment but of diversity (COSTA, 2015, p.76), being in this case more related to the study of the format than of the content or production processes. There are also some more recent terms, such as Longform Journalism (LONGHI; WINQUES, 2015), which is also related more to its digital format and environments than to its aesthetics and experience, as advocated by American scholar John C. Hartsock in his most recent book (HARTSOCK, 2016). The term Narrative Journalism is generally considered a reference to the Nieman Foundation, the journalistic branch of Harvard University, in the United States, particularly the period when this foundation was directed by Professor Mark Kramer in the early 2000s. On the one hand, the term Literature of Reality refers to one of the great exponents of the practice, the American writer Gay Talese (TALESE; LOUNSBERRY, 1995), who understands that the journalist can use literary resources to better report on a given reality. Creative Nonfiction Literature is a translation of the Spanish *Periodismo informativo de Creación*, which refers to the Gabriel García Márquez’s *Fundación Gabriel*

García Márquez para El Nuevo Periodismo Iberoamericano. But it is not uncommon for a number of researchers to be tempted to propose their own term, as astronomers do when they imagine they are discovering a new star. On the other hand, there is a tendency to use more traditional terminologies, such as New Journalism – literary journalistic pieces written during the 1960s and 1970s by American writers Norman Mailer (1923-2007), Gay Talese and Tom Wolfe, to name but a few – as if they were somehow detached from Literary Journalism. The author of this article understands New Journalism to be a specific period within the history of Literary Journalism – and certainly the most mediated one. There are also controversies among scholars if other specific proposals, such as the Gonzo Journalism (RITTER, 2015), would be part of Literary Journalism, given the radical and iconoclastic conditions adjoined to its production.

Either way, Act II, Scene II of Shakespeare’s *Romeo and Juliet* may be applicable here: “What’s in a name? That which we call a rose / By any other name would smell as sweet” (SHAKESPEARE, 1998). In other words, the most important seems to be the observation of the journalistic phenomenon that involves the production of these in-depth pieces, and not to get entangled in language barriers or in nets of sterile definitions. In this sense, no one so far has been happier than the John C. Hartsock in asserting that there is no universal designation. Without intending to definitively resolve the issue, he says he has decided to opt for the term Literary Journalism because of the understanding that the texts under consideration are narrative. “Future discussions between academics will be able to culturally construct a definitive nomenclature, if such nomenclature is possible” (HARTSOCK, 2000, p.11).

The Origins of Literary Journalism

The quest for the origins of Literary Journalism has led to an interesting debate. Lima suggests that the term was coined in the United States in the 1930s (LIMA, 2010). For Pena, its origins are much earlier and broader in scale, based on a community’s need for knowledge and information to combat the fear of the unknown. Therefore, “it begins with the first human communication, still in prehistory” (PENA, 2006, p.25 – Our translation). According to Castro, ‘reporting news in a literary fashion goes back to the Egyptians’ (CASTRO, 2010, p.11). Paradoxically, each of these statements can be considered accurate, but for the sake of this paper we will adopt the notion that Literary Journalism dates from the 18th century, when the modern characteristics of Journalism, namely periodicity, universality, topicality and publicity (GROTH, 2011), began to emerge.

In Brazil, the main examples of Literary Journalism date from the early 20th century: Euclides da Cunha (1866-1909) (CUNHA, 1944) and João do Rio (1881-1921) (RIO, 1976). In the same way as authors such as Charles Dickens (1812-1870) and Mark Twain

(1835-1910), however, Cunha and Rio can be considered precursors of Literary Journalism as it is practiced and understood today (MARTINEZ, 2016).

An engineer from Rio de Janeiro, Euclides da Cunha, probably the most studied Brazilian Literary Journalist, covered *Canudos'* insurrection for the newspaper *O Estado de S.Paulo* in 1897. For the next five years, he used surplus material to write *Os Sertões*, published in Portuguese in 1902 and translated in the 1940s into English as *Rebellion in the Backlands* by the University of Chicago (CUNHA, 1944). João do Rio was the pseudonym of the then-multimedia Paulo Barreto (1881-1921), whose immersion into Rio de Janeiro society, as the translated into English as “Religions of Rio”.

The magazine *Realidade* and the daily *Jornal da Tarde*, although discontinued, are still references in the history of Brazilian literary journalism, a tradition continued in the creation of magazines such as *Brasileiros* and *piauí*, in addition to websites, including independent ones. For instance, the most recent winner in the reportage category of the Gabo 2016 Awards, of the *Fundación Nuevo Periodismo Iberoamericano* (FNPI), was Brazilian journalist Natalia Viana for her story “São Gabriel and his demons” (VIANA, 2016). The report was published on May 15th, 2015, in the *Agência Pública de Jornalismo Investigativo* (Public Agency of Investigative Journalism), which proposes a non-profit model of journalism with the aim of maintaining its editorial independence. The reports of *Agência Pública* are reproduced by a network of more than 60 vehicles under the creative commons license.

In spite of all the advancements in the digital environments, though, in Brazil the reportage books continue to be the privileged site where Literary Journalism can be observed in all its potentiality (LIMA, 2009).

A modality for the few

For Lima, literary journalism occupies a special position in contemporary journalistic culture, but it is not “the most popular form of journalism, nor the most constant. Nor is it the dominant style in the press. As it is not the largest, it has to be different” (LIMA, 2010, p.9 – Our translation). We can highlight two observations within this context.

Professional training. The most significant exponents of Literary Journalism in general have a comprehensive and humanizing worldview that attempts to be comprehensive (KÜNSCH, 2014; MARTINO, 2014) to account for the complexities in the world in which we live (MORIN, 2007). This broad vision requires, in addition to the mastery of literary resources and journalistic techniques, knowledge in various fields, such as history, sociology, psychology and anthropology, among others. It also demands professionals with sensitivity to the perspective of alterity, that is, attempting to understand the other, without neither the need to endorse nor judge his/her/their world view. The motto would be that we know

in advance what we already know about the world of others, so what is interesting would be to discover what the other thinks, feels and does in the pursuit to create immersive and engaging reports. Professional market. Once you have a qualified professional, you need a fertile field to receive the stories produced. The great criticism to Literary Journalism in Brazil is that there is no longer a place for it in the contemporary world. Though certainly not unilaterally, talented and trained literary journalists are able, over time, to impose their style, often through persistence, to editorial boards. Even in the case of dailies with wide circulation in the State of São Paulo, such as *Folha de S. Paulo* and *Estado de S. Paulo*, it is possible to find remarkable literary journalistic pieces now and then. There are also, in the Brazilian case, journalists responsible for corporate publications who, in possession of appropriate skills and vision, are in a position to influence managers to open spaces for innovative literary journalistic practices. Specifically in the Brazilian case, these opportunities are sometimes not taken advantage of, either due to the lack of training or personal/institutional initiative. An example of this would be an annual coverage event, such as Mother's and Father's days, which could be better utilized if editorial policymakers simply forecast an annual calendar that would provide for more thorough and creative treatment of the reports, as it is done in the U.S. and in certain Brazilian dailies, such as *Zero Hora* in Porto Alegre (state of Rio Grande do Sul).

On the art of seeing the world anew

It is not our intention here to present a list of names, but rather an outline about what makes literary journalism somewhat authorial, enabling authors to present their ways of seeing and reporting the world anew. Consequently, especially in the case of non-fiction books, this diversity of authorial production allows readers to choose from visions that are similar, complementary, different or even diametrically opposed to his or her own. In this sense, one interesting aspect of Literary Journalism would be to accompany an author in his or her trials and tribulations during the writing of a story, since readers can like one piece produced and dislike the next. Since the writing process is organic and in constant flux, it is therefore subject to various highs and lows.

This authorial notion leads to another issue. Like a cactus planted in damp soil or an Amazonian tree transplanted in the desert, an author may not be at an optimum production level if he/she is not in a soil which provides him/her the necessary nutrients to flourish. And if the journalistic universe today has lost the gigantic newsrooms present until the end of the 1990s, it has gained a multitude of options, some of them represented by independent journalistic institutions. This is the case of digital environments, and, in these, of social networks, which are leading many users who achieve success and visibility to receive proposals allowing insertion in traditional communication media, such as

television and books. On the other hand, successful network users intuitively or consciously sense that they are designing an identity and cultivating news of common interest to a given community, nourished through characteristics attributed to journalism, in particular specialized journalism, such as periodicity, contemporaneity and specificity. Again, this requires planning, since demands no longer come from the outside (an editor, a deadline, a physical space, a monthly remuneration), but rather from the journalist him- or herself as an entrepreneur of his/her own career.

Instead of fallacies, research reviews

There are debates in the field that have been going on for decades, and if they continue to be present it is because they probably are still relevant to the academic community, especially for young researchers. Let's comment on three of them. The first, from the standpoint of Journalism, is the notion that it lacks objectivity. The fact is that when analyzing outstanding reports which have elements of Literary Journalism, what is usually noticed in an exhaustive research work. Rigorous scrutiny, therefore, often for long periods of time, is one of the basic assumptions made by Mark Kramer in one of the seminal works on the subject (KRAMER; SIMS, 1995). The second issue is that literary journalism would be composed of flowery passages containing elements such as the “wax nose” (*nariz de cera*, in Portuguese; purple prose in English) – jargon for unnecessary openings in pieces which do not comprise the lead concept.

The interesting thing is that already in 1970 Tom Wolfe, one of the exponents of American Literary Journalism, in a phase called New Journalism, launched a book in which he postulates the literary resources with which journalists composed their journalistic pieces: scene-by-scene construction, the use of realistic dialogues, detailed description of one's status-life symbols, and, more difficult to be found, multiple points of view (WOLFE, 2005). In this context, a recent Brazilian research has focused on the division between an author (considered as a social mediator demarcated by the formation and linked to an occupation) and a narrator (a creation of the author who exists to narrate the work from a given perspective) in journalism, arriving at the conclusion that, even today, Brazilian journalists use this narrative resource intuitively, unintentionally (MARTINS, 2016).

Finally, the third issue concerns the length of stories, especially in digital media, where unproven claims have been made that readers are only interested in shorter pieces. There is actually a contradiction here, if we notice that new denominations, like Longform Journalism, are precisely characterized by digital environments. Research carried out on the work of the Brazilian journalist Eliane Brum addresses this question: “In the website of the magazine *Época*, Brum accepts the temporal rhythm of weekly production, strictly respecting the deadline, but appropriates with gusto the unlimited space” (MARTINEZ, 2014,

p.75 – Our translation). An example is *Vital Testament* (*Testamento vital*, in Portuguese), an interview with Brazilian cardiologist José Eduardo de Siqueira, which, with 7,509 words, is exceptional in length. “[...] this study reveals that the phenomenon of the bond (MENEZES, 2007) between journalist-author speaks louder than possible limits of their production” (MARTINEZ, 2014, p.75 – Our translation). This could be seen as an example of *afeto* or affection-linked bonds, the basis of all Communications as defended by theoreticians in the field (BAITELLO JÚNIOR, 2014; SODRÉ, 2006). The challenge, apparently, would not be to produce shorter texts, especially in digital environments, but to be able to establish this affective link between the story and the reader. Once that interaction is established, the length of the story becomes apparently less important.

Beyond Literature

Considering all forms of journalistic productions, Literary Journalism carries the greatest burden with respect to the investigation of the fact – no invention is allowed – and the ethics involved in working with sources and revealing content to readers. We have already noted in Wolfe (WOLFE, 2005) the four resources that link Journalism to Literature. However, Literary Journalism goes beyond this interface, establishing relationships with other fields of knowledge, such as Sociology, in particular through immersive techniques as participant observation. In this context, participant research would consist of “the insertion of the researcher into the natural environment of the occurrence of the phenomenon and its interaction with the situation investigated” (PERUZZO, 2017, p.162 – Our translation). According to Peruzzo, this mode of scientific inquiry, which had impacted the field of Communications during the 1980s and the beginning of the 1990s, has been in decline due to the crisis of the Marxist paradigms. For Peruzzo, however, there is evidence today of a renewed interest in this research methodology.

This relationship between the fields of Communications and Information, which includes Journalism and Sociology, naturally refers to the studies compiled by the Chicago School in the 1930s. “The function of the news is to guide men and society in a real world. Insofar as it achieves this, it tends to preserve the individual’s sanity and permanence in society”, suggests one of its main exponents, American journalist Robert Park (1864-1944) (PARK, 1972, p.183). A strong supporter of the empirical method, perhaps due to his journalistic training, Park advocated observing individuals not in isolation or from academic offices, but through immersing oneself in the city’s marginalized communities, here, specifically, Chicago’s peripheral neighborhoods of the first half of the 20th century, an effervescent crucible constituted of different migrant peoples, with their respective cultural practices that were assimilated or rejected by means of the tensions, osmoses and entropies linked to the new urban space. Thus, journalism would be responsible not only for enabling

individuals to become aware of certain events, so as to be able to position themselves among them, but also to relate to certain notions, such as identity belonging and, above all, social action.

Psychology would also contribute to the currents that would allow us to understand in depth the psychic factors that consciously or unconsciously move the individual and social groups. In this multidisciplinary way, [...] we can understand Literary Journalism of the 21st century as the mode of journalistic practice that employs methods of capturing and observing the reality of social sciences, an area where journalism is embedded. Once selected, these data, redefined from the professional's experience, are written with techniques from the literature with the objective of creating a non-fictional account that allows for an in-depth understanding of the theme. (MARTINEZ, 2012, p.120 – Our translation).

It is this set of conceptual, technical, aesthetic, and ethical frameworks that could enable the literary journalist to “surpass the superficial layer of the real, delving into the deeper dimensions of reality in order to clarify, rescue, understand, and finally report in a more integral basis the senses, the nexuses and the connections existing in the event” (MARTINEZ, 2014, p.66 – Our translation).

Life stories in a complex setting

Much has been said, and rightly so, about the central role of human beings in these contemporary narratives (VILAS-BOAS, 2008, 2014). Lima emphasizes the importance of plunging into the inner sea of the individual, which certainly welcomes the knowledge coming from the psychological sciences (LIMA, 2010, p.89). It is important to highlight that life history is a method consecrated in several fields of knowledge (MARTINEZ, 2015), offering to the literary journalist a wide range of possibilities, such as the family life history advocated by the French sociologist Bertaux (2010), which is employed by Latin American scholars, such as Jorge González, professor at the Autonomous University of Mexico.

In a certain way, since life histories are at the heart of Literary Journalism, they would have, to the extent that it was possible for the literary journalist, the potential of amplifying the attempt to understand him/herself and the other in a remarkable exercise of alterity, which would extend itself to the relationship with the community and/or society in which both the interviewee and the interviewer are inserted. In addition to discerning the individual and social aspects of this exchange, any attempt to understand the relations between both individuals' respective “cosmos” would not be lost, especially in the Brazilian case. This implies an approach that is linked not only to the subtle layers of the imaginaries that each human being possesses, consciously or not, but also to the perceptions, openings

and denials connected with the mysteries inherent in human life – which, incidentally, will never be subject to reductionist and absolute explanations.

In addition to this comprehensive inner dive, one must therefore be aware of the innumerable connections that link the person and social groups to various systems, including the media. It is the so-called ecosystem (MARTINEZ; MENEZES, 2014), which Robert Park called human ecology in the 1930s.

The importance of references

That journalism is in crisis has been known since the beginning of the 21st century. Therefore, it seems to be more productive from the research point of view to focus on examples of professionals and institutions that are managing to offer, if not perfect, at least possible paths to improvement, and, from the reflection on these cases, draw possibilities applicable to each case. There are always good examples from traditional magazines in this field. For those who speak other languages, such as English, one would be the *New Yorker*, which has produced material of excellence since 1925. It is no longer necessary to invest financial resources in this endeavor to keep it up to date, as vehicles are releasing a certain proportion of their material for free on their social networks or in their newsletters.

Perhaps, in this field of references, in addition to the serious study of the subject, and the follow-up of the novelties, some serendipity is needed, that is, allowing for quality material to appear where we would not expect to find it. The journalist Eliane Brum, in lectures, usually reveals that she is a voracious reader of everything, including boxes of cereal and medicine packaging. It is this curious look that might allow one to identify new angles in known scenarios.

Final considerations on knowledge, academic dialogues and possible future

Edvaldo Pereira Lima, a retired professor in the Postgraduate Program at the School of Communication and Arts at the University of São Paulo, is one of the references in the teaching and researching of Literary Journalism, especially in the State of São Paulo, where he has trained several researchers since the 1990s. In the last quarter of a century, several other professionals have begun to theorize about the discipline, reflected in the productive discussions in various scenarios and universities spread throughout the country, which by the late 2000s has led us to point out the phenomenon of the expansion of the discipline (MARTINEZ, 2009). In this process of mapping the field, some authors have begun to specialize in a given segment of study, as is the case of Literary Journalism and its relationship with science (PASSOS; NERING; CARVALHO, 2010). The offer of *lato sensu* courses, such as the Brazilian Academy of Literary Journalism, now namely Post Graduation in Literary Journalism, has also helped in the last decade to train professionals with an expanded vision of possibilities of practices and processes in this discipline.

However, we would like to highlight the relevance of the academic meetings, which during these past years have brought together scholars devoted to the teaching and researching on the subject. One point to be emphasized is that, due to various institutional demands, the term Literary Journalism is still not always identifiable in the production and in the disciplines offered by the researchers, especially in *stricto sensu* Postgraduate Programs. This is because professors are confronted with the challenge of aligning their studies to the field, lines and research groups peculiar to each program to meet the guidelines proposed by the Coordination for the Improvement of Higher Education Personnel (Capes), the foundation of the Brazilian Ministry of Education responsible for regulating master's and doctoral programs in the country.

Nevertheless, spaces for debate, such as the one promoted by the Brazilian Society of Interdisciplinary Communication Studies (Intercom) since 1977, in particular the Research Group on Journalism Theories since 2004, have helped to foster the construction of the field in a gradual albeit solid manner. It is also important to emphasize the effort made by Brazilian scholars to establish links with research groups of Literary Journalism abroad. This is the case of the International Association for Literary Journalism Studies (IAJLS), founded in France in 2006, which mission is to bring together researchers from all over the world to encourage academic research and education in Literary Journalism based on the premise that the term deals with journalism *as* literature instead of journalism *about* literature. In 2016, the conference was held for the first time in Latin America, thanks to the initiative of Professor Juan de Moraes Domingues of the Faculty of Social Communication of the Pontifical Catholic University of Rio Grande do Sul (PUC-RS).

The participation in this academic event, which gathered together world-class scholars in the field, such as Norman Sims, emeritus professor at the University of Massachusetts Amherst, and John C. Hartsock, Department of Communication Studies, State University of New York at Cortland (SUNY Cortland), may help the positioning of Brazilian research on the international level, increasing our researchers' chances to publish in books and scientific journals dedicated to literary journalism (LIMA; MARTINEZ, 2014; DOMINGUES; TRINDADE, 2014, among others) This is the case of books such as *Literary Journalism across the Globe: Journalistic Traditions and Transnational Influences*, edited by professors Bak and Reynolds (2011). It seems that, in these early years of the 21st century, Brazilian scholars are on the verge of not only entering into but also influencing the research on literary journalism an international scale.

The strategies behind the teaching and the researching of Literary Journalism are not always simple or visible, and swift results should not be expected. However, these strategies are enabling researchers around the world to feel that they are not working in isolation but as integral members of a field of study. As the French epistemologist Edgar Morin once said, we live in a “world that is dying, but a new world cannot yet be born”

(MORIN, 2016 – Our translation). As always happens during childbirth, there is always a tension between the moments of shadow and the glimpses of light. And this possibility of witnessing something that is about to be born is disturbing and awe inspiring.

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