Parallel Realities:

Brasil Paralelo and Right-Wing Documentary Culture on Brazilian YouTube

by

Giovanni Francischelli

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Dissertation Committee

Dr. Gabriela Martinez, Advisor

Dr. Janet Wasko, Core Member

Dr. Christopher Chavez, Core Member

Dr. Daniel Steinhart, Institutional Representative

University of Oregon

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DISSERTATION ABSTRACT

Giovanni Francischelli

Doctor of Philosophy in Communication and Media Studies

Title: Parallel Realities: Brasil Paralelo and Right-Wing Documentary Culture on Brazilian YouTube

This study explores the production and digital distribution of conservative documentary films on YouTube and digital platforms. By analyzing Brasil Paralelo (BP), one of the largest right-wing media production companies in Brazil, this research sheds light on how an ideologically driven media company operates in contemporary platform capitalism. The goal is to use BP as an important case study to understand international debates around disinformation, political polarization, culture wars, and other forms of political dysfunction commonly associated with the rise of new digital media. The theoretical framework connects three different areas: the political economy of media, cultural studies, and documentary film studies. Methodologically, the study draws on digital ethnography, critical discourse analysis, social network analysis, and historical methods.

One of the main goals is to address the extent to which right-wing media production benefits from its intersection with digital platforms and their affordances, including participatory communities, algorithmic amplification, micro-target advertising, and other forms of digital communication. To achieve this, I use BP as a case study and account for the company's history, establishment, growth, production, and diversification of its distribution strategies to penetrate the digital public sphere.

The dissertation is divided into seven chapters. The first is an introduction in which I present BP as a case study in global communication and digital media research; the second is a literature review focusing on the political dysfunction associated with social and digital media; the third chapter explains my methodological approaches. In the second part of the dissertation, we have three different chapters each trying to respond to fundamental and interrelated questions about my case study: (1) how this ideological company emerged and operates within broader political and economic networks in Brazil and globally; (2) how its documentaries construct ideological narratives through rhetoric, aesthetics, and affect; and (3) how algorithmic recommendation systems, targeted advertising, and participatory communities amplify its reach and engagement. Finally, we have a short concluding chapter that discusses the findings, limitations, and contributions.

The dissertation argues that BP exemplifies a new moment for political communication, in which documentary films and propaganda interact with digital platform infrastructures and commercial incentives. By tracing how right-wing narratives are produced, circulated, and monetized, *Parallel Realities* contributes to transnational discussions about the relationship between right-wing politics and digital technologies. One of the central arguments is that right-wing content is simultaneously a political discourse and a cultural commodity optimized for attention economies. I hope that this grounding of analysis in the context of Brazil, a highly connected society, can offer a Global South perspective that extends current debates beyond the Euro-American focus of most scholarship on platform communication and political outcomes.

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With eternal love and remembrance, I dedicate this work to my father, Lauriberto Francischelli, who passed away while I was completing my master's degree in Sao Paulo, Brazil; and to my daughter, Cora Perez Francischelli, who was born in Springfield, Oregon, as I completed this doctorate. Two edges of life meet across the continuum of my academic journey. And to my cat, Tiger, my faithful companion through many solitary hours spent writing this text, who passed away just days before my defense. A strong reminder that life unfolds while we strive to understand and change the world for the better.

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CHAPTER I:

INTRODUCTION

As I conclude this dissertation, Brazil is entering yet another general electoral cycle in the year 2026, in an election that is expected to be polarized and to oppose the left-wing Workers' Party (PT) and President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva against candidates associated with the contemporary Brazilian right, particularly the movement associated with the right-wing populism of Jair Bolsonaro (referred to as Bolsonarism). As the electoral period intensifies and campaigns are expected to become increasingly explicit and confrontational, the right-wing group is expected to release "*Dark Horse*", a high-budget biographical drama about Jair Bolsonaro's life, starring Jim Caviezel, directed by Cyrus Nowrasteh, and produced with transnational ambitions. At the same time, the left-wing actors are exploiting both the conservative movements' increasing alignment with American political interests and the controversies surrounding the opaque financing structures reportedly used to fund the film.

The fact is that contemporary conservative movements are no longer confined to electoral politics. They now produce films and other forms of media culture, including stories, myths, documentary films, news outlets, street protests, symbols (such as the Brazilian yellow soccer jersey, which is now a strong symbol of the Brazilian right wing), and much more. Far from being an isolated Brazilian phenomenon, it reflects transformations in political communication across multiple countries. Everything is now weaponized politically, and everything can turn into a political narrative in the constant battles over ideologies and narratives that help sustain political identities and worldviews.

The emergence of this new right-wing political landscape has been closely tied to the expansion of social media platforms. Since they became popular, a transnational ecosystem of

conservative media actors has emerged, and political polarization and culture wars have intensified, with online political activism and widespread engagement. From figures such as Dinesh D'Souza and Steve Bannon in the US, to organizations such as Turning Point USA and PragerU, these actors have learned to operate strategically within platform media environments, bypassing traditional journalistic gatekeepers while cultivating highly engaged ideological communities online. This phenomenon is not unique to the United States; in Brazil, these dynamics are perhaps most clearly embodied by Brasil Paralelo (hereafter BP), the media company that serves as the central case study of this dissertation.

Understanding how the contemporary right has increasingly transformed itself into a cultural commodity and a media-producing force requires examining the political actors themselves, and the media infrastructures that have enabled their communication, given legitimacy to their discourse, and might have helped amplify their worldviews: the new digital and social media.

Throughout much of the twentieth century, political communication operated largely through centralized broadcasting systems dominated by a relatively small number of corporate media institutions that exercised strong forms of gatekeeping over what was audible, visible, or legitimate. While these systems were themselves ideological and concentrated, they nonetheless imposed significant barriers to entry for smaller political actors and alternative media producers. In Giuliano da Empoli's terms, these systems were centripetal: their primary objective was to secure the median voter's consent (Empoli, 2019) .

Over the last two decades, however, digital platforms have given way to participatory social media, becoming central infrastructures of global communication and profoundly transforming the circulation of information and cultural production. With social media, there is

no longer a centralized broadcasting logic but fragmented outputs and audiences, algorithmic distribution, and highly segmented ideological publics that no longer seek consensus. In this new environment, digital media became simultaneously more concentrated at the infrastructural level, dominated by a handful of global technology corporations, and more decentralized at the level of content production, allowing political actors, influencers, and ideological entrepreneurs to cultivate highly engaged niche communities at unprecedented scale, what da Empoli describes as *centrifugal* politics (Empoli, 2019).

As these platforms moved to the center of contemporary communication systems, multiple countries simultaneously witnessed the rise of right-wing populism, political polarization, disinformation, and new forms of authoritarianism. Political actors, influencers, and alternative media entrepreneurs have learned to strategically exploit these systems, bypassing traditional journalistic gatekeepers and building highly engaged online communities across multiple digital platforms. Conservative media ecosystems that were once more restricted to niche audiences gained unprecedented visibility through YouTube channels, streaming platforms, podcasts, online courses, and other forms of media productions.

Mobilizing financial resources for advertising and content production, right-wing populist groups and leaders have risen to power across the globe. One of their key success strategies was to produce emotionally charged content for social media platforms, organizing through groups and networks, and leveraging digital engagement for political purposes. Documentary films, a genre historically associated with truth claims, realism, and public debate, became particularly valuable within these emerging digital media ecosystems. On video platforms such as YouTube, a new form of militant documentary emerged, aimed at highly engaged online conservative audiences and functioning as an ideological glue for this movement's cultural identity.

This project situates Brazil as a critical case study in the global rise of right-wing media cultures and conservative documentary production. Since the end of the military dictatorship in 1985, Brazil has seen a steady (albeit uneven) expansion of democratic participation and civic life. However, since 2013, with the rise of mass street protests and online activism, the country has become a fertile ground for reactionary politics, amplified by conservatism, media ownership concentration, and the strategic use of digital platforms. It is within this context that BP, a media company founded in 2016, emerged as one of the most powerful vehicles for right-wing communication and cultural warfare, using documentaries to engage in the dispute over political discourse and historical facts.

BP nowadays produces content for millions of viewers, with nearly 700 million views, 8,000 videos published on YouTube, and 5 million subscribers on its channel. From Brazil, the company is also producing international films and seeking to enter the North American market through a subsidiary, Big Pictures Originals, as a new window of opportunity is open with the Trump administration and connections with international conservative figures. With a highly sophisticated organizational structure, a rapid production pace, and content spanning a wide range of topics, BP has, in many ways, been constructing the intellectual and ideological repertoire of this new conservative political movement. Although this movement is undoubtedly diverse in its factions, ranging from agribusiness interests and militarism to evangelical groups and monarchists, it also shares many common elements, such as a cohesive discourse on anti-feminism, anti-abortion, anti-LGBTQIA+, anti-environmentalism, property rights, economic liberty, and meritocracy.

To study BP through its documentaries, therefore, is to understand how the rise of digital platforms is connected to that of right-wing movements. Also, to examine, through its economic

and social structures, how this political movement became possible and what its implications are, especially in a hyperconnected society like Brazil, where visibility and content supply can make a significant difference. It is this relationship that this dissertation sets out to examine.

Rationale for the Research and Research Questions

BP offers a compelling case study of the relationship between digital platforms and contemporary right-wing movements. While some scholars have identified an "affinity" between social media infrastructures and populist mobilization (Gerbaudo, 2018), others have identified this movement as digital populism (Bobba, 2021; Schroeder, 2026), the rise of digital fascism (Fuchs, 2026), asymmetrical political polarization (Barberá, 2020), online radicalism (Carter, 2018), network propaganda (Benkler et al., 2018) and other terms that associate neoconservative movements and politics with the rise of digital platforms.

Few would deny that digital media are challenging traditional journalistic authority, academic consensus, and historical knowledge (Cazzamatta, 2025; Fuchs, 2018) and giving rise to conservative voices that were previously marginal in politics. The Brazilian scholar Pablo Ornelas Rosa (Rosa, 2024; Rosa et al., 2025), coined the term *technoconservatism* to describe this contemporary right-wing movement that combines neoliberal and libertarian economic principles, traditionalist, patriarchal, and colonial social values, with an enthusiastic adoption of digital technologies and artificial intelligence. From this perspective, the new right-wing movement can be understood as aligned with platform capitalism, relying on platform infrastructures, algorithms, and data extraction as tools of political mobilization.

This project situates BP within these debates and analyzes how the documentary form, traditionally associated with truth claims and public debate, is now mobilized to promote conservative ideology online. Many historians in Brazil have pointed out that BP's documentary

films challenge mainstream historiography through revisionist narratives that often rely on conspiratorial discourse and culture-war rhetoric (Balestro dos Santos, 2021; M. P. Cleto, 2024, 2024; de Britto, 2023; Felinto, 2023; Oliveira Brito & Rodrigues Junior, 2021; Picoli et al., 2020; Rosa, 2024). My dissertation project contributes to this critical agenda, although not by focusing on the historiographic accuracy of their films, but by drawing on media studies, documentary theory, and the political economy of communication to offer a distinctive approach to how ideological media operate within contemporary platform capitalism.

This project is organized around three research questions: 1) how the company emerged and under what historical and political conditions it developed, including its institutional structure, funding strategies, and political ties; 2) what narratives and rhetorical strategies their documentary films employ to legitimize and promote right-wing ideology and literacy, and how these appeal to or activate a conservative audience; 3) how *BP* leverages social media and digital platforms' affordances—such as YouTube's recommendation algorithms, targeted advertising, and participatory communities —to expand their reach, shape public discourse, and sustain engagement.

To answer those questions, I'm using a set of methodologies, including political economy analysis, critical discourse and film analysis, digital ethnography and social network analysis, all under the general framework of critical media studies and international communication scholarship. The research seeks to provide a comprehensive understanding of the connections between digital platforms and the dissemination of right-wing ideology in contemporary Brazil, linking these dynamics to global trends in the rise of right-wing populism, the cultural divide, and political polarization.

Significance

The contributions of this dissertation, I believe, are innovative in at least three distinctive ways. First, while much scholarship on digital authoritarianism has focused on the United States and Europe, this project expands the scope to Latin America where Brazil has emerged as a critical site of social media usage and right-wing political organization. Although much of the literature on social media, right-wing media, and the rise of political polarization is based on European and US cases, this is a pioneer synthesis of the Brazilian context, contributing to a broader international scholarship.

Second, the dissertation advances documentary studies by examining how documentary language is repurposed within contemporary disinformation and platform-based media ecosystems. While the relationship between documentary films and political propaganda is well established in the literature (Barnouw, 1993; Nichols, 2017; Niney, 2002; Winston, 2008), understanding how documentary films are being instrumentalized today for political mobilization through digital media is innovative and remains largely underexplored. It is also an innovative approach to understanding the relationships between documentary and the growing debate about misinformation in online contexts.

Finally, the project contributes to the political economy of communication scholarship, demonstrating how this theoretical framework is particularly important for understanding digital platforms and the rise of right-wing media. While much of the literature has focused on the "effects" of social media, asking whether it causes political polarization, radicalism, or increases the spread of disinformation, my approach is rooted in the political economy of right-wing media, accounting for the political-economic dimensions of marketing, production, and distribution of their ideologies.

Overview

The dissertation consists of 7 chapters. After this introduction, Chapter II reviews the relevant literature and theoretical frameworks related to platform communication and the political dysfunctions often associated with platform logics. In this context, YouTube is understood as one of the main platforms for political communication, especially in Brazilian right-wing media cultures, and as a driver of political polarization and radicalism through its recommendation systems.

Chapter III discusses the methodological approaches employed in this study, including critical digital ethnography, political economy, social network, and discourse analysis. Taken together, these methods help to examine BP from multiple angles, from its institutional structure and funding, the rhetorical and ideological content of its films, to the digital platform dynamics that shape its reach and engagement.

Chapter IV examines the political economy and institutional development of BP, analyzing its business model, funding structures, platform expansion, and media strategies. The chapter covers its emergence from the rise of networks of neoliberal think tanks in the 1990s and the emergence of right-wing digital cultures in Brazil in the 2010s, through the rise of figures such as Olavo de Carvalho, the company's founding in 2016, its acceleration during the Bolsonaro years (2018-2022), and its more recent transnational expansion.

Chapter V analyzes the discourse, aesthetics, and ideological construction of selected BP documentary productions, focusing on themes such as historical revisionism, anti-communism, conspiracy narratives, the defense of former military dictatorship, attacks on universities and social movements, and other issues central to the formation of a contemporary Brazilian conservative identity. Drawing on a corpus of 45 documentary films, the chapter maps the

company's principal thematic axes, offers a detailed reading of one of its most recent productions—*God Complex*—which signals a transnational turn toward American conservative politics, and examines the formal and rhetorical strategies that recur across these films.

Chapter VI analyzes the circulation of BP's content across digital platforms from a digital ethnographic perspective. To understand the BP universe in digital media and the use of digital marketing strategies, I dived into the company's proprietary streaming service and its YouTube channel. Drawing on an observational protocol based on proxy YouTube users, the chapter examines how YouTube recommendation systems shape distinct ideological media environments. The findings show how BP grew and expanded over the years through marketing strategies, and how YouTube plays an important role in their digital strategy, by reinforcing ideological preferences and creating cohesive political communities, a phenomenon that appears especially pronounced among right-wing users.

The concluding chapter VII summarizes the dissertation's main findings and reflects on the implications of contemporary platformed communication. It also briefly discusses the research limitations and future directions, which I hope can inspire and illuminate further research on right-wing media and digital culture.

CHAPTER II:

PLATFORM COMMUNICATION:

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND LITERATURE REVIEW

Contemporary communication is undergoing significant transformation, in which older forms of communication (radio, broadcast, print, cinema) are affected by the rise of the internet and digital media infrastructures. This transformation reflects an important shift from the logics of mass media to those of flexible specialization and accumulation, characterized by personalized services, niche markets, and algorithmically segmented publics. Large technology corporations such as Amazon, Google, and Meta now operate as central intermediaries in the circulation of information, culture, and advertising, delivering highly targeted products and services to fragmented and datafied audiences. They are known as "digital platforms," a term that emerged to describe a diverse range of online services/infrastructures and has since become a cultural value (Srnicek, 2017; Nieborg and Poell, 2018).

For decades, scholars have examined the relationships among media ownership, its advertising logic, the competition for audience attention, news framing, ideological pressures from owners and sponsors, and the production of consent (Herman & Chomsky, 2019). With digitalization and the increasing datafication of contemporary societies, new dynamics are brought into these processes, reshaping how political and cultural content is produced, distributed, and consumed on a global scale (Nieborg & Poell, 2018; Srnicek, 2019)

Advertising revenue has increasingly migrated from legacy media industries to digital platforms, allowing these corporations to reorganize the infrastructures through which information circulates (Harvey, 1989; Srnicek, 2017; van Dijck, Poell, & de Waal, 2018). Those digital media platforms have become a trillion-dollar industry with unprecedented power and

control over information flows. Platforms now shape information flows and influence public discourse. Platforms reorganize the material conditions in which we access information and services and how we communicate daily. As Gillespie (2018) argues, they are not neutral intermediaries but active custodians of discourse, shaping what is visible, discoverable, and monetizable online.

The accumulation of user data and the asymmetries of power between users and platforms have been analyzed extensively by political economy scholars in the last few years (Cohen, 2023; Fuchs, 2024; Srnicek, 2019; Tufekci, 2017; Zuboff, 2019). For Jin, the dominant positions of Facebook, X and Google are consistent with "platform imperialism" (Jin, 2013, p. 161). He defines it from its asymmetrical relationship in which U.S.-based digital platforms dominate global markets, allowing them to shape technological infrastructures, embed commercial and intellectual property interests into their platforms, and extract capital from users and markets worldwide.

Beyond traditional forms of media concentration, including vertical and horizontal integration, platform communication systems are globally interconnected digital infrastructures characterized by the rapid circulation of information, transnational flows of culture and capital, and the expansion of platform-based services, in which users, producers, advertisers, and other actors are connected under the same infrastructure controlled by a few international tech oligopolies making money from user's dependence and data extraction.

Within this context, BP offers a valuable case study for examining how a contemporary right-wing media company operates across the logics of digital platforms and engages audiences in ways that may intersect with those debates about the political effects of new digital media.

This chapter reviews recent scholarship on platform capitalism and the political dysfunction it entails. Furthermore, it situates BP and the Brazilian context within those debates.

Platforms and Political Dysfunction: A Political Economy Critique

Contrary to the techno-democratic optimism of the early 1990s and 2000s (Barlow, 1996), most people nowadays worry about the harms posed by social media platforms. The prioritization of engagement over information quality is identified as the central element of the political economy critique of platforms (Tufekci, 2017; Zuboff, 2019).

The political economy critique of social media has also renewed interest in understanding the audience as a commodity, a concept that received particular attention in Dallas Smythe's work (1977). While Smythe applied the idea to advertising-supported mass media, the idea of audience as a commodity has since been extended to digital media, where systems prioritize engagement to keep users scrolling and sell ads, while consumers increasingly become prosumers, i.e., users who also produce content (Fuchs, 2024).

The central argument is that the demand for users' attention and profits has led to a profit-driven corruption of the public sphere (Simons, 2023), with many reports and debates reverberating in academia and the mainstream media. Researchers and whistleblowers such as Frances Haugen[1] (from Facebook) and Guillaume Chaslot (a former engineer at Google corporation), have exposed how their products are designed to maximize users' engagement and profits, keeping people connected and extracting data for targeted advertising (Tufekci 2017; Fuchs 2017; Zuboff 2019).

[1] Mac, R., & Kang, C. (2021, October 3). Whistle-blower says Facebook "chooses profits over safety." *The New York Times*. https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/03/technology/whistle-blower-facebook-frances-haugen.html

The main focus of criticism is usually the recommendation algorithms, as they are designed to be addictive and often amplify violent, divisive, extreme, or sensational content to keep users engaged and sell more ads. Because of this "addictive design," some scholars have claimed that it contributes to the creation of harmful media effects (Benkler, Faris, & Roberts, 2018; Marwick & Lewis, 2017; Fuchs, 2021; DiResta, 2024). Facebook, one of the earliest and big social media platforms, is associated with filter bubbles (Pariser, 2011). YouTube has been largely linked by academics and journalists with the radicalization of users, offering them extreme videos through the recommendation system through "a rabbit hole of extremism" (O'Callaghan et al., 2015). There are also concerns about echo chambers of information in which users become insulated from content that challenges their political assumptions (Barberá, 2020), increasing political polarization (C. Bail, 2021; Finkel et al., 2020; Sunstein, 2017), the spread of disinformation and conspiracy theories, and declining trust in institutions, among other negative effects (Arora et al., 2022; C. Bail, 2021; Barrett et al., 2021; Finkel et al., 2020; Sunstein, 2017).

The literature assessing social media and political dysfunction is vast and expanding. However, measuring and understanding the harmful effects of media remain central challenges in communication research. A collaborative review by Haidt and Bail offers a nuanced synthesis of the field, organizing a complex set of questions that researchers have posed about potential harms caused by social mediav. Depending on the specific research question, methodological approach, and study design, findings vary, offering mixed evidence regarding the effects of social media on making people more polarized, creating echo chambers, amplifying inflammatory discourses, decreasing trust in traditional institutions or increasing the probability of violence (see Haidt & Bail, ongoing). At stake is the broader question of how communication systems can continue to serve democratic life rather than become instruments that undermine it.

The debate surrounding the political effects of social media becomes even more complex when viewed from a global perspective. While much of the existing literature has focused on North America and Western Europe, considerably less attention has been devoted to developing countries such as Brazil, India, Indonesia, or the Philippines, where social media platforms often play an even more central role in the circulation of political information (Nielsen & Fletcher, 2020) and where moderation policies can be weaker or non-existent. In some of these contexts, platform adoption also interacts with inequalities and authoritarian traditions. Brazil, for example, remains one of the world's largest social media markets; it has experienced intense political polarization, disinformation campaigns, and the rise of influential digital right-wing media organizations such as BP. Therefore, Brazil offers an important context for understanding these dynamics.

Political Polarization

A central focus of communication research is the potential of social media to exacerbate political polarization. Polarization is often vaguely defined as the divergence of political attitudes shifting from the center towards ideological extremes (Arora et al., 2022; Barberá, 2020). Much of the literature on political polarization has focused on the United States, where politics is dominated by two major parties. In that context, polarization often refers to the growing divergence between Republicans and Democrats over political ideals and policy goals. If the divergence between the poles increases, we can see greater polarization (Finkel et al., 2020).

In the United States, scholarly debates about political polarization have existed at least since the 1990s. DiMaggio et al. (1996), for example, examined changes in public opinion between 1972 and 1994 and showed that evidence of political polarization varied according to the topic under analysis. In Brazil, only more recent scholarship has begun to pay attention to

political polarization. Because Brazil has a multi-party system, the division between left- and right-wing party alliances has become more pronounced only in recent elections and current political contexts.

Brazilian scholars such as Esther Solano and Pablo Ortellado (Ortellado et al., 2022; Solano & Ortellado, 2018) have traced the roots of Brazil's political polarization to around 2010, when neo-conservative groups began organizing more effectively against the Workers' Party (PT). This countermovement grew in parallel with the expansion of digital platforms and influenced key political events, including the 2013 mass street protests (known as the June Journeys), the impeachment of Dilma Rousseff in 2016, Lula's imprisonment, and Bolsonaro's election in 2018. Those events are often interpreted as signs of Brazil's increasing political polarization between a new right-wing movement and the traditional Workers' Party. However, most Brazilian scholars understand this new right-wing movement not as a rupture, but as the rearticulation of authoritarian tendencies historically present in Brazilian politics, now reshaped by online mobilization, moral panic, and evangelical-Christian identity (Santos & Miranda, 2020; Solano & Ortellado, 2018; Solano & Rocha, 2022).

Recent research has shed new light on the amplification of political polarization and the growing division in societies, especially due to the increasing influence of social media (Arora et al., 2022; Barberá, 2020). The idea was that by expanding inflammatory or divisive content for each partisan group, social media would increase the affective and moral divides in society (C. Bail, 2021; Barrett et al., 2021; Settle, 2018; Sunstein, 2017). Bail (2021), for instance, argues that social media distorts political discourse by amplifying a relatively small number of highly radical users, making extreme voices appear more representative than they are. In this sense,

platforms may shift public debate away from a more democratic equilibrium and toward more polarized and radical forms of political engagement.

In an influential 2020 article, 15 university researchers concluded that social media companies like Facebook and Twitter (now X) play a critical role in intensifying political sectarianism (Finkel et al., 2020). They stated that "Social-media technology employs popularity-based algorithms that tailor content to maximize user engagement, increasing sectarianism within homogeneous networks, in part because of the contagious power of content that elicits sectarian fear or indignation" (Finkel et al., 2020, p. 534). This "out-party hate" sentiment is framed as "political sectarianism" (Finkel et al., 2020).

In one of the most popular studies on the topic – a large-scale study of Facebook users - Jaime Settle (2011) concluded that the platform increases divisiveness among users, fostering stereotyped evaluations and politicizing non-political issues. Van Bavel et al. (2021) also argue that social media platforms may facilitate polarization by rewarding divisive content, outgroup animosity, and moral outrage through engagement-driven systems. However, expanding this hypothesis beyond simplifications and anecdotal evidence is difficult.

Many other researchers have addressed the issue with quantitative methods to measure the effect of messages or algorithmic amplification of divisiveness or polarized content, finding evidence that supports the hypothesis (Guerra et al., 2021; Ledwich & Zaitsev, 2019; Ribeiro et al., 2020; Settle, 2018. C. A. Bail et al., 2018; Barrett et al., 2021; Pariser, 2011; Sunstein, 2017). On the other hand, many are critical of polarization as a concept, with studies finding no evidence associating use of social media with more radical or polarized opinions (Boxell et al., 2017; Brown et al., 2022; A. Y. Chen et al., 2023; Guess et al., 2023; Hosseinmardi et al., 2023; Ledwich & Zaitsev, 2019; Nyhan et al., 2023). To make things even more confusing, it is also

common to see different conceptualizations of polarization (affective vs political) and overlapping terms such as divisiveness, sectarianism, tribalism, and radicalism.

Iyengar offers a possible solution not based on policy division but on how partisans view each other as a disliked out-group. It involves a strong sense of one's positionality within one's group and a negative sentiment toward those identifying with the opposing group. His framework suggests moving the target from “political polarization to “affective polarization”. His argument is that we choose our political preferences based on our identities rather than on opinions about policy issues. According to his argument, identifying with a political party triggers negative evaluations of the opponent side, and exposure to campaigns only reinforces this predisposition (Iyengar et al., 2012). His argument is that what we understand as political polarization is less tethered to political ideology and more closely intertwined with emotions and sentiments that traverse from one pole to the other, labeling it as the “affective polarization” (Iyengar et al., 2012). The concept of "affective polarization," rather than just political polarization, would be more effective for understanding the hostility and negative sentiments among partisan groups.

Digital Culture Wars

In the type of framing described above, another important aspect is that political polarization creates a form of partisan hostility characterized by seeing opponents as wrong, unpatriotic, or a danger to the nation. (Barberá, 2020). Political (or affective) polarization can become a threat to democracy when we move from divergence in political views (necessary for democracy) to dislike the outgroup (affective polarization). Unlike economic disputes, which often allow compromise, moral disputes concern values and identities that people consider non-negotiable. Social media, and often traditional media, can be dangerous when it distort and

amplify those emotions, fueling extremism, muting moderates, and leaving us with misgivings about the other side of the political spectrum (Bail, 2021).

This phenomenon can also be understood in terms of culture wars (Hartman, 2016; Hunter, 1991), where conflicts are organized around competing moral worldviews and collective identities rather than disagreements over specific public policies. In the culture-war contexts, political disputes are increasingly revolving around symbolic issues—including religion, gender, sexuality, national identity, education, and historical memory—that are framed as existential struggles between incompatible visions of society.

The historicity of culture wars in its contemporary sense (Hartman, 2016; Hunter, 1991) dates back to the rise of social movements in the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s, when liberalization and emancipatory movements intensified in the USA and other parts of the world (Hartman, 2016). The term was coined by Hunter (1991) to describe how an alliance of religious, orthodox, and conservative forces was established in a battle against their progressive counterparts—black people, women, lesbians and gays, challenging historical oppressions, the white-male dominant patriarchy, and hegemonic discourse. Although Hunter developed the concept in the context of United States, the culture war framework has since been applied to other national contexts because of the globalization of identity movements and the influence of political narratives.

At the center of these cultural and political struggles lies a contest over how social reality is defined and understood. In Gramscian terms, this is a struggle for hegemony (Gramsci, 2012): the effort to establish interpretations of society as common sense while challenging competing visions. For Gramsci, hegemony is not maintained through force or the exclusion of dissident perspectives. It operates through the active production of consent, making dominant understanding appear universal as it absorbs and neutralizes potential challenges. For this reason,

categories such as race, gender, sexuality, class, and religion become sites of ideological contestation rather than a fixed or universally accepted reality.

From this perspective, ideological struggle extends beyond electoral politics and permeates the institutions and cultural arenas that shape public consciousness, including the media, education, religion, the family, the arts, and other sites involved in the production and reproduction of ideology. In this context, new actors and organizations started to reshape public discourse, re-legitimize authoritarian values, and neutralize progressive agendas by mobilizing cultural products such as documentary films, podcasts, interviews, books, etc., promoting epistemologies that challenge or delegitimize the established status quo in topics such as abortion, decriminalization of drugs, police brutality, women's rights, and others.

In Brazilian society, culture wars were largely shaped by the rise of a new conservative, Christian (evangelical)[3], and reactionary force, organized mainly in opposition to the Workers Party and fighting against the alleged imposition of its left-wing cultural agenda. Some authors analyzed how the culture war has shaped Brazilian politics, especially in recent decades. It accounts for (1) affirmative policies based on race and gender (the racial quotas); (2) policies for the redistribution of wealth; (3) reproductive rights and gender identities, and (4) controversies on national culture and cultural institutions (Teixeira Vieira de Melo & Vaz, 2021).

For this reason, the argument about the polarization of Brazilian society is often linked to the emergence of a culture war in the country. The topic gained force during Bolsonaro's administration (2018-2022) as his rhetoric and that of his supporters largely influenced the

[3] This convergence between evangelical conservatism and the rise of Bolsonaro is also explored in Petra Costa's documentary *Apocalypse in the Tropics* (2025), which examines the growing political influence of evangelical Christianity in contemporary Brazil.

"culture war" framework[4]. Another important figure in the diffusion of culture war narratives in Brazil was the self-proclaimed philosopher Olavo de Carvalho. Having built his intellectual career largely outside traditional academic institutions, Carvalho translated, interpreted, and popularized the works of several American conservative thinkers, acting as a key intermediary in the transfer of U.S. culture war narratives to the Brazilian right. In his rhetoric, political opponents are portrayed as moral enemies, making compromise very difficult. In his rhetoric, traditional democratic institutions are constantly delegitimized and start to face growing pressures.

Filter Bubbles and Echo Chambers

Another strong argument about the political dysfunction caused by social media draws on the idea of filter bubbles. The argument is that social media collect our data, learn our preferences, and train algorithms to replicate them, incorporating and reinforcing our own bias. This argument became widely known through Pariser's (2011) theory of the Facebook "filter bubble." Pariser shows how algorithms used by social media create the filter bubble effect, reinforcing our tendency to see only information aligned with our worldview and reducing bipartisan interaction (Pariser, 2011). According to this perspective, algorithmic personalization creates informational environments that distort users' perceptions of reality (Bail, 2021).

It is not a totally new idea. Alstyne and Brynjolfsson argued in 1996 that the concept of a global village, in which individuals from various backgrounds exchange information online, was

[4] At least two academic journal issues were published entirely on the topic. The first was from Revista Eco-Pós - Dossiê Guerras Culturais (v.24, n.2, 2021) edited by Cristina Teixeira de Melo (UFPE) e Paulo Vaz (UFRJ) and the second is Dossiê - Guerras culturais: políticas em confronto v. 15 n. 1 (2022) edited by Pablo Ortellado and Diogo de Moraes Silva (USP).

only one possible outcome of information technology. Another possible outcome was the emergence of a "cyberbalkan", in which individuals who share the same interests or resources would create fringe communities with a common ideology. "Once like-minded individuals locate each other, their subsequent interactions can further polarize their views or even ignite calls-to-action" (Alstyne and Brynjolfsson, p. 81). In fact, the idea of selective exposure has been a concern of communication scholars for decades (Lasswell, 1948; Lazarsfeld & Katz, 1955; Noelle-Neumann, 1974). But with the advent of new social media and digital platforms, interest in those dynamics has been renewed.

Despite relevant work in this field, many authors are critical of the filter bubble theory, arguing that users actively construct and reinforce political identities online. In practice, the authors who are critical of this hypothesis claim that in general, social media environments are far more heterogeneous and interconnected than the bubble metaphors suggest, and that social media often increases exposure to varied news sources rather than reducing it as we interact with different people whether family, work or school peers, and friends (Chen et al., 2021; Eady et al., 2019; Heatherly et al., 2017).

While filter bubbles are often understood as the result of personalized media environments and selective exposure, for example, individuals curating their information diets according to preexisting preferences and beliefs, the concept of echo chambers points to a socially corrosive dynamic. It refers to fragmented online publics in which opinions are completely homogeneous, and no disagreements can exist. It is not limiting exposure to opposing viewpoints but actively cultivating distrust toward external sources of information and alternative epistemic authorities (Nguyen, 2020).

In this sense, echo chamber participants are not only isolated inside homogeneous informational spaces; they are also encouraged to perceive outsiders as fundamentally illegitimate. As Nguyen (2020) argues, the central problem of echo chambers is not informational enclosure but the undermining of trust itself, making individuals less able to engage with disagreement and more susceptible to ideological reinforcement and political radicalization.

Although the filter bubble and the echo chamber are often used interchangeably, Nguyen (2020) argues we should make a distinction between the two phenomena. The filter bubble, which she calls the epistemic bubble, is a social structure in which relevant voices are simply omitted. People in bubbles are not necessarily hostile to outside information (just not exposed). In echo chambers, increased segregation and specialization of content can lead to dangerous ideological isolation. An echo chamber is much more powerful and dangerous. In an echo chamber, outside voices are not only excluded but actively discredited. Members are taught to distrust outsiders, legacy media, fact checkers, experts, and institutions.

In echo chambers, users lack exposure to opposing views and actively undermine trust in out-group sources. For this reason, echo chambers manipulate trust itself, and these dynamics affect individuals across the political spectrum. Partisan media increasingly communicate with audiences that already share their ideological positions, effectively "preaching to the choir" rather than exposing publics to diverse viewpoints or encouraging cross-cutting political discussion. Consequently, consumers of highly partisan media may be more susceptible to misinformation. Research on the 2018 Brazilian elections, for example, found that supporters of the Workers' Party were more likely to believe party-friendly false stories, while its opponents were more likely to believe negative stories about it (Batista Pereira et al., 2022).

The theory of echo chambers explains how social media amplifies affective divisions and distorts our perception of political discourse by filtering the content we see to only align with our own preferences, helping propagate outrage against the out-group, and often muting moderate voices while amplifying radical discourse. As echo chambers already train members to distrust outside sources, exposure to contrary evidence may reinforce existing beliefs. This idea is consistent with Bail's findings, that people tended to become more attached to their political positions even when exposed to oppositional viewpoints during one of his experiments (C. A. Bail et al., 2018).

Misinformation, Disinformation, and Fake News

Among the many concepts associated with political dysfunction and social media, misinformation and disinformation have become among the most debated, particularly in relation to the rise of populist leaders and their political campaigns, such as those of Donald Trump in the United States and Jair Bolsonaro in Brazil. Although these debates gained global visibility during the 2016 U.S. presidential election, scholars emphasize that they are a transnational phenomenon evident across multiple political contexts, including Brazil, India, the Philippines, and several European countries (Bennett & Livingston, 2018).

While these terms are frequently used interchangeably in public discourse, scholars generally distinguish between fake news, misinformation, and disinformation. Misinformation refers to false or misleading information shared without necessarily intending harm, whereas disinformation involves the deliberate creation and circulation of deceptive information intended to manipulate, confuse, or produce political effects (Guess & Lyons, 2020).

The debate became popularized under the label of "fake news," but the term itself is problematic and contested. Many scholars consider it an oxymoron: if information is false, it is

not actually news. The term is also criticized for collapsing very different phenomena into a single vague category. Moreover, the expression was strategically appropriated by Donald Trump and other right-wing populist actors to delegitimize journalism and dismiss media coverage critical of their administrations (Guess & Lyons, 2020). These concepts are also distinct from conspiracy theories, although they frequently overlap in practice. Conspiracy theories rely on narratives suggesting that hidden groups secretly control society or conceal "higher truths" from the public (Benkler, Faris, & Roberts, 2018).

Importantly, mis/disinformation are not new historical phenomena; false rumors, sensationalism, and politically motivated distortions have long existed in societies and earlier media systems. However, some claim that digital platforms dramatically accelerated their scale, speed, and reach. Others believe that, in fact, exposure to false information is limited compared to overall news consumption. (Guess and Lions, 2020).

One of the main risks of disinformation within contemporary social media environments is that it can be associated with strong partisan identities (immersed in echo chambers). Individuals may accept and circulate information that confirms preexisting beliefs and ideological commitments without necessarily verifying or thinking critically about its accuracy. For this reason, misinformation and disinformation are frequently linked to partisan media ecosystems and political polarization, especially within contemporary right-wing media networks (Guess & Lyons, 2020). For Christian Fuchs (2021), the rise of new nationalism and authoritarianism is connected to an "emotionalization" of politics in which people increasingly respond to information affectively rather than rationally, accepting false claims as true when they align with ideological worldviews.

Such dynamics are also tied to critiques of the political economy of digital platforms. False, sensationalist, or charged content often performs well within the "attention economy" of social media, because it generates engagement (clicks, shares, and watch time). Those metrics are economically valuable to platforms that depend on advertising revenue (Fuchs, 2024). As a result, and due to the lack of regulation or transparency, recommendation systems facilitate the amplification of misleading or extremist content.

One of the most concerning consequences of the diffusion and amplification of misinformation and disinformation is that people can believe it regardless of the evidence. Scholars debate that corrective fact-checking often has limited effects because political identities and ideological attachments strongly shape how people process information. Even after misinformation is disproven, individuals may continue to believe or defend false claims if they are connected to partisan identity or worldview commitments (Ecker et al., 2022; Wittenberg & Berinsky, 2020). This makes misinformation and disinformation useful as contemporary forms of propaganda, particularly within digitally networked media systems (Benkler, Faris, & Roberts, 2018), but can also erode trust in journalism, science, and the public sphere.

Political Propaganda

Propaganda traditionally refers to systematic efforts to shape public opinion and mobilize political attitudes through persuasive forms of communication. The concept emerged as an important field of study during the early twentieth century, particularly in the aftermath of World War I, when intellectuals became increasingly concerned with the power of media, persuasion, and mass psychology in industrial societies. Early theorists such as Walter Lippmann and Harold Lasswell argued that modern publics were highly vulnerable to symbolic manipulation and emotional appeals mediated through newspapers, advertising, radio, and political campaigns.

In *Public Opinion,* Lippmann famously described how citizens rely on simplified "pictures in their heads" rather than direct access to reality (Lippmann, 1932), while Lasswell's work examined how propaganda could be used to manufacture consent, mobilize populations, and manage public opinion through communication strategies (Lasswell, 1927) .

Propaganda has long been a central feature of mass communication itself. Throughout the twentieth century, propaganda became closely connected to both political communication and the expansion of consumer capitalism. Scholars in sociology, psychology, and communication studies developed models of persuasion and attitude change to understand how audiences can be influenced through manipulation, framing, symbolism, and other forms of strategic messaging. Propaganda, therefore, is generally understood as intentional communication directed at specific populations to shape perceptions, behaviors, and ideological orientations. Unlike misinformation, which may circulate unintentionally, propaganda is typically strategic, organized, and goal-oriented.

Critical approaches to propaganda also emphasized the structural relationship between media systems and ideology. In political economy, one of the most influential formulations emerged in Edward S. Herman and Noam Chomsky's *Manufacturing Consent*. Their "propaganda model" argued that mass media in capitalist democracies systematically reproduce dominant political and economic interests through structural filters, including ownership concentration, advertising dependence, sourcing practices, and ideological pressures. Herman and Chomsky's propaganda model demonstrates how bias and ideological framing can emerge from the institutional organization of media industries themselves.

In the digital age, propaganda has acquired new forms and infrastructures. Scholars increasingly refer to "digital propaganda," "computational propaganda," or "networked

propaganda" to describe how political actors use social media, algorithms, bots, influencers, and participatory media to shape public discourse (Benkler, Faris, & Roberts, 2018). Unlike earlier mass-media propaganda models based on broadcast communication, digital propaganda operates within decentralized, interactive media environments in which users themselves participate in the circulation of political content, from daily news to meme wars (Donovan et al., 2022). There are algorithms amplifying messages, data-driven advertising systems, and targeted communication to specific demographic and ideological groups.

As a result, propaganda today is disseminated not only through centralized apparatuses such as traditional mass media, but also through segmented networks of influencers, new media outlets, recommendation systems, and peer-to-peer communication infrastructures such as WhatsApp and Telegram, which are very popular in Brazil (Nemer & Marks, 2023). In the context of Brazil, Viktor Chagas shows that the apparently grassroots digital network of pro-Bolsonaro WhatsApp groups during the 2018 Brazilian election was, in fact, characterized by coordinated political activity, in which political actors emulate the appearance of an organic public (Chagas, 2022).

Hate Speech

Hate speech has also become increasingly visible and normalized on social media, a phenomenon also linked to the political economy of those platforms. Outrage, fear, and hostility often generate clicks, comments, and shares, making hate speech highly profitable. On social media platforms, hate became an entertaining and rewarding form of communication, with approval, recognition, and validation from fellow participants in those communities (Walther, 2022; Walther & Rice, 2025). Extremist and reactionary online subcultures have flourished, with forms of harassment, trolling, hate speech, and coordinated attacks against groups with limited

moderation or accountability. Vulnerable groups, especially women, racial minorities, immigrants, LGBTQ+ individuals, and political opponents, are disproportionately targeted by online abuse and intimidation (Nielsen & Fletcher, 2020)

The architecture of social media encourages rapid circulation (virality), anonymity, and algorithmic amplification, allowing hostile content to spread quickly across networks and communities. Anonymous forums such as 4chan, certain communities on Reddit, and fringe platforms such as Gab, Telegram, 4chan, 8chan, Gettr, have become relevant spaces for the circulation of memes, misogyny, racism, and political bigotry because of reduced moderation and stronger concentration of radical and hateful users (Tom Tong, 2025). These environments frequently operate through irony, provocation, and "trolling" culture, blurring the boundaries between humor, political discourse, and harassment. As Marwick and Lewis (2017) show, online cultures helped normalize extremist narratives and create pathways between fringe communities and mainstream political discourse (Marwick & Lewis, 2017). Online hate and trolling have reshaped the boundaries of acceptable public discourse, allowing what were once fringe to migrate into mainstream political life (Marwick & Lewis, 2017; Fuchs, 2024).

In the context of Brazil, João Cezar de Castro Rocha (2021) theorizes this phenomenon through the concept of the "rhetoric of hate" (*retórica do ódio*). It describes a deliberate political technique rooted in the disqualification of opponents and the conversion of disagreement into hostility. Central to his analysis is how this rhetoric was actively taught and disseminated, particularly through the intellectual influence of Olavo de Carvalho, whose online courses and YouTube channels trained a generation of right-wing activists in the art of verbal aggression as a mode of political argument, transforming the public sphere into a space of permanent cultural and hate warfare (Rocha, 2021).

Right-Wing Digital Cultures

Among the many dimensions of contemporary political dysfunction, one important transformation is the shift in the political uses of digital media. While early internet culture was often associated with progressive, countercultural, or left-wing experimentation, contemporary digital environments have increasingly become dominated by right-wing movements and actors skilled at mobilizing online rhetoric, affect, and networked political communication. The amplification of alt-right and radical viewpoints on platforms such as Facebook created an environment in which these voices, although often representing minorities, appeared far more visible and influential than they were.

Platform policy changes and algorithmic dynamics also contributed to declining trust in mainstream news institutions, particularly as traditional journalistic sources became deprioritized within social media ecosystems[5]. This process has created fertile ground for the expansion of right-wing alternative media ecosystems (Holt, 2022).

Those alternative new outlets also grew from the perception that dominant institutions have failed to represent significant segments of the population (Holt, 2022; Jeppesen et al., 2025). They were also fueled by economic and political dissatisfactions, feelings of exclusion, distrust, and marginalization, loss of privileges, especially among segments of the population, and especially among white Christian men, regardless of whether those perceptions are entirely accurate (Fuchs, 2018, 2026).

[5] In late 2017 and early 2018, Facebook shifted its algorithm to prioritize "Meaningful Social Interactions" from friends and family de-emphasizing news on the feed - https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2018/jan/11/facebook-news-feed-algorithm-overhaul-mark-zuckerberg

Within this framework, authoritarian forms of communication and politics emerged partly as responses to demographic change, multiculturalism, feminism, and struggles for racial and gender equality. Social minorities and people of color often become disproportionate targets of hostility and resentment within these environments, helping explain the global rise of populist right-wing leaders and movements.

The literature on strategies used by right-wing groups to promote their ideology is also growing. Tripodi (2022), for example, shows how right-wing populists build alternative media networks to advance their agenda. To achieve that, they explore the argument that traditional media is biased and silences conservative voices, urging individuals to "do their own research". This creates a distinct form of right-wing media literacy, which she compares to the study of religious texts, in which audiences are encouraged to interpret information independently and draw their own conclusions. She also identifies "five Fs" of conservative values (faith, family, firearms, forces, and free market), which are essential to organize right-wing discourse, audience retention, and monetization (Tripodi, 2022) .

Giuliano da Empoli (2019) notes a similar shift with the growth of digital platforms worldwide. While traditional corporate media had a centripetal tendency – i.e., more consensual and coalition-based. He notes the emergence of a centrifugal trend, in which more extreme, radical, polarizing, and violent discourse is amplified, empowering far-right politicians and political entrepreneurs.

Jen Schradie investigated this asymmetry between right and left channels in social networks. In *The Revolution That Wasn't: How Digital Activism Favors Conservatives,* she shows that right-wing activists have more time, capacity, and access to the resources necessary to

produce social media content. They also exhibit a vertical hierarchy and cohesion of ideas, while the left is more heterogeneous, diverse, and less hierarchical (Schradie, 2019).

Many authors argue that digital media have become a crucial factor in the rise of contemporary right-wing populism across countries. Using four case studies — Donald Trump in the United States, Narendra Modi in India, the Sweden Democrats, and Chinese online nationalism — Schroeder shows that populist actors have used digital platforms to bypass traditional media gatekeepers and communicate directly with audiences (Schroeder, 2026) . One of his central arguments is that populists benefit disproportionately from digital media because online platforms weaken traditional gatekeeping structures. Social media allows populists to circulate messages that may be unacceptable or marginalized in mainstream media.

For Paolo Gerbaudo (2018), there is an "elective affinity" between social media and populism following the rise of figures from the left and right, such as Donald Trump, Bernie Sanders, Nigel Farage, and movements such as Podemos. He situates these developments within the crisis of authority affecting mainstream journalism after the 2008 financial crisis. Declining trust in legacy media institutions, perceptions that journalism failed to hold elites accountable, and associations between mainstream media and neoliberal power structures created fertile conditions for populist and anti-establishment narratives.

From a theoretical perspective, some scholars interpret these formations through the concept of counter publics. Digital platforms help populists construct "counter publics" — alternative political spaces where supporters reinforce anti-elite narratives and nationalist identities. The term comes from Nancy Fraser (1990), who uses the term to describe discursive arenas formed in opposition to dominant publics, where subordinated groups develop alternative interpretations, identities, and political demands (Fraser, 1990). On the other hand, Cazzamatta

cautions against analytically equating far-right media ecosystems with emancipatory or democratic counter publics. From her perspective, treating regressive and exclusionary media projects as "alternative media" creates a false equivalence between anti-democratic actors and democratizing communicative practices. Rather than counter publics in a progressive sense, these media formations function as regressive or "defensive" publics aligned with existing inequalities, nationalist resentment, and illiberal political projects (Cazzamatta, 2025).

In Brazil, Pablo Ornellas Rosa (Rosa, 2021; Rosa et al 2025), identified this configuration of right-wing media actors, entrepreneurs, and social influencers as *technoconservatism*: a contemporary right-wing movement agenda that combines neoliberal and libertarian economic principles, traditionalist, patriarchal, and colonial social values, with an enthusiastic adoption of digital technologies and artificial intelligence. From his perspective, the new right-wing global movement is well aligned with platform capitalism, as it relies on platform infrastructures, algorithms, and data extraction as tools of governance, political mobilization, and ideological reproduction. Mércia Alves, for instance, conceptualizes digital Bolsonarism as a kind of "parallel party," operating through a permanent digital campaign on digital platforms that extends beyond electoral cycles and traditional party structures (Alves, 2025).

Understanding the relationship between the new right wing and the digital expansion of media and media organizations is crucial, as this connection enabled the circulation and amplification of their discourse, as well as of more aggressive anti-establishment discourses. On a final note, for the purposes of this research, I use the term *right-wing* as an umbrella category encompassing a diverse set of political actors, movements, and ideological traditions. This choice should not be interpreted as collapsing important distinctions between conservatism, right-wing populism, authoritarianism, and fascism.

YouTube, Documentary Films, and Political Radicalization

In this constantly changing landscape, YouTube has often been implicated in several of the political harms discussed. The promotion of misinformation and conspiracy theories on YouTube has drawn the attention of scholars, policymakers, and the public. Scholars have identified an alternative influence network that uses YouTube to promote right-wing ideology across contexts (Kaiser & Rauchfleisch, 2020; Lewis, 2018). Research suggests that the YouTube recommendation system is prone to several negative effects, including the formation of an extremist ideological bubble (Fisher & Taub, 2019; Kaiser & Rauchfleisch, 2020; Lewis, 2018; Munn, 2019; O'Callaghan et al., 2015; Ottoni et al., 2018); spreading conspiratorial theories (Faddoul et al., 2020), misinformation on health communication (Kaiser et al., 2021), and even distributing disturbing content targeted to children [6] .

YouTube is an optimal platform for monetization and the diffusion of ideas and ideologies, particularly in longer video formats. It is usually considered an alternative to free-air TV for young generations (Budzinski et al., 2021; Mumpuni et al., 2021). YouTube reported revenue of $60 billion in 2025[7], and the number of users has continued to increase year after year. Content creators with a fan base of millions of subscribers became multimillionaire celebrities, influencing generations of people, especially young adults, millennials, and gen Z, who are the heavier users of the site.

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[6] Spangler, T. (2017, November 9). YouTube says it will crack down on bizarre videos targeting children. *Variety*. https://variety.com/2017/digital/news/youtube-kids-bizarre-disturbing-videos-blocking-age-restriction-1202611864/

[7] Spangler, T. (2026, February 4). YouTube topped $60 billion in 2025 revenue from ads and subscriptions. *Variety*. https://variety.com/2026/digital/news/youtube-2025-total-revenue-ads-subscriptions-alphabet-earnings-1236652260/

While YouTube competes with traditional media for advertising revenue, the YouTube experience is also very different from that of cinema or TV broadcasting, because its viewing experience is shaped by a dynamic, individualized recommendation system. The recommendation system is the primary way the platform influences video consumption and advertising strategies. YouTube admits that over 70% of the videos watched are driven by its AI recommendation system (Solsman, 2018). The problem happens when the algorithm starts recommending infringing or harmful videos or ads because they are going viral or paying well. Mozilla Foundation created an extension that allows users to report regrettable videos they've watched, so they can notify YouTube about disturbing content recommended by the YouTube recommendation system. The "*YouTube Regrets*" report collected data from 37,380 YouTube users to better understand harmful YouTube recommendations, revealing that the Platform was recommending videos containing misinformation, violent content, hate speech, and scams[8].

For those involved in analyzing recommendation systems, decoding what content is offered is more a question of politics than technology, since platform algorithms filter out some topics because they could cause harm or pose a threat, while others are bypassed without being noticed by the way those moderation rules are designed. Defining the objectives and metrics of those machine learning systems, the concepts and guidelines they are built to respond to, and how to classify content, for example, are all exercises of power that are ultimately under the hierarchy of a few people working for Google.

[8] Mozilla Foundation. (n.d.). *YouTube Regrets: Findings*. Mozilla Foundation https://www.mozillafoundation.org/en/youtube/findings/

YouTube Rabbit Hole Theory

Since YouTube became one of the most important digital platforms, it has also become the target of increasing criticism, especially its recommendation algorithm, which has also often been implicated in facilitating problematic content pathways. A systematic literature review on YouTube recommendations and problematic content found that most studies either implicated the platform's recommender system in facilitating pathways to extremist or problematic content, or reported mixed results regarding its influence (Yesilada & Lewandowsky, 2022).

One of the main critiques is that users who watch radical, conspiratorial, or harmful videos are more likely to be recommended similar videos, a phenomenon often called the "rabbit hole" effect. This theory suggests that the video platform encourages the consumption of radical content as the users move from one recommended video to another (Brown et al., 2022; Ledwich & Zaitsev, 2019; O'Callaghan et al., 2015), spiraling into extremist content driven by the YouTube Recommender Algorithm (YRA).

The rabbit hole theory gained visibility in 2018 following disclosures by former YouTube engineer Guillaume Chaslot, who described how the platform's recommendation system was optimized to maximize watch time[9]. Because of it, the system could create toxic feedback loops that progressively steer users toward more extreme content; The theory became widely popularized by Zeynep Tufekci in *The New York Times* (2018), where she criticized how the platform "promotes, recommends and disseminates videos in a manner that appears to

[9] Lewis, P. (2018, February 2). "Fiction is outperforming reality": How YouTube's algorithm distorts truth. *The Guardian*. https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2018/feb/02/how-youtubes-algorithm-distorts-truth

constantly up the stakes" and argued that YouTube could potentially "be one of the most powerful radicalizing instruments of the 21st century"[10].

Some scholars have attempted to empirically test this radicalization hypothesis by mapping YouTube recommendation networks and user trajectories. Some studies have found evidence supporting the existence of such radicalization pathways (Alfano et al., 2021; O'Callaghan et al., 2015; M. H. Ribeiro et al., 2020). Santini et al. (2023) used network analysis to demonstrate quantitatively that far-right, hyperpartisan channels are frequently recommended within YouTube's ecosystem (Santini et al., 2023). Kaiser and Rauchfleisch (2020) explored the now-discontinued "related channels" YouTube feature to show how it contributed to the formation of homogeneous channel clusters, reinforcing patterns of homophily, or the idea of *"birds of a feather flocking together"* (Kaiser & Rauchfleisch, 2020). By learning how the algorithm works, and employing digital strategies, smaller channels can learn to get recommended by big channels, rapidly and effectively increasing their audience. This evidence supports the hypothesis that echo chambers are created through recommended channels that could lead users to change their political preferences and beliefs toward more radical positions (Munn, 2019).

On the other hand, research using experiments with real users found evidence that the recommendation algorithm pushes users into mild ideological echo chambers (Brown et al., 2022). Contrary to the "rabbit hole" narrative, exposure to extremist YouTube channels is driven by resentful users seeking out this content, not by algorithmic recommendations (Chen et al.,

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[10] Tufekci, Z. (2018, March 10). *YouTube, the great radicalizer*. *The New York Times*. https://www.nytimes.com/2018/03/10/opinion/sunday/youtube-politics-radical.html

2023). Some authors claim that since YouTube started moderating the recommendations, it has not promoted radicalization or false theories. Instead, the algorithm favors left-leaning or politically neutral mainstream media and cable news content, rather than far-right independent channels (Ledwich & Zaitsev, 2019).

One of the most in-depth examinations of the YouTube recommendation system was conducted by researchers from the University of California (Faddoul et al., 2020). They show that, despite the company's efforts to reduce conspiratorial content, announced by YouTube in January 2019, the content remains highly recommended by the platform. Nevertheless, this remains a moving target because YouTube can quickly adjust the algorithm's recommendations. As YouTube's algorithm is a moving target (and the company adjusts its filter in response to criticism or empirical evidence), it remains an important concern that recommendations stemming from its decisions can expose users to harmful content that should be removed rather than promoted. The potential bias in its algorithmic design is also concerning, as it can promote certain ideas over others and influence public policies or political outcomes.

Documentary Films on YouTube

Among the many forms of content circulating on digital platforms, documentary films occupy a particularly important position on YouTube, as the genre combines long-form videos, storytelling, emotional appeal, and the traditional authority of a persuasive voice or argument. Historically, documentary has never functioned merely as a neutral representation of reality (Nichols, 2011). From Grierson's conception of documentary as the "creative treatment of actuality" to Vertov's agitprop cinema and Riefenstahl's fascist propaganda films, documentary has consistently been linked to projects of political education, persuasion, and social mobilization (Chanan, 2007; Nichols, 2017; Winston, 2008). Documentary cinema has long

addressed viewers not simply as spectators, but as citizens participating in the debates over history, morality, and collective identity.

Nonfiction films persuade audiences not because they are objective representations of reality, but rather because of their rhetorical structures, emotional appeals, editing strategies, and narrative organization (Nichols, 2017; Plantinga, 1997). Documentary "voice," in Nichols' terms, emerges through cinematography, montage, interviews, narration, music, and the arrangement of evidence into coherent arguments about the social world. Because documentaries are anchored in the historical world while simultaneously employing dramatic and affective storytelling techniques, they can become especially powerful vehicles for political messaging. Throughout the twentieth century, documentaries were repeatedly mobilized for propaganda, public education, activism, and campaigns for social change, ranging from state-sponsored nationalist projects to militant and counter-hegemonic movements in Latin America, feminist video activism, and Third Cinema traditions (Burton, 1990; Aguayo, 2019).

In the contemporary digital environment, these dynamics continue under platformized conditions. While longstanding traditions of politically engaged documentary persist, YouTube has also become a fertile terrain for the emergence of a new form of militant conservative documentary aimed at highly engaged online audiences and functioning as an ideological glue for this movement's cultural identity. Although progressive, feminist, environmental, and other activist documentaries continue to circulate on the platform, the combination of conservative political mobilization and platform logics of recommendation, engagement, and monetization has given right-wing media and their documentary films a particularly high degree of visibility and reach. As documentaries increasingly circulate through digital recommendation ecosystems, their

historical role as tools of political pedagogy and propaganda becomes intertwined with platform logics of visibility, monetization, and audience engagement.

The Brazilian Context: Right-Wing Uprising, Social Media, and Political Polarization

Brazil offers a singular case for understanding the harms associated with digital platform communication and the growth of right-wing authoritarianism in a situated, non-Global North context. As one of the world's largest democracies, the largest Global South economy, and the most connected society in Latin America, Brazil combines mass social media adoption with intense political polarization, disinformation campaigns, attacks on democratic institutions, and a rapidly expanding right-wing digital media ecosystem.

The country's trajectory with social media stretches back to Orkut's massive popularity in the 2000s, the first social media platform to gain popularity in the country. This early embrace paved the way for Facebook's dominance in the early 2010s and later established Brazil as one of the largest markets for Instagram, YouTube, and TikTok where influencers, political commentators, and media entrepreneurs command audiences at every scale. Equally distinctive is the role of WhatsApp, which serves as a central infrastructure for communication across family, neighborhood, church, work, and political groups, creating dense networks for the rapid circulation of information, rumors, and audiovisual content. Despite this richness, Brazil remains a largely underexplored terrain in academic scholarship, and this dissertation approaches the country as a particularly significant context for examining the relationship between social media, political dysfunction, and right-wing mobilization.

In the context of Brazil, one of the most interesting reports about how YouTube was radicalizing Brazilian users appeared in *The New York Times* in 2019, in a report by Max Fisher

and Amanda Taub[11]. In this report, the authors examine how far-right channels on YouTube decisively influenced the election of Jair Bolsonaro as president in 2018. The far-right candidate had a long tradition of spreading false information and controversial content on Brazilian national TV. Favored by the recommendation system, those clips featuring Bolsonaro in TV shows launched him from an average congressman to a star in YouTube's right-wing communities before he became Brazil's president. Just as he did, several other candidates used social media to foster engagement and build a community of voters, launching their political careers.

Those social influencers who became politicians can be defined as "political entrepreneurs", individuals who take advantage of the affordances offered by digital platforms to build political influence and draw financial rewards (Nunes, 2024). Many of them began not in formal politics but as social media influencers, managing Facebook pages and YouTube channels and cultivating a fan base that later converts into voters.

Caio Gontijo identifies a network of "online organic intellectuals," updating Gramsci's notion of the organic intellectual to explain how different types of Bolsonarist actors helped shape the reconfiguration of neoliberalism during Brazil's political crisis. Through social media and by translating popular frustration into accessible conservative narratives, political figures, digital influencers, libertarian activists, religious leaders, and other right-wing personalities helped reframe socioeconomic grievances as cultural and moral conflicts, contributing to the consolidation of Bolsonarism as a political force (Gontijo, 2026). This dynamic gave rise to a wave of political outsiders often labeled "social network people," who have helped legitimize

[11] Fisher, M., & Taub, A. (2019, August 11). How YouTube radicalized Brazil. *The New York Times*. https://www.nytimes.com/2019/08/11/world/americas/youtube-brazil.html

extreme rhetoric and inflammatory forms of politics that resonate across both legacy and alternative media.

Their discourses and actions seem to spread and reverberate faster than those of other forms of political participation. Giuliano da Empoli (2022) calls these actors "engineers of chaos" because they skillfully manipulate digital ecosystems to provoke emotional reactions, destabilize public discourse, and transform outrage into political capital.

It is in this context that several YouTube channels, Facebook pages, and WhatsApp groups grew, bringing together conservative activists not only to discuss politics but also to share interests in music, games, or popular culture, embedding ideological elements into cultural content that appears neutral or entertaining. It is in this context that BP emerged, among several other YouTube channels, and became a central node in this universe of right-wing political influencers and entrepreneurs.

Brasil Paralelo and the Parallel Epistemology

When I decided to use BP as a case study, I delved into the literature on the company and identified at least 50 academic papers or book chapters, 15 academic theses, and one book discussing the company and its productions. The vast majority of studies employ qualitative and interpretative analyses, including critical discourse analysis of films, especially BP's earlier productions. While many studies focus on individual films as case studies and the company's historical claims, a much smaller body of work examines the company's strategies, conventions, and how its messaging is produced and distributed more holistically.

BP is among the most studied and debated platforms in Brazil's right-wing digital ecosystem. While they deny accusations of promoting far-right discourses and disinformation, researchers have investigated their content, political relationships, and cultural strategies to show

how they operate as a private apparatus for advancing economically libertarian and socially conservative ideology (Balestro dos Santos, 2021; Carvalho & Rovida, 2020; de Britto, 2023; Santos & Miranda, 2020).

The company produces high-end documentary films, courses, videos, and podcasts that cover a wide array of topics, including communism, colonization, race, gender, environmentalism, electoral politics, and the Brazilian military dictatorship (1964–1985), often revisiting these issues through a revisionist and ideologically conservative lens or under the culture war framework. Cleto highlights how their films are crafted to produce cultural impact by leveraging discourses and ideologies associated with a new far-right counter-public that emerged and reorganized around social media digital channels (Cleto, 2022; Cleto, 2024; Gruner & Cleto, 2021; Moraes & Cleto, 2023).

Scholars have identified BP's productions as emblematic of a conservative ideological project rooted in historical revisionism (Picoli et al., 2020; Spinola, 2024). For Felinto, BP is described as a machine of ideological propaganda in which films are constructed with "conspiratorial atmospheres" that emotionally engage audiences and confuse audiences (Felinto, 2023). Some have identified cultural war narratives (Carvalho & Rovida, 2020; Charrone, 2024), and polarization through disinformation and moral panic—particularly around topics like gender and education (Avila, 2021a; Moraes & Cleto, 2023; Nelli Borges, 2019).

Salles et al. (2023) argue that their strategy is not simply misinformation, but an effort to reorganize belief systems around cultural enemies, such as environmentalists or progressive educators (Salles et al., 2023). Similarly, Brito and Rodrigues Junior (2021) describe their approach as "alt-history": a simplified, mythologized rewriting of the past (Oliveira Brito & Rodrigues Junior, 2021). For Picoli et al. (2020), their so-called neutrality is part of an anti-

scientific project that undermines critical thinking and legitimizes reactionary worldviews. Bonsanto (2021) situates the company's media practices within a "order of disinformation" that blurs the line between ideological persuasion and factual distortion (Bonsanto, 2021). For Carvalho & Rovida (2020), BP builds a conservative-liberal common sense by reframing the past through historical revisionism, thereby naturalizing authoritarian and elitist ideologies.

Building on these interpretations, I have previously conceptualized BP's project as the construction of a "parallel epistemology" (Francischelli, 2025). This parallel epistemology establishes an alternative regime of truth through which audiences are encouraged to interpret reality, diverging from traditional science and often accounting for conspiratorial worldviews, the mobilization of culture war narratives, the use of moral binaries, and processes of historical revisionism.

This is only possible through the skilled way in which BP strategically mobilizes the documentary form and its longstanding association with authenticity and authority. In the digital age, BP has mastered blending documentary films with participatory and social media to leverage the reach and potential of the documentary film language. In this context, this dissertation expands on the existing literature on BP, by examining how this parallel epistemology is constructed through documentary form and then mobilized, distributed, and amplified in the contemporary digital and global media landscape.

Conclusions

This section provides a brief overview of major concerns associated with platformized forms of communication. While many debates reproduce and update longstanding tensions within communication research, contemporary scholarship continues to struggle to determine the extent to which media technologies directly shape beliefs and behaviors. The literature also

suggests that concepts such as political polarization, filter bubbles, echo chambers, disinformation, hate speech, and radicalization are often interconnected and have been accelerated or intensified by digital technologies, even though each remains conceptually loose and empirically contested.

One of the biggest problems that can arise from communication theories and research is "technological determinism," i.e., the mistaken idea that technology has a deterministic effect on us (it makes us polarized or extremists, for example). Communication scholarship has long recognized that technology affects us, but we also have agency, influence, and the ability to shape technology (Williams & Edge, 1996). Expecting social media to have a homogeneous effect is an oversimplification, as it is shaped by political, cultural, and social contexts, and we cannot blame algorithms for extremism while ignoring economic, political, and cultural causes.

The diversity of methodological approaches also tends to result in different evidence. In communication science, empirical studies of media effects have often emphasized minimal or moderate influences, rather than direct or uniform impacts on audiences (Lazarsfeld & Katz, 1955; Lazarsfeld & Merton, 1948). This happens for multiple reasons. First, it is difficult to determine whether the media shape individuals' political views or whether people selectively consume media that aligns with their preexisting preferences. Second, approaches such as "Uses and Gratifications" emphasize the active role of audiences, including how users selectively seek media to satisfy particular needs (Katz et al., 1974). Third, we should not rely solely on the internet and social media to understand contemporary phenomena. Traditional media outlets, for example, have long been criticized for contributing to political divisiveness, even before the rise of social media (Boxell et al., 2017, Brownell, 2023; Prior, 2007). Finally, communication research has also emphasized the nuanced and individualized nature of media influence at the

user level, as well as the influence of contextual factors in interpersonal communication (Katz, 1957).

However, while empirical findings often diverge, there is agreement that digital platforms have transformed scale, speed, and visibility, as well as the risks associated with many of those political dysfunctions. They do not create the dysfunctions by themselves, but they transform the conditions under which those issues occur. Cohen (2023), for example, emphasizes that platformized communication infrastructures enable the mobilization of powerful automated assemblages capable of amplifying polarization, resentment, conspiracism, and extremist narratives at a scale never imagined before (Cohen, 2023). It means something might be changing quickly in how social media is designed and how they distribute and amplify content to raise engagement, which is very different from traditional media such as radio and television. And in this regard, the political economy critique of the addictive design has proven very effective. While broadcasters and news publishers have editorial responsibilities, platforms such as Facebook, YouTube, and TikTok are treated as neutral intermediaries, not liable for the content they help spread with their recommendation algorithms. But their design choices—especially regarding recommendation systems, moderation, and advertising—play a central role in shaping online discourse, often resulting in unwanted and complex political effects.

Research Design and Questions

My goal in this project is to expand the scholarly understanding of the intersections between platform political dysfunction and the growth of right-wing populism and digital authoritarianism, using Brazil and BP as case studies. Because BP has often been cited as a key player in disinformation campaigns and the culture wars shaping contemporary Brazilian

politics, I chose it as a case study to examine how BP employs documentary filmmaking and digital platforms to promote conservative ideas in Brazil.

While most studies on social media and political dysfunction have employed quantitative approaches, measuring polarization or disinformation through survey responses or media exposure experiments, I decided it would be better to adopt a more contextual, case-specific approach using BP as a case study. This approach provides a grounded analysis of how right-wing ideology is mobilized within contemporary digital infrastructures.

The dissertation is guided by three central questions, each corresponding to a particular chapter, with a specific set of methodologies and a corresponding data corpus.

RQ1 (Chapter IV): How did BP emerge, and under what historical and political conditions did it develop? What are the company's institutional structure, funding strategies, and ties to other political and ideological networks?

RQ2 (Chapter V): What themes and historical narratives are prioritized in BP's documentaries, and how do they mobilize a conservative audience? How does this reflect a political agenda rather than a purely commercial enterprise? What emotions, ideas, or actions does this content seek to activate in its viewers?

RQ3 (Chapter VI): How do these films leverage digital affordances—such as algorithmic recommendation, targeted advertising, monetization, and interaction—to expand their distribution and influence and forge alliances with other political actors, investors, and audiences?

By situating these questions within the landscape of digital media and documentary films, this dissertation contributes to scholarly debates on the role of digital media in shaping contemporary political and informational crises.

CHAPTER III:

METHODS

When trying to understand social media harms and contemporary forms of political dysfunction, there is a tendency in contemporary scholarship to employ data-driven approaches, including quantitative analysis, computational methods, large-scale datasets, and predictive models of user behavior (Fuchs, 2019). While these approaches have generated important insights, they often fail to capture the broader contexts that provide the necessary conditions for those outcomes to happen. For this reason, critical scholars have argued that the study of digital media should combine computational approaches with qualitative, interpretive, and theoretically grounded methods capable of addressing questions of power, ideology, and social inequality (Fuchs, 2019; Fuchs & Qiu, 2018). Following this tradition, this dissertation adopts mainly a qualitative research framework to examine the emergence of right-wing media cultures and political polarization in Brazil. More specifically, the project draws on Fuchs (2019) definition of critical digital research: an approach that combines digital methods with qualitative analysis, critical theory, and interpretive inquiry.

By adopting a mainly qualitative perspective, this research seeks to move beyond generalizations to understand the situated and contextual elements of the communication disorder caused by social media, accounting for its political, economic, and cultural dimensions. My focus is on the contextualized experience of political polarization and the emergence of right-wing media in Brazil, but I hope this shows a relation to international research that addresses those large-scale global phenomena.

Given the interdisciplinary nature of this inquiry, the research is divided into three interconnected methodological phases. First, the dissertation employs a political economy of

communication approach through document analysis and social network analysis of actors, institutions, and organizational relationships surrounding BP. Second, it conducts a textual and critical discourse analysis of a corpus of 45 documentary films released between December 2016 and December 2025, with particular attention to the documentary *God Complex* (2025). Third, the project incorporates a digital ethnography of BP's digital presence, including its YouTube channel, their proprietary platform, monetization and advertising strategies, and the dynamics of the YouTube recommendation system.

This chapter provides an overview of each methodological approach and outlines the principal strategies used for data collection and analysis. Despite the risks of descriptive research, overinterpretation or researcher bias, typically associated with critical methods, I hope the methodology outlined here to be consistent with the critical and humanistic research tradition that seeks to interrogate dominant systems of power, while contributing to a better understanding of the social, political, and cultural consequences of technology development and the plataformization of communication.

Political Economy

Political economy can be considered both as a theory and a method (Mosco, 2009). Rather than isolating variables to measure effects or causalities, political economy emphasizes totality, situating media within broader historical processes, moral questions, and struggles for social transformation (Mosco, 2009; Wasko et al., 2011). At its core, it seeks to uncover the interconnections between corporate interests, economic structures, and political power. Using a political economy framework means analyzing the whole, i.e., a holistic view of the subject.

Applied political economy research emphasizes the material and organizational conditions that enable and sustain a company's operations. My aim, using a political economy

framework, is to understand BP and its productions as significant forces in disseminating right-wing ideology in Brazil, as well as the social and economic conditions that enabled their development. It is a way to consider not only films as ideological texts but also the material conditions that make their business possible and successful. This framework accounts for the historical context and for how the company is intertwined with other socio-economic spheres, such as the world of politics, the platform economy, local and global political contexts, historical processes, and other socio-cultural dynamics.

In terms of data collection, political economy research relies heavily on literature and document analysis across micro, meso, and macro levels of inquiry. At the macro level, this includes broader historical and theoretical literature on global and local media industries, capitalism, and politics. At the meso level, the analysis can focus on local data, investigative journalism, industry reports, public controversies, and institutional debates. At the micro level, the research can examine official corporate documents such as statutes, organizational records, meeting minutes, legal filings, advertising records, public statements, interviews with founders and collaborators, and other materials directly related to the subject's structure and activities. Together, these layers of documentation help situate a political economy subject within its political, economic, cultural, and technological relations, enabling a more comprehensive understanding of a company's historical development and its ideological project.

Primary Sources

I collected and examined a range of primary documents about BP, including corporate statutes, organizational reports, minutes of general meetings, press materials, newsletters, and public statements. Those documents are very heterogeneous but illuminate a range of aspects of the company's political economy. They are primary sources, or what Lindloft and Taylor call

"mute evidence" (Lindlof & Taylor, 2011, p.217). Unlike interviews or other forms of elicited data, they do not directly respond to the researcher's questions but can reveal significant information when we read and interpret them in context.

From Meta's Ad Library[12], I collected a database of 75,274 political ads published by BP on Meta platforms, mainly Facebook and Instagram. From the total, around 3,000 are unique advertising texts. This data is only available because, as a transparency measure in response to the 2020 regional elections in Brazil, Meta began publicly disclosing data related to political advertisements on the platform and has classified BP's campaigns as political ads.

I was able to scrape a data set of almost seven thousand videos published on their YouTube channel, including the metadata associated with each video using YouTube data tools. It was also possible to watch and code dozens of films that are only available on their proprietary platforms.

Finally, I collected and analyzed at least 15 cases involving BP identified through a review of federal and regional court records, including lawsuits filed both by the company against journalists, scholars, fact-checkers, and media organizations, as well as cases filed against BP itself. I excluded small-scale consumer disputes, such as subscription renewal complaints, and instead focused on cases involving copyright, freedom of expression, defamation, and other company-related issues, such as indemnification for material damages and the right of reply or rectification by the aggrieved party.

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[12] Meta. (n.d.). *Meta Ad Library*. Retrieved August 29, 2026, from https://www.facebook.com/ads/library/?active_status=all&ad_type=political_and_issue_ads&country=BR&is_targeted_country=false&media_type=all&search_type=page&source=ad-report&start_date[min]=2018-09-18&view_all_page_id=301774903545521

Secondary Sources

As secondary sources, I collected the broader academic literature on the company and diverse news and investigative reporting from independent outlets such as *Agência Pública* and *The Intercept*, which have provided important information about the company's strategies, political relationships, and organizational structure. In terms of academic research, the systematic review identified at least 50 peer-reviewed articles and 15 theses or dissertations that directly or indirectly provide information about BP. The majority are in Portuguese, but at least 4 papers were published in English. A comprehensive literature review about the company is available in Portuguese (Oliveira, 2025). It must also be mentioned Balestro's bold and pioneering work in uncovering the network of relationships between BP and other right-wing and conservative think tanks served as an important source of inspiration and information. (Balestro dos Santos, 2021; Santos & Pereira, 2020)

It was also possible to identify many other documents, news reports, and interviews with owners and people involved in the organizations, available online on conservative media pages, YouTube channels, and social media. It must be said that many documents are scattered online on websites, YouTube channels, and social networks. Oftentimes, secondary sources served as entry points for identifying and locating primary materials. Throughout the research, I sought to verify information by consulting original documents and other primary sources whenever they were available. Although dispersed, incomplete, and not always reliable, secondary and online resources and documents allowed me to identify important information about the company's history and connect it to their history and institutionalization.

Strengths and Limitations of Document Analysis

The advantages of working with documents and online sources, whether primary or secondary, are significant. First, they are very accessible, avoiding logistical constraints associated with extensive fieldwork or experiments. They are also cost-effective, reducing the financial cost typically associated with large-scale data collection or in-person research. Additionally, these sources are unobtrusive and non-reactive, meaning their use does not influence or alter the behavior of the subjects under study, which is particularly beneficial for minimizing bias and distortion in the research process (Scott, 1999).

However, documents may be subject to bias (Scott, 1999; Bowen, 2009). Some disadvantages of relying on documents include insufficient detail and selective and restricted access, that can lead to a selective presentation of information, focusing on only certain aspects of a topic. Bowen notes, "Conducting research with documents as the sole source, therefore, raises questions about biased selectivity." Key considerations for researchers include recognizing the potential biases and limitations inherent in the material and documenting the data collection process and rationale as transparently as possible (Karppinen and Moe, 2019). These should be considered to mitigate biases and ensure the rigor of document-based research.

Procedures

The analytical procedure for documentary analysis is not much different from that of critical content analysis: it starts with finding, selecting, and organizing the data and proceeds to interpreting and synthesizing them (Bowen, 2009). One approach to analysis is to create what Geertz refers to as "thick descriptions," (Geertz, 1973) which involve capturing not only the physical qualities of the documents but also their contextual details. This includes situating the

documents within their historical, cultural, or institutional settings to uncover deeper meanings and significance. In the applied case, the connections between BP and a specific network of political and economic actors—including private institutes, think tanks, and right-wing organizations—were mapped by identifying individuals connected with these institutions who also appear as interviewees in the company's documentaries, podcasts, and also in the company documents.

In sum, the political economy approach allows for a grounded understanding of BP as both an ideological and a commercial media company operating in the new platform economy with political and economic interests. By analyzing primary documents, advertising records, and legal disputes, as well as examining the company's organizational structure and network of recurring collaborators, the research situates BP within a network of conservative institutions, political actors, and private companies and entrepreneurs.

Social Network Analysis (SNA)

One of the most useful methods I found for understanding the BP universe and the circulation of content was using social network graphs and analysis. A "network" is defined as a set of objects (nodes) linked by relationships (edges). Those ties can be directed or undirected. This type of analysis and data visualization offers a "helicopter view" that reveals patterns beyond individual perception. (Kadushin, 2012) and can help us understand how things are connected and how information spreads.

According to Scott (2019), social network analysis (SNA) is a set of concepts, measures, and techniques for relational analysis. In media and communication studies, SNA has become especially useful for analyzing digital platforms, where interactions among users, channels, videos, organizations, hashtags, comments, and recommendations can be mapped as

networks. This approach allows researchers to identify clusters, central actors, bridges, and patterns of polarization or fragmentation. Metrics such as density, centrality, modularity, clustering coefficients, and community detection became paradigms for SNA and help describe how networks are structured and how information may circulate within them.

Textual and Discourse Analysis

The second part of the dissertation focuses on the films. To better understand the message (the content), the study draws on a corpus of 45 documentary films produced by BP between December 2016 and December 2025. The rationale for selecting these films was that they are documentaries or documentary series produced by the company, excluding narrative, journalistic, or animated works. Although some authors consider those films to be pure "propaganda" (Holanda, 2024b), we depart from the company's perspective, which presents them as documentaries. As discussed in the literature review, documentary and propaganda are not mutually exclusive categories, and documentary has long served as a vehicle for persuasion, from state-sponsored productions such as Leni Riefenstahl's films to more contemporary examples.

Here, the focus is on the critical analysis of the discourse associated with each documentary. It would be too ambitious and inappropriate to undertake a close reading of all films, so I decided methodologically to adopt a generalist approach, grouping them into thematic categories first and later delving into a deeper analysis of a single film: *God Complex*. Important to note that while several studies have already examined early titles such as *1964: O Brasil Entre Armas e Livros* (Avila, 2021b; M. P. Cleto, 2024; Nelli Borges, 2019; Picoli et al., 2020; Rodrigues, 2022; Santos & Miranda, 2020), *Brasil: A Última Cruzada* (Carvalho & Rovida, 2020; Charrone, 2024; M. P. Cleto, 2024; Moraes & Cleto, 2023; Saraiva & Seffner, 2023), and

Patria Educadora (Felinto, 2023; Sousa De Moura & Damasceno, 2023), there remains a need to evaluate more contemporary production, to observe how the company is evolving in their narrative and storytelling.

At the time I conducted the YouTube data scrape (fall 2025), BP's YouTube channel had nearly 7,000 publicly available videos, making it necessary to establish clearer analytical boundaries regarding what could meaningfully be considered part of BP's documentary project. Given the large corpus, I had to decide what to include and what to leave out, so I focused on a selected corpus of 45 films listed in Appendix 1, which are, to date, the most important documentary films and series produced.

Restricting the corpus to documentary films ensures comparability across the sample and enables me to discuss genre conventions. It also facilitates a systematic analysis of recurring themes, rhetorical strategies, representational practices, and ideological messaging in those films. Early scholarship identified revisionist, conspiratorial, and cultural-war narratives in BP documentary films, so it remains important to evaluate whether the framework used in those early works remains central to their current productions. This step is essential for mapping the continuity and evolution of their discourse, as well as for examining how BP adapts its narrative strategies in response to shifting political contexts and platform evolution.

Procedures

One of the most important steps in this process was selecting the data for analysis. It is important to note that during the research process, BP continued to release films, often responding to world events and the news. For this research, I am accounting for a sample of documentary films produced during the first 10 years of BP's operation, from 2016 to 2025 – presented in Appendix 1. This selected sample encompasses a range of thematic areas—

including Brazilian national politics, history, environment, education, arts, public safety, and other social issues.

Although I watched every documentary in the corpus, I am discussing in more detail the productions that had fewer references in my literature review. This sample generally includes more recent titles such as *História do Comunismo*, a six-episode series featuring interviews with scholars from institutions like Cambridge and Princeton; *Amada e Ultrajada: o Exército na História do Brasil*, which revisits the historical role of the military in Brazilian society; *Unitopia*, a documentary that critiques ideological tensions in public universities; *From the River to the Sea*, which addresses the Israel-Hamas conflict; and *Entre Lobos*, a multi-part production that explores crime, public security, and policing in Brazil, featuring interviews with high-ranking military and law enforcement officials. Perhaps my biggest contribution is a "thick" reading of *God Complex,* produced in the USA and oriented towards US American audiences.

For the analysis, I conducted an initial viewing and automated transcription of the films and grouped them by topic to gain a general understanding of their themes. From this preliminary approach, I identified potential ways to group films and to code themes. Using those categories, I reviewed the details and their practical application in one of their biggest international productions: *God Complex,* a feature-length documentary about an alleged industrial censorship complex in the United States.

On one hand, examining the larger corpus of films enables the identification of recurring themes, narrative structures, rhetorical strategies, and ideological patterns that characterize BP's documentary production and situate it as a node in the broader ecosystem of right-wing digital media. On the other hand, the close reading of *God Complex* provides detailed insights into the film's rhetorical strategies and offers evidence of patterns in their continuity and the company's

expansion and internationalization. Taken together, the macro and micro-level discourse analysis enabled a solid understanding of BP's productions through the lens of critical discourse analysis and documentary film theory and analysis.

Digital Ethnography

A final component of this research involves working with digital data. My goal is to be immersed in BP digital universe and observe how its content circulates across platforms. Based on the literature, one of my main interests is examining the YouTube recommendation system and the overall BP's digital advertising strategy.

My strategy is largely inspired by the work of Salles et al. (2023), whose network analysis demonstrates quantitatively that right-wing, hyper-partisan channels are frequently recommended within YouTube's ecosystem. However, rather than engaging in large-scale algorithmic modeling, my study takes an observational and interpretive approach to understanding how the platform suggests related content after users watch one of BP's documentaries. My goal is to qualitatively build insight by manually tracking and interpreting the recommendation pathways that emerge after engaging with BP content.

In its broadest sense, digital ethnography refers to research that adapts and applies traditional ethnographic methods to the context of the internet to understand how people interact and build communities online (Hooley et al., 2012). It understands and studies the internet environment not only as a technological system but also as a social space shaped by human practices and interactions. Researchers engaged in digital ethnography use the same methods of traditional ethnography, such as participant observation, interviews, surveys, network analysis, archival research, and fieldnotes, to understand online cultures.

In a more restricted definition, digital methods are not simply using the internet as a place to collect data, but using "methods of the medium,", methodological approaches already built into the logic of how platforms themselves organize information, rank relevance, and structure participation (Rogers, 2013). It means focusing the research on objects born within digital systems themselves, like hashtags, likes, hyperlinks, PageRank, tagging systems, and recommendation algorithms. For the last part of the study, I worked mostly with digital data by exploring BP online materials such as posted videos, comments, discussions, and other forms of digital traces. In this section, my focus was on understanding how YouTube recommends videos to users who interact with BP and the Brazilian right-wing bubble.

Understanding YouTube Recommendations

One of the problems with most of the YouTube studies cited is that they use "no login" rather than personalized accounts. It is well known that the recommendation algorithm is shaped by each user's personal preferences, taking into account their history of engagement with other YouTube videos, channels, Google products, and other software development kits (SDKs). While some scholars have used plug-ins to track individual users (Chen et al., 2023) or created bots to simulate real users (Hosseinmardi et al., 2021), those are expensive and difficult to implement.

Acknowledging that every study can only provide a partial understanding of how algorithms work, a possible solution is to use proxies to test the behavior of algorithms that control certain characteristics of a user account. This framework allows researchers to control and test a diverse set of variables, such as gender, age, user location, subscriptions, and navigation history, as each unit plays a role in determining what will be recommended. So instead of attempting to map a large set of recommendations for this study, I decided to focus on

a single video and describe the recurring themes and channel profiles recommended together for different proxy users, controlling for subscriptions and watch history.

To operationalize this approach, I created three proxy accounts designed to simulate different types of viewers, controlling their channel subscriptions and watch history. While this may differ from the experience of real users with much richer data profiles, the use of newly created proxy accounts allows for control of key variables while minimizing interference from unknown prior signals. The proxies serve as a methodological entry point into specific content spheres that may otherwise remain difficult to observe in opaque recommendation systems.

Mapping the recommendation proved a useful way to assess the validity of the filter bubble and rabbit hole theories, including pathways that promote harmful and conspiratorial videos from one channel to another. The idea aligns with other research agendas that have tried to reverse-engineer the YouTube recommendation algorithm to assess whether it drives users toward a more extreme or radical video pipeline (the so-called “Rabbit Hole” theory) or fosters ideological clustering (the so-called “filter bubble” or “echo chamber” effect).

Procedures

Creating and training proxy user profiles

To start data collection, I created three different proxy profiles simulating users with different political orientations, which I labeled *left*, *center*, and *right*. I acknowledge that these categories vary depending on context, therefore. For the purposes of this study, however, they are defined in relation to contemporary Brazilian politics. The **left** is associated with social movements, redistributive policies, and parties aligned with the Workers' Party (PT), representing a relatively moderate left within the Brazilian political spectrum; the **right** combines strong moral conservatism, religious influence, and radical free-market economic

positions, becoming significantly more radicalized in recent years around supporters of Jair Bolsonaro; and the center reflects a more traditional liberalism, often aligned with mainstream or neoliberal media and institutional politics.

The three YouTube accounts were created with email addresses and usernames specifically designed for this study. All accounts also had their language and regional settings configured to Portuguese (Brazil) to ensure consistent localization across profiles. These accounts were accessed through browsers with cleared histories, to avoid interference from cookies or personalized browsing data. I used a proxy/VPN server to simulate navigation from the same location in Sao Paulo, Brazil, ensuring that the geolocation of the research environment (University of Oregon) does not influence the results.

The training phase of Proxy Profiles

Once the profiles were created, I proceeded to the training phase of the proxy accounts, during which each account was subscribed to a set of channels corresponding to their assigned political orientation: (R) right-leaning users to outlets aligned with Brazilian conservative media; (C) centrist users subscribed to Brazilian mainstream media channels; and (L) left-leaning users subscribed to leftist media channels. I classified each channel's political orientation based on its editorial stance and political content. For subscriptions, I selected only media channels, not those based on public political figures or social influencers, to keep the list smaller and more consistent. The channels and political orientations are listed in Appendix 2.

The training channels were selected primarily based on their visibility and size within the Brazilian YouTube ecosystem, with a focus on the largest channels associated with each political orientation. In practice, large right-leaning channels are considerably more numerous and easier to identify than left-leaning equivalents, reflecting already the unbalanced structure of the

Brazilian political media landscape on the platform. The significantly larger number of followers and video offerings among right-wing channels already suggests that the right has greater penetration within the YouTube network, with larger channels and more substantial subscriber bases.

Each proxy account was then trained by watching three hours of videos within its respective bubble to "train" the algorithm. The goal was to establish three hypothetical users with contrasting preferences, enabling me to observe how YouTube's recommendation system behaves when presented with ideologically distinct profiles. While this training period is necessarily limited compared to real users who may accumulate years of viewing history, three hours of targeted viewing was sufficient to generate measurable recommendation patterns while keeping the experimental setup manageable.

After creating and training the proxy accounts to reflect distinct ideological profiles, each account was exposed to the same documentary video seed, produced by the channel BP, under identical conditions (same device settings, same resolution/autoplay, same signed-in state, Brazil IP and at the same time of the same day using three different computers).

For this purpose, I chose the 1-hour-21-minute documentary *Duas Vidas (Two Lives)* about abortion. Among different topics approached in BP's documentary films, abortion seemed to be the one available with a clearer divide between conservative and progressive approaches, making it a relevant case for testing how YouTube's recommendation system responds to such content. Although this analysis focuses on a single film and theme, the procedure can be replicated in future research with other videos or topics to compare results across different contexts.

I then collected the resulting set of recommended videos and classified the content and partisanship of the associated channels to analyze the structure of the recommendation network. It is worth noting that the training took place during the week of October 29, 2025, just one day after a major police operation in Rio de Janeiro that resulted in the deaths of 121 people[13], an event whose highly contentious nature significantly influenced the topics of the videos that appeared during the training phase. Nevertheless, the small-scale design allowed for detailed monitoring and in-depth qualitative interpretation of recommendation patterns.

Scraping recommended data (two step) for each proxy user

After watching this video in its entirety, I examine how YouTube's recommendation system shapes users' experiences, focusing on the list of suggested videos that appear after viewing. For this study, the recommendation interface considered my initial plan was to use the "Up Next" panel that appears on the right side of the video while it is playing. It is important to note that YouTube has recently modified its recommendation interface. The former "Up Next" sidebar is no longer always displayed; instead, recommendations now appear under multiple filters or sub-tabs, such as "YouTube Shorts," "Politics," "News," or "Recommended for You."[14] For this initial stage of analysis, I focused on the default first tab, which presents a mix of all categories and is algorithmically ranked by perceived relevance. Filtering by political or topical sub-tabs could produce different results and might be explored in future developments.

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[13] - This is referencing the real "Operação Contenção" in Penha/Alemão Rio de Janeiro that happened in October 2025 and to this day was the most lethal police action in Brazil

[14] YouTube. (n.d.). *How YouTube recommendations work*. YouTube: How recommendations work

I recorded the first 10 video recommendations for each proxy defined as the 1st-degree source to ensure a consistent sample. For each of those 10, I followed up by capturing 10 additional recommendations (2nd-degree) to extend the sample. For each video, I recorded the video ID, which was later used with YouTube Data Tools to collect additional information such as title, thumbnail, description, like and view counts, published date, and number of comments.

Data collection was conducted simultaneously across all three proxy accounts to minimize the influence of external variables such as daily news events or platform updates. Even though minor time differences are unavoidable, they were kept within a short window to reduce bias. Links to all recommended were saved manually and later transfer to an "edge" datasheet. I use video ids to organize into more complete node information datasets using YouTube Data Tools. The directionality of flows was maintained from the seed video to first-degree recommendations and then to second-degree recommendations (seed → first-degree → second-degree). In addition, edges were weighted based on their position in the recommendation ranking, assigning greater weight to higher-ranked recommendations to reflect their relative prominence in the user interface.

The final dataset consisted of seed videos, their first-degree recommendations, and second-degree recommendations connected to those results, forming a network of distinct channels analyzed in this study. The final sample consists of the original seed video plus ten first-degree and ten second-degree recommendations per proxy user, resulting in 199 videos (nodes) recommended across 330 interactions (edges) (See figure 8, in chapter 7). This sample size reflects the bespoke construction of the data, enabling tractable qualitative analysis, alongside the formal network analyses.

Triangulating Findings

An important way to validate interpretations is to use multiple forms of evidence, looking for data that challenge the interpretation, and verifying claims. When data from different methods align, it strengthens the findings (Lindlof & Taylor, 2011, p.274). As Bowen explains, qualitative researchers should use at least two sources of evidence to find agreement and support across different data and methods. By triangulating data, researchers build credibility by gathering evidence from multiple angles, thereby reducing bias (Bowen, 2009, p.28)

For instance, to answer my research questions, I integrate different qualitative methods to provide a more comprehensive understanding of BP's social and economic structure (RQ1), discursive strategies and thematic patterns (RQ2), and its use of digital platforms and the internet (RQ3). While the political economy strategies reveal articulations between the company and political figures, business elites, and a network of politically aligned organizations, the discourse analysis shows some of the rhetoric strategies and the strategic use of documentary film to promote certain values; finally, the digital ethnography shows how user engagement and algorithmic governance shape the circulation of that content and ideologies. By triangulating these findings, I expect to develop a better understanding of the convergence of right-wing politics and platforms/digital media in Brazil and abroad, and to offer a more robust analysis of how algorithms and digital advertising might be important elements in this process.

CHAPTER IV:

THE POLITICAL ECONOMY OF BRASIL PARALELO

This chapter addresses the first research question by examining how Brasil Paralelo emerged and developed within broader historical, political, and economic contexts. There are basically two ways of seeing a media company's development. One is focusing on the evolution of their productions, with a focus on discursive content. This perspective is very informative, but it is insufficient on its own to account for economic expansion and political influence. The other approach is the political economy, which emphasizes the material and organizational conditions that enable and sustain the company's operations. In this chapter, I focus on the political economy approach, and references to key publications are left for the next chapter.

In tracing the historical development of BP, I found it useful to organize this chapter around four significant moments. First, the pre-digital era, before the emergence of BP and the consolidation of a digital right-wing ecosystem in Brazil, when conservative and neoliberal organizations primarily operated offline through think tanks, business associations, and intellectual networks that would later adapt to digital technologies. Second, the period of *BP*'s emergence (2013–2018), marked by political crisis, mass mobilization, and the rapid expansion of social media platforms, which created favorable conditions for new forms of conservative media entrepreneurship, as I argue. Third, the Bolsonaro years (2018–2022), when disinformation campaigns, right-wing networks, and digital political mobilization reached unprecedented levels and became increasingly intertwined with state institutions and political power. Finally, the post-Bolsonaro period (2022–present), characterized by strategic repositioning, adaptation, restructuring, and efforts toward internationalization, particularly

through the company's attempts to expand its operations and forge connections with international conservative media networks.

The New Brazilian Right

The growth of right-wing media in Brazil can only be fully understood by considering the country's political history and political reorganization, especially after the end of the military dictatorship (1964-1985). The emergence and consolidation of new conservative movements are rooted in this historical context, shaped by Brazilian legacies of authoritarianism and by elite organizations operating across political, social, and economic spheres.

The work of authors such as Flávio Casimiro, Debora Messenberg, Esther Solano, Camila Rocha, João Cezar da Castro Rocha, Balestro dos Santos and Letítica Cesarino, are particularly important for understanding this "New Brazilian Right". Those authors show how this movement, which would later be consolidated around the election of Jair Bolsonaro in 2018, is connected to an important network of business elites, radical free-market networks, and conservative organizations since the end of the military dictatorship. (Casimiro, 2018, 2020; Cesarino, 2022; Messenberg, 2017; C. R. D. Rocha, 2019; J. C. de C. Rocha, 2021; Santos & Miranda, 2020; Santos & Pereira, 2020; Solano & Rocha, 2022, 2022)

In particular, Casimiro's research examines this historical process, mapping the reorganization of the political right from the 1980s through 2014 (Casimiro, 2018). According to him, the origins of this new right can be traced back to Brazil's process of redemocratization – the gradual transition from a repressive military regime to a constitutional democracy. In the context of the decline of the military regime and the drafting of a new constitutional democratic order, segments of the civil-business elite saw the need to reorganize politically to defend liberal economic principles and free-market values.

This reorganization of the elites led to the formation of a dense network of neoliberal organizations, comprising think tanks, political training institutes, and advocacy groups operating in different areas such as economics, law, and education. Their goal was to expand their political capacity, and to influence public debate and the foundations of the new democratic regime, including the drafting of the Federal Constitution of 1988. (Casimiro, 2018; C. R. D. Rocha, 2019)

Important to note, as Casimiro and Camila Rocha point, the actors involved in this process do not constitute a unified or homogeneous bloc, but rather a heterogeneous set of economic elites with distinct interests. Caldeira Neto also describes the contemporary Brazilian far right as a heterogeneous political field in which different conservative, radical-right, and neofascist traditions coexist and intersect (Caldeira Neto, 2025). Nevertheless, at specific historical junctures, particularly during political crises, these factions can converge around shared projects.

In the Brazilian case, most of these authors agree that this convergence becomes visible through the formation of a heterogeneous coalition united by anti-communism, critiques of cultural hegemony, and opposition to the Workers' Party (PT) starting in 2014, and that supported Bolsonaro in the 2018 general election. As Rocha (2021) argues, this unity did not emerge spontaneously but was gradually constructed through networks of activists, intellectuals, think tanks, and political organizations that helped articulate market-oriented liberalism with moral conservatism.

Débora Messenberg (2017) identifies three main axes structuring this movement: anti-communism (which in Brazil translates into anti-Workers' Party rhetoric), moral conservatism, and adherence to neoliberal economic principles. Her analysis converges with that of Rosa

(2024, 2025), who highlights the same elements while also emphasizing nostalgia for the military regime, the political influence of agribusiness interests, and neo-Pentecostal churches. In any case, this alignment brought together different strands of conservatism and radical defenders of free-market capitalism and deregulation, now reinforced by the mobilizing force of young activists recruited through online communities. For Rocha (2021), as for Casimiro (2018, 2020), this configuration represents an unprecedented amalgam of ultra-libertarian and conservative positions.

For most of those scholars, what fundamentally changed in the organizational structure of the New Brazilian Right elites was not the ideological realignment. The defense of free-market interests, the political influence of agrarian and landowning elites, and the promotion of traditional, Catholic family values were already largely present in a society with deep roots in a patriarchal, colonial society marked by extractive forms of exploitation. What distinguished this new political cycle, however, was the way it became intertwined with profound transformations in technology, cultural industries, and the emergence of new digital platforms capable of producing, distributing, and monetizing content and ideology at scale.

Neoliberal Think Tanks and Elite Networks Expansion (1980s–1990s)

Although many authors identify social media as responsible for political polarization and the emergence of a new Brazilian right, the literature shows that several neoliberal think tanks and advocacy organizations had already been playing a pioneering role in articulating and disseminating these ideas since the early 1980s. This earlier activity suggests that these organizations helped shape the process. Among the most influential nodes in this ecosystem are the "*Instituto Liberal,"* founded in 1983 by Donald Stewart Jr; the "*Instituto de Estudos*

Empresariais", founded in 1984, and its annual *Fórum da Liberdade*, first held in 1988, which serves as a platform to connect entrepreneurs, intellectuals, and policy advocates in Brazil.

It is important to note that this network expanded steadily over time and benefited from the expansion of digital media and platforms. Early organizations were gradually followed by new institutions throughout the 2000s and 2010s, including the *Instituto Millenium* (2005), the *Instituto Mises Brasil* (2007), and the *Instituto de Formação de Líderes* (2007), which replicated elite-training models in different Brazilian cities and states.

This expansion included an educational front aimed at students and universities, often framed by these organizations as a response to "left-wing indoctrination" and as a means to train future leaders. Examples include the Brazilian branch of *Students for Liberty*, active since the early 2010s and central to the diffusion of libertarian activism among undergraduate students, as well as initiatives such as *Instituto Borborema*, founded in 2015, which presents itself as committed to the recovery of "true education" and cultural values. There are also organizations specifically oriented toward women and the promotion of female participation in politics, such as the *Ladies of Liberty Alliance*, which launched a Brazilian branch in 2018, and initiatives like the *Instituto Damas de Ferro*, founded in 2020.

Over time, this network grew and diversified, paving the way for the emergence of new media outlets, including publishing houses, news platforms, and blogs. Figure 1 below illustrates how this expansion operates, situating BP in the network provided by those authors. It shows how the institutional infrastructure of neoliberal advocacy groups progressively extended across multiple sectors, reinforcing its capacity to shape public discourse and influence political agendas, and how the new right wing digital media, came to serve as a news platforms for their discourse and content production.

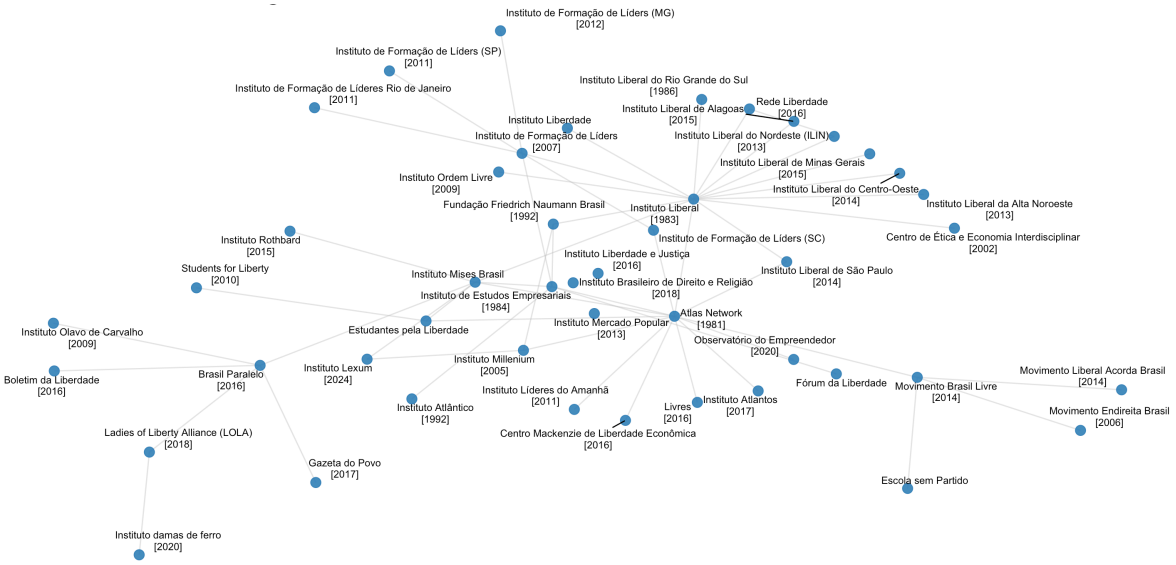


Figure 1. A Network of Liberal and Ultraliberal Institutes and Organizations from the 1990s to 2026

The figure maps the expansion of this network, which developed primarily through the articulation and legacy of institutions such as the Instituto Liberal, the Instituto Atlântico, and the Instituto de Estudos Empresariais. It illustrates a diverse but highly interconnected ecosystem that contributed to the diffusion and consolidation of ultraliberal and free-market ideology in Brazil. It shows a coordinated network with central organizations and regional branches, leadership-training initiatives, public forums, publishing projects, alternative media, and several different advocacy groups aimed at shaping public policy or limiting the scope of state action.

The activities of those organizations include the production of articles and policy papers, the organization of conferences and events, the publication and translation of works by liberal authors, reading groups, private meetings with political and business leaders, and the creation of other spaces where entrepreneurs, intellectuals, activists, and policymakers can circulate and coordinate their agendas.

This model of influence is largely inspired by the Anglo-American tradition of think tanks and was introduced and adapted in Brazil by influential business figures such as Donald Stewart Jr., Henry Maksoud, Jorge Gerdau Johannpeter, Winston Ling, and Salim Mattar. In a later phase, a new generation of entrepreneurs and public figures, including Flávio Rocha, Hélio Beltrão, Fernando and Cristiano Fiori Chiocca, and Carlos Wizard, became prominent supporters of the causes of those libertarian and conservative groups. Among them, Hélio Beltrão played a particularly important role by founding the Instituto Mises Brasil, which became central to the dissemination of ultraliberal ideas associated with Ludwig von Mises and Austrian economics and had a great influence on the founders of BP, as we will see.

In practice, these organizations are also embedded in transnational circuits of funding, training, and ideological support, including connections with U.S.-based organizations such as Students for Liberty, the Cato Institute, the Atlas Network, and the Liberty Fund (De Britto, 2023; Santos, 2020). Camila Rocha (2021) notes that many of these think tanks brought together business elites and intellectuals trained at U.S. universities (Rocha, 2021, p. 81). Even when they lacked direct organizational ties to U.S.-based institutions, these groups were often shaped by American models of libertarian elite formation. Britto (2023, p. 68) also notes that many articles and books published by right-wing institutes were translations of classical liberal and libertarian authors, such as Ludwig von Mises, Carl Menger, Ayn Rand, and Friedrich Naumann.

By the early 2010s, this network had already established an organizational infrastructure capable of producing intellectuals, activists, entrepreneurs, media outlets, and political leaders. The emergence of BP is only one node in this this broader ecosystem.

Right-Wing Digital Culture in Brazil (2000s)

While a network of institutes and organizations had already been established since the 1990s, the expansion of the internet marked a significant shift in strategy. New profiles, pages, and groups began using digital platforms, allowing these actors to operate beyond the limits of traditional media and amplify the circulation of their ideas. Whereas in the 1990s their activities were largely centered on organizing events, publishing books, and producing policy-oriented materials, this same network gradually adapted to the digital environment. In doing so, , it expanded its ability to influence public opinion, mobilize supporters, and spread conservative and ultraliberal values via decentralized, scalable, and participatory communication.

In Brazil, Orkut, launched in 2004, was the first social media platform to gain public attention. It was on Orkut pages that the first online communities started to get traction, bringing together people with similar interests. Given that Orkut was organized around user-created "communities," a new engagement with neoliberal ideas emerged through groups dedicated to discussing specific libertarian authors and conservative intellectual traditions. Many of those groups, very diverse in terms of their topics and contexts, became forums that brought together people interested in economic liberalism and conservative authors. Through these communities, a new audience and a new right-wing digital culture started to take shape (Rocha, 2017, 2019; Messenberg, 2017).

Over time, this environment contributed to the formation of a more ideologically cohesive and, in some cases, more radicalized public, increasingly aligned with libertarianism. This process also contributed to a generational shift within the network, moving from older business elites to younger actors who became increasingly central to the circulation and reproduction of these ideas. According to Rocha (2021), this period marked the moment when a

new ultraliberal right began to engage more actively with emerging political figures and networks. Until this point, radical free-market ideology remained underrepresented in academic environments, mainstream media, and institutional politics, which, since the end of the Brazilian military dictatorship, had been largely shaped by ideas of the welfare state and redistributive policies. A post-authoritarian consensus emphasized the state's role in protecting social welfare, a position that became increasingly associated with the Workers' Party governments after 2002. Online communities, however, provided fertile ground for the circulation of anti-state ideas and anti-Workers' Party rhetoric.

Olavo de Carvalho and The Rhetoric of Hate

In this ultra-libertarian context, one of the central figures that emerged in online communities was the self-proclaimed philosopher Olavo de Carvalho. Although he had been active since the 1990s through books, newspaper columns, and lectures, his influence expanded considerably during the Orkut era, where the platform's community-based structure facilitated the formation of large networks of followers interested in his ideas.

Olavo, who passed away in 2022, is largely considered a guru of Brazilian new Right. Many of his ideas are, in fact, drawn heavily from the U.S. culture-war rhetoric, shifting from class struggle to a battle for people’s hearts and minds. In Brazil, this is not entirely new, it can already be traced back to the Doctrine of National Security that informed military doctrine during the dictatorship. But it was Olavo who effectively became a central figure in efforts to contest what was perceived as the left's hegemony in the media and universities, the “indoctrination,” and the general corruption of politics and “the system,” with a conspiratorial worldview. His ideas will begin to appear more visibly in initiatives such as the Escola Sem

Partido movement, created around 2004*, Movimento Endireita Brasil*, *Movimento Brasil Livre,* and others, which will gain more traction in the following decades.

Following his success on social media, he founded the Instituto Olavo de Carvalho in 2009 and expanded his activities into digital media, producing content for YouTube, including videos and podcasts, closely following the evolution of online platforms. In the following years, he would become one of the best-selling authors in Brazil, and to this day, his ideas, grounded in notions such as the rhetoric of hate, culture war, anti-communist paranoia, cultural Marxism, and "gender ideology," have come to function as a kind of ideological foundation upon which segments of the Brazilian right rely.

As the libertarian-conservative groundwork was already in place, what it was missing it was a stronger ideological grammar to connect anti-leftism, anti-institutional resentment, cultural conservatism, and free-market radicalism. Olavo de Carvalho helped shape this grammar, and through his online courses, he built a network of influencers who increasingly engaged with national politics. Many of his former students became activists or media entrepreneurs, creating alternative media outlets that claim to represent reality from perspectives they claim traditional media do not address. Not surprisingly, the BP founders were students of Olavo and were largely influenced by his rhetoric and worldviews.

Political Crisis and the "Awakening" (2010–2016)

As this network of economic ultraliberalism continued to expand, new organizations linked to business elites and entrepreneurs increasingly challenged the social pact that had shaped Brazil's democratic order after the end of the military dictatorship. This pact, institutionalized in part by the 1988 Constitution, had combined democratic reconstruction with social rights, welfare policies, and a commitment to social inclusion. By the early 2010s,

however, this arrangement was increasingly contested by actors who opposed the expansion of state-led social policies and defended a more radical free-market agenda. The rupture became visible with the mass protests of 2013, followed by the highly polarized 2014 presidential election and the impeachment of President Dilma Rousseff in 2016.

These events marked a period of intense transformation in Brazilian politics, destabilizing an order that had remained relatively stable at least since Fernando Henrique Cardoso's election in 1994. Over the 2010s, and especially through the articulation of publishing houses, websites, and media companies, criticism of government intervention, welfare policies, and especially the Workers' Party became increasingly visible and commercially successful (see Rocha, 2019, pp. 172-173)[15]. In this context, Camila Rocha (2019) notes that a new right-wing culture began to emerge, mobilizing through new publications, connecting online, and eventually moving into the streets and into political positions. For this newly mobilized public, all Brazilian political parties increasingly came to be perceived as part of the same discredited political system that they were rejecting.

The window of opportunity came in June 2013, when large-scale street mobilizations began, following a pattern similar to that of the Arab Spring: protests were largely organized through social media and featured diffuse, heterogeneous demands. What initially began as a left-wing movement against the rise in transportation fares was quickly transformed into massive nationwide demonstrations against corruption, police violence, and the political establishment,

[15] As Rocha notes, books such as Rodrigo Constantino's Esquerda Caviar and Olavo de Carvalho's O mínimo que você precisa saber para não ser um idiota entered Brazilian best-seller lists after their publication in 2013; by 2015, Carvalho's book had become a major best-seller, selling more than 120,000 copies amid the pro-impeachment mobilizations (Rocha, 2019, pp. 172-173).

particularly after episodes of police brutality circulated widely and went viral on social media platforms.

It was in this context of "political awakening" that several communication initiatives and political organizations aligned with right-wing networks found favorable conditions to disrupt the direction of the protests, especially by redirecting discontent toward the Workers' Party. Facebook pages became important organizational tools, enabling the creation of events and mobilizing supporters to participate in the demonstrations. Groups such as *Movimento Brasil Livre* (MBL) and *Revoltados Online* used these tools to transform diffuse dissatisfaction into a broader anti-establishment culture, targeting government corruption, Congress, the media, political elites, and, especially, the perceived hegemony of the Workers' Party (PT).

Because of the high level of engagement and the lack of appropriate solutions to the social demands, protests continued after the 2014 presidential election, in which Dilma narrowly defeated the liberal-right candidate Aécio Neves. As demonstrations grew, demands broadened against the political class, especially as the 2014 FIFA World Cup approached and discontent over public spending deepened. The growing mobilization culminated in the removal of Dilma Rousseff from office in August 2016 on charges related to fiscal irregularities (unauthorized budget decrees).

In fact, the impeachment cannot be understood separately from the anti-corruption protests and political crisis that began in 2013, fueled by traditional and social media. Political discontent was not a direct product of social media; it was also embraced and amplified by Brazil's highly concentrated mainstream media, which helped transform the protests into a national movement targeting Dilma Rousseff's (PT) presidential administration. The disdain for

the political system was also fueled by corruption scandals, such as Operation Car Wash[16], a major anti-corruption probe that uncovered systemic bribery involving politicians and state-owned companies, which received extensive media coverage and became central to public debates about the legitimacy of the Workers' Party government.

As Messenberg shows, the opinion leaders who shaped Brazil's right-wing uprising included many famous journalists and commentators circulating through newspapers, magazines, blogs, Facebook, and YouTube (Messenberg, 2017). In this sense, mainstream media helped amplify neoliberal discourses that would later be radicalized within digital right-wing ecosystems. Similarly, De Albuquerque et al. (2025) argue shows that anti-system dynamics did not emerge solely from marginal or alternative actors but were significantly enabled—and at times driven—by mainstream media organizations located at the center of the media system (De Albuquerque et al., 2025). The search for controversy, clicks, and "declaratory journalism" gave visibility to actors who rejected the very norms of public debate on which traditional media depended (Nunes, 2020).

As the political crisis deepened, the governing coalition fractured. In March 2016, PMDB—the PT's principal coalition partner—withdrew its support for Dilma Rousseff, and

[16] Although Operation Car Wash uncovered extensive corruption schemes involving politicians and business elites, the investigation has also been the subject of substantial scholarly criticism. Researchers have argued that prosecutors and Judge Sérgio Moro selectively targeted political actors, engaged in procedural irregularities, collaborated improperly during investigations, and contributed to the politicization of the judiciary. The operation's credibility was also undermined by leaked messages confirming coordination between prosecutors and judge Sérgio Moro, exposing judicial bias and political instrumentalization. (see Greenwald, G. (2019). *The Secret Brazil Archive*. The Intercept. https://theintercept.com/series/secret-brazil-archive/) Subsequent judicial decisions—including the Brazilian Supreme Court's annulment of several convictions against former president Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva on procedural grounds and the recognition of judicial bias in Moro's conduct—have reinforced these criticisms. This dissertation does not seek to adjudicate these debates but recognizes that Operation Car Wash remains a contested episode in contemporary Brazilian political history.

many of its legislators voted in favor of her impeachment. Following Rousseff's removal, Vice President Michel Temer assumed the presidency and introduced a more market-oriented reform agenda, marking the end of 14 years of Workers' Party administrations and a shift towards more neoliberal policies.

The emergence of new right-wing media

Left-wing alternative media initiatives such as Jornalistas Livres and Mídia Ninja also played an important role in covering protests and political mobilization, providing a left-wing framing of the demonstrations and engaging a lot with social and digital media. However, the expansion of right-wing media outlets, groups, and organizations was impressive comparatively. Since around 2015 onward, a growing ecosystem of alternative right-leaning media channels proliferates, with projects such as Boletim da Liberdade (2016), the political news outlet O Antagonista (2015), and BP (2016), which quickly gained prominence, exploiting the gap between popular discontent and the narratives offered by the traditional mainstream media.

Until the mid 2010s the online alternative media was largely dominated by left-wing blogs, sites, and platforms, while radical right-wing political positions were seldom represented in either alternative or mainstream media, which tended to reflect the interests of moderate centrist parties aligned with what is often described as Brazil's "old politics." What these right-wing actors sought was a form of "new politics," positioned as an alternative to the neoliberal consensus that had prevailed up to that point.

It is important to note that these outlets do compete for the same online audiences interested in conservative perspectives and potentially willing to pay through subscriptions, donations, or product purchases. However, this is not simply a matter of market competition. These outlets are often aligned within the same ideological ecosystem. In this sense, the more

significant competition for right-wing media is with traditional media and large communication companies, with which they compete more directly for audiences and advertising revenues.

This period cemented, in line with a global pattern, the legitimacy crisis affecting traditional media and journalism, which were increasingly perceived as incapable of representing the radicalism of emerging voices opposed to "traditional politics". It was in this context that alternative conservative media companies emerged in Brazil alongside other right-wing technoconservative movements and political groups. These actors contributed to Bolsonaro's electoral rise in 2018 and continued to expand during and after his presidency. In the years that followed, BP would become one of the main nodes in this political and media ecosystem.

The Founding of Brasil Paralelo (2016–2018)

BP emerged in the context of the "political awakening" discussed in the above section, marked by the impeachment of President Dilma Rousseff and the large-scale street mobilizations that were happening in Brazil, fueled by the right-wing blogosphere, online communities, and emerging digital media. The company's trajectory and the inspiration behind its foundation are rooted in such a process. However, unlike many social movements articulated in Brazil at that time, BP did not emerge from street-level mobilization, but from the initiative of three young university-educated entrepreneurs, grounded in market ideology and discourses of entrepreneurship and commercial and intellectual value.

The company initially was established in the state of Rio Grande do Sul, south of Brazil, a place where many of the mentioned think tanks were already acting. BP, registered under the name "LHT Higgs Produções," officially started in August 2016 when President Dilma Rousseff was removed from office. The company's YouTube channel was created on July 25, 2016, a month before the formal registration (YouTube Data Tools).

The official story told by the company, its partners, and supporters is marked by the entrepreneurial spirit of young recent business graduates interested in understanding the "extreme political crisis" that Brazil was undergoing at that moment, and to address a social demand from an audience that had only a superficial understanding of what was happening politically in Brazil. The strategy was to amplify the voices of individuals with a sophisticated understanding of this context, but who lacked access to mainstream media platforms[17].

The founders claim to have started in a small room in Porto Alegre, with only five people, reinforcing a narrative of independent entrepreneurial effort. Of the five original founders, three graduated from the same institution—Escola Superior de Propaganda e Marketing (ESPM), a leading private institution in advertising and marketing in Brazil. They founded BP shortly after graduating in 2016 and have remained at the helm of the company to this day. Understanding their career trajectories reveals the extent to which they were early and direct exposed to ultraliberal think tanks and liberal educational networks, as well as how they actively cultivated connections within these networks.

Founders and Entrepreneurial Trajectories

BP founders' trajectories reveal how the BP foundation was inspired by those neoliberal intellectual networks and by Olavo de Carvalho's culture-war framework. Each of the founders' prior involvement in leadership and financial organizations, and the influence of Olavo courses

[17] All information according to their own website, available on: https://www.brasilparalelo.com.br/noticias/o-que-e-a-brasil-paralelo?ref=nucleo.jor.br

and materials by the Mises Institute, played a significant role in shaping the company values and the owners' radical free-market and conservative rationalities

First, there is Henrique Leopoldo Viana who became one of the leaders in the company. In January 2022, he was appointed both Chairman of the Board of Directors and the sole statutory Director of BP. A particularly noteworthy aspect of his trajectory is his role as a board member of Junior Achievement in the state of Rio Grande do Sul, which is a branch of an organization founded in 1919 in the USA to inspire and prepare young people for economic success (as noted by Balestro dos Santos, 2021).

In an interview with Esmeril Magazine, Viana publicly acknowledged that the inspiration for creating BP came from Instituto Mises Brasil and the Online Philosophy Courses taught by Olavo de Carvalho, both of which he described as key sources of his intellectual formation[18]. Olavo's influence is also mentioned in a 2017 video published on the YouTube channel Parlatório Livre[19]. On this occasion, Viana states that Olavo not only inspired them intellectually but also shaped how they should position themselves, as a company, but also by adopting a form of "militancy" (apud De Brito, 2023, p. 77). The central strategy was to create an active and engaged militancy and at the same time make business, just like Olavo was already doing with his courses and YouTube channel.

In those interviews, Viana explains that the initial idea was not to create a film production company but a study group that would organize meetings and lectures on political topics,

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[18] Dirani, C. (2020, January 21). *Perfil | Henrique Viana abre as portas da Brasil Paralelo*. Esmeril. https://revistaesmeril.com.br/perfil-%E2%94%82-henrique-viana-abre-as-portas-da-brasil-paralelo/, Albuquerque thesis, page.22 also mentioned in Balestro dos Santos (Balestro dos Santos, 2021, p. 67).

[19] Parlatório Livre. (n.d.). *Parlatório Livre - Jornalismo e liberdade - Henrique Viana* [Video]. YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6BF83wbervI&t=857s

bringing knowledge to people who were out in the streets protesting the left but lacked intellectual grounding. However, with the guidance of Olavo de Carvalho, they decided to follow a traditional product-selling model for that audience, selling premium content to their users and subscribers, while maintaining militancy.

> 'We were going fully in the direction of selling products, and he (Olavo de Carvalho) said: "no, no, no, wait a second; it is extremely important that you do not lose sight of militancy—you are fulfilling a role for the country, a service to the cause; so don't lose that, people need to be militants." (Viana, 2017 apud Britto, 2023, p. 78).

The second founder is Fellipe Valerim, who currently serves as a board director and has also worked as a producer, director, and photographer for the company. Valerim had a prior professional relationship with Henrique Viana before the creation of BP. They were business partners in Trive Art, a cultural venture they co-founded in 2011, which is now inactive. Like Viana, Valerim also has a background in entrepreneurship and leadership institutions, having served as a director at a coaching institute in Rio Grande do Sul between 2015 and 2016.[20]

In an interview for the conservative newspaper Boletim da Liberdade, Valerim acknowledges that the Brazilian "political awakening" of 2013 was a decisive moment for them. "After the impeachment of the former president, it became clear that there was a significant portion of the population with the potential to mobilize and generate effective changes in the

[20] According to Balestro dos Santos (2021), he worked for eleven months, as at the Instituto IBN Coaching in Porto Alegre (p. 69).

course we were following. This excited us"[21]. As Vallerim notes in this interview, the aim was to reach a young, politically engaged audience, especially through YouTube, connecting them to these various figures discussing Brazil's political situation (July 19, 2018, cited in Balestro dos Santos, 2021, p. 60)

His motivations were also shaped by earlier engagement with Instituto Mises Brasil (IMB). In a podcast for the IMB[22], he recounts how his initial engagement with conservative and liberal ideas came from lectures promoted by Mises Brasil and Helio Beltrão (with whom he had "close contact"), and by reading *Six Lessons* by Ludwig von Mises, a book that was being distributed during his university years. He says in the interview that what opened his mind was a lecture by Beltrão at ESPM, and from that point on, they began to organize themselves.

Finally, the third partner is Lucas Ferrugem, who also serves as a board director and works mainly as a producer and director. He has also taught courses within the BP platform, particularly classes focused on history and politics (Balestro dos Santos, 2021, p. 70).

Ferrugem has openly discussed the strategy of positioning BP as an instrument to organize and disseminate knowledge produced by conservative professors and intellectuals who, according to him, lack space in mainstream media and academic institutions[23]. He publicly expressed deep distrust toward both the press and higher education institutions, arguing that most

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[21] This is in 2018 for a right-wing journal Boletim da Liberdade (The Freedom Boletim), available at: https://www.boletimdaliberdade.com.br/2018/07/19/brasil-paralelo-em-entrevista-exclusiva-conheca-a-origem-dos-documentarios-que-fazem-sucesso-na-internet/

[22] This testimony on podcast mises brasil id 592, referenced both in Balestro dos Santos's dissertation Balestro dos Santos (2021, p. 69), and in Britto's work,

[23] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p265bGtPv-4&t=738s

journalists, professors, and university administrators are not legitimate professionals but rather "fraudsters"[24], a position well aligned with Olavo de Carvalho's culture war framework.

At the time of its founding, the group also included Rodolfo Tayler Zampieri, who, according to his LinkedIn profile, was responsible for creating and developing the BP visual identity and branding[25]. Like the other founders, he is an alumnus of ESPM, but in 2018, Zampieri left the company and returned to freelance work. According to his own account, he subsequently developed e-books for other conservative digital influencers and has continued to collaborate with conservative organizations, including the CPAC Brazil editions in 2020 and 2021.

In sum, the core founders were young graduates of ESPM, a private institution oriented toward marketing and advertising and traditionally associated with upper-class and high-income students. They belonged to a cohort directly exposed to Olavo de Carvalho's online courses and to the educational materials circulated by Instituto Mises Brasil. As Balestro dos Santos (2021, p. 82) argues, these influences are crucial for understanding how the founders conceived BP's operations: on the one hand, the militant and culture-war framework associated with Olavo de Carvalho; on the other, the ultraliberal emphasis on free markets, private initiative, and individualism promoted by neoliberal institutes and think tanks. Although BP presents its

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[24] Brasil para lerdos [@brparalerdo]. (2022, March 3). *What the founder of Brasil Paralelo thinks about professors and universities* [Post]. X. https://x.com/i/status/1499383241765183493

[25] In the interview for Boletim da Liberdade, Vallerin explains the company's logo is designed in the shape of a wormhole to convey the idea that the brand serves as a gateway to a parallel reality. As he notes, it is "parallel to what people were used to seeing in the mainstream media" – available at: https://www.boletimdaliberdade.com.br/2018/07/19/brasil-paralelo-em-entrevista-exclusiva-conheca-a-origem-dos-documentarios-que-fazem-sucesso-na-internet/

productions as independent, nonpartisan, and grounded in the expertise of specialists, in practice it has come to function as an educational arm of a conservative and ultraliberal movement, cultivating and consolidating the ideological frameworks that brought this coalition together.

Beyond the Founders: Expanded organization networks

The narrative of young entrepreneurs who graduated, started a small initiative to study and discuss ideas with fellow students, and eventually grew into a major media and documentary production company has strong appeal and is frequently promoted by BP and its supporters. In a video, conservative congresswoman Bia Kicis recounts that when the group traveled to Brasília to film a series of interviews, they did not even have 200 reais to pay for accommodation[26].

In their own materials, the founders emphasize a trajectory marked by sacrifice and gradual achievement, framed in terms of hard work and purpose. As stated in one promotional text: "Nine years ago, we started BP with a small group of friends and a borrowed camera. Today, after more than 100 original productions and the release of a feature film, we are moved by what we are experiencing."[27] This self-representation frames the company's origins as a small, informal initiative, highlighting material constraints and references to borrowed equipment. It creates a strong contrast with its current success and scale of production, now operating from offices on the main Avenue in São Paulo, with two hundred employees and an expanded institutional presence.

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[26] Brasil Paralelo. (n.d.). *"Os fundadores da BP não tinham 200 reais para se hospedar" | Veja a história que Bia Kicis contou!* [Video]. YouTube https://youtube.com/shorts/udrLBfe86N8?si=qa7zDjSg6ncSgFlb

[27] Costa, G. (2026, July 15). *10 anos de Brasil Paralelo: O que aconteceu até agora?* Brasil Paralelo. Brasil Paralelo https://www.brasilparalelo.com.br/noticias/10-anos-de-brasil-paralelo-o-que-aconteceu-ate-agora

The story follows a familiar entrepreneurial script, resembling the myths surrounding Silicon Valley founders and American billionaires who purportedly built successful companies from garages with minimal resources. This "garage myth" is also a symbol of individualism, meritocracy, and entrepreneurialism as the primary drivers of success, and downplays the structural conditions and political-economic networks and relationships that also shape an organization's growth.

However, at this point, it is important to examine other elements that help complete the picture of BP's founding structure and to identify additional individuals involved in its early organization and subsequent transformations. Beyond the previously mentioned influence of Hélio Beltrão—an entrepreneur in the gas and energy sector and a prominent figure within libertarian business circles—the company's founding structure also included a fifth person: Bruno Ruschel, who is the brother of Leandro Ruschel, both of whom also reportedly attended courses taught by Olavo de Carvalho. The presence of the Ruschel brothers is significant, as they brought in greater business experience and capital. Leandro Ruschel does not appear in the company's initial records, despite being a prominent presence in several of its productions. However, since May 2022 onward, he is listed in the company's ownership structure.

The Ruschel brothers are shareholders in PZL S.A., a family-owned joint-stock company, and hold interests in several other companies. Leandro has a large business portfolio, operating primarily in the financial investment sector. He is a co-founder of *Liberta Investimentos* and of other companies operating in the financial services sector. *Liberta*, according to its website, has 25 years of experience in the financial market, 15,000 clients, and over R$8 billion under

management[28]. Currently, Leandro lives in the United States, where he is expanding his business activities through L&S Investment Advisors, LLC.

Although Bruno has a discreet profile, Leandro draws attention as he describes himself as a "conservative activist and influencer in Brazil, well known on social media and in the press." Indeed, he currently has around 1 million followers on Twitter, 388,000 on YouTube, and 389,000 on Instagram, where he frequently comments on politics. His public interventions have frequently aligned with pro-Bolsonaro discourses and networks, and his online activity has been examined by scholars and journalists as part of larger ecosystems associated with misinformation and political radicalization during the Bolsonaro years[29].

By contrast, Bruno Ruschel has maintained a lower public profile, with limited information about his activities available in open online sources. Although he no longer appears to be actively involved as a partner in BP, with his departure having been formalized in the fifth amendment to the company's articles of incorporation in July 2019, coinciding with the company's relocation to São Paulo, his brother, Leandro Ruschel, has played a more visible and continuous role. According to his LinkedIn profile, Leandro has served as a member of the company's board since 2016 and has participated in profit distributions as a shareholder, as indicated in the minutes of the Extraordinary General Meeting held on December 21, 2022.

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[28] Liberta Investimentos. (n.d.). *Sobre a Liberta*. Liberta Investimentos https://libertainvestimentos.com.br/sobre-a-liberta/

[29] Fávero, B., Ely, D., Barbosa, J., & Mangabeira, M. (2020, November 10). *Um terço dos tweets mais populares de bolsonaristas sobre eleição dos EUA tem desinformação*. Aos Fatos. Aos Fatos https://www.aosfatos.org/noticias/um-terco-dos-tweets-mais-populares-bolsonaristas-sobre-eleicao-eua-tem-desinformacao/?utm_source=chatgpt.com

Despite the strong entrepreneurial narrative surrounding its origins, BP is, in fact, embedded within a larger ecosystem of economic and political support. The early presence of figures such as Leandro Ruschel and Bruno Ruschel evidence connections with financial and business networks that extend beyond the three main founders. In later years, this embeddedness becomes even more explicit with the involvement of Jorge Gerdau Johannpeter, a leading figure in the industrial sector and a long-standing supporter of liberal think tanks and advocacy institutes in Brazil.

Bolsonaro's Rise and the Acceleration of Brasil Paralelo (2018–2022)

Jair Bolsonaro was a relatively marginal congressman when he participated in the first BP-related content when the company was founded in 2016. At that time, he was a rising star on YouTube, before he became President of Brazil. Bolsonaro's election in 2018, transformed that emerging right-wing digital ecosystem into a more direct channel of political power. During his administration, many of the people who were part of Olavo de Carvalho network (including Bolsonaro's sons) were invited to compose the government. Many of the individuals who frequently appeared as interviewees in BP's early productions, particularly those Balestro dos Santos describes as the "core group" of BP, also attained positions of political power in his governments. Many who, at the time, were primarily active as commentators, intellectuals, or media personalities, and would appear as expert in different BP documentary films, successfully translated their visibility and influence into electoral capital.

Since the inauguration of Jair Bolsonaro's government, traditional news organizations and right-wing media outlets have been treated very differently. Media organizations aligned with the Bolsonaro administration—such as *Terça Livre, Senso Incomum, Conexão Política, Reaçonaria,*

and Renova Mídia, and BP—received privileged access and information[30]. They also benefited from public support by Eduardo Bolsonaro (a congressmen and son of Jair Bolsonaro) and other right-wing politicians, who used his social media accounts to promote videos and subscription plans associated with those channels and outlets.

These connections also operated symbolically, through public gestures of endorsement that helped situate BP and those media outlets within the cultural universe of Bolsonarismo. Bolsonaro himself was photographed watching one of BP films (1*964: O Brasil entre Armas e Livros)* on the presidential airplane while returning from an official trip to Israel, while Eduardo Bolsonaro repeatedly promoted the company's films, series, and subscription plans on social media[31].

A more concrete indication of institutional access was the circulation of *Brasil: A Última Cruzada* through TV Escola, a public educational channel then linked to the Ministry of Education. Although BP claims the agreement was formally a free, non-exclusive licensing arrangement, the exhibition placed BP's revisionist historical narrative within a state educational infrastructure and drew criticism from historians, including a critical note from the National Association of University Professors of History[32].

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[30] Menezes, L. F. (2019, January 1). Site engana ao dizer que não há restrições a jornalistas na posse de Bolsonaro. *Aos Fatos*. https://www.aosfatos.org/noticias/site-engana-ao-dizer-que-nao-ha-restricoes-jornalistas-na-posse-de-bolsonaro/

[31] Zanini, F. (2020, June 18). "Netflix dos bolsonaristas" gastou R$ 328 mil em anúncios de Facebook e Instagram. *O Estado de S. Paulo* https://www.estadao.com.br/politica/netflix-dos-bolsonaristas-gastou-r-328-mil-em-anuncios-de-facebook-e-instagram/ and Rudnitzki, E., & Oliveira, R. (2019, August 9). Nasce o cinema olavista. *Agência Pública*. Agência Pública https://apublica.org/2019/08/nasce-o-cinema-olavista/

[32] Associação Nacional de História (ANPUH). (2019). *Nota de alerta 2019*. ANPUH. https://anpuh.org/?option=com_k2&view=item&id=5585:nota-de-alerta-2019

During the Bolsonaro administration, BP also had access to people in positions of power, including Roberto Alvim, president of the National Arts Foundation (FUNARTE) and later special secretary of Culture; Mário Frias, who subsequently occupied the same secretariat; Damares Alves, minister of Women, Family, and Human Rights; former education minister Abraham Weintraub; foreign minister Ernesto Araújo; and presidential adviser Filipe Martins, several of whom were students or close followers of Olavo de Carvalho

At that moment, it was not surprising that BP would grow. The company increased the number of productions, intensifying the pace at which it was producing films and also in terms of the YouTube channel subscriptions and reported revenue; In addition, the reading of their legal documents reveals that they expanded activities as far as offering trainings, courses, consulting, business management, advertising agency services, journalism activities, events organization, technology services, and the operation of a holding company for non-financial institutions.

The evolution of those services was gradual and is reflected in the company's legal documents, which show a continuous expansion of its range of activities. In 2019, while still registered as LHT Higgs Produções Audiovisuais Ltda., the company's activities centered on seminars, lectures, professional and managerial training, internet content portals, crowdfunding, and retail sales of books and general goods. In 2020, however, the company amended its corporate purpose to exclude crowdfunding and some retail activities while adding many other services and activities, including film, video, and television production; software licensing; brand and patent licensing; data processing and hosting; non-financial holding activities; business-management consulting; advertising intermediation; sales promotion; event organization; education; audiovisual sound mixing; advertising films; sound recording and music editing;

design; and book publishing. In 2021, when the firm was transformed into *BP Entretenimento e Educação S/A*, this expanded object was incorporated into the new corporate statute.

The scope widened again in 2022 with the addition of non-daily newspaper publishing and integrated printing/publishing activities, and in 2023 with retail book sales, magazine publishing, and the publication of directories, lists, and other graphic products. By the 2025 consolidated statute, now under *BP Educação e Entretenimento S/A*, the company's legal object covered audiovisual production, education and training, digital infrastructure, consulting, advertising, events, publishing, retail books, magazines, and holding-company activities, showing a cumulative diversification well beyond film production alone[33].

The growth stands in contrast to the context of independent Brazilian audiovisual production, which was impacted by COVID-19 and the suspension of multiple public funding programs during the Bolsonaro administration. Paradoxically, this same context coincided with a period of rapid growth for BP.

The turning point appears to occur around September 2021, when the pace of video production begins to increase sharply. As illustrated in the figures below, which depict the pace of content publication on YouTube, the channel enters a phase of accelerated growth and a markedly steeper trajectory.

[33] See (2019 JUCESP/JUCISRS filing, p. 18; 2020 JUCESP filing, pp. 4-5; 2021 JUCESP filing/protocol 0540425217, pp. 9-10 and 27; 2022 JUCESP filing/protocol 0899775226, pp. 5, 8-9; 2023 JUCESP filing/protocol 0591788238, p. 3; 2025 JUCESP filing/protocol 3052821258, pp. 6-7.)

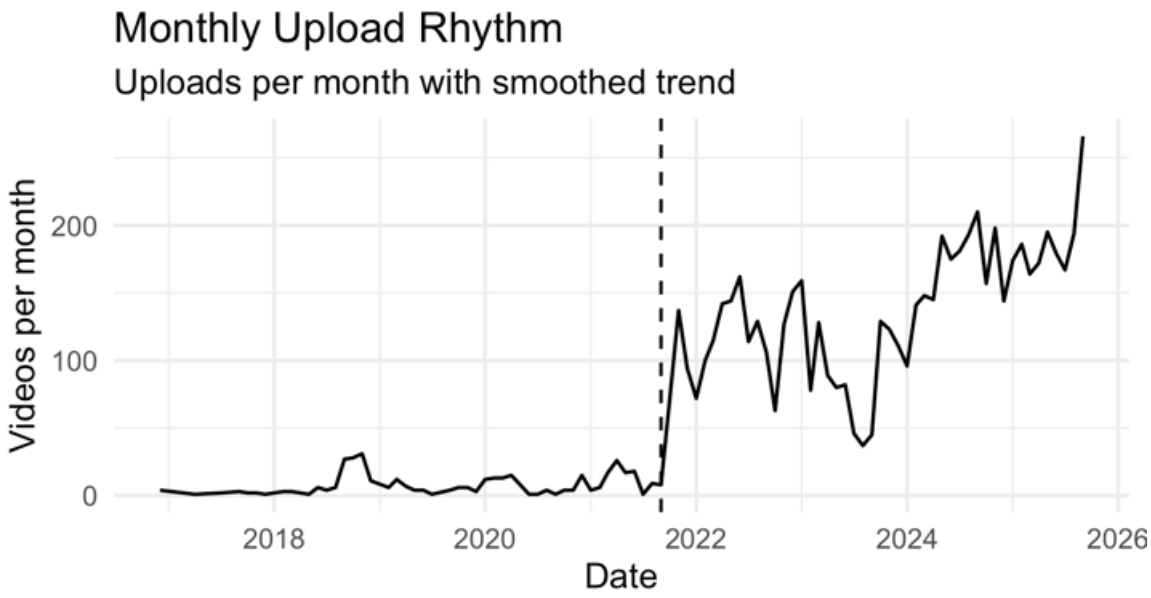


Figure 2. Monthly Upload Rhythm on BP YouTube

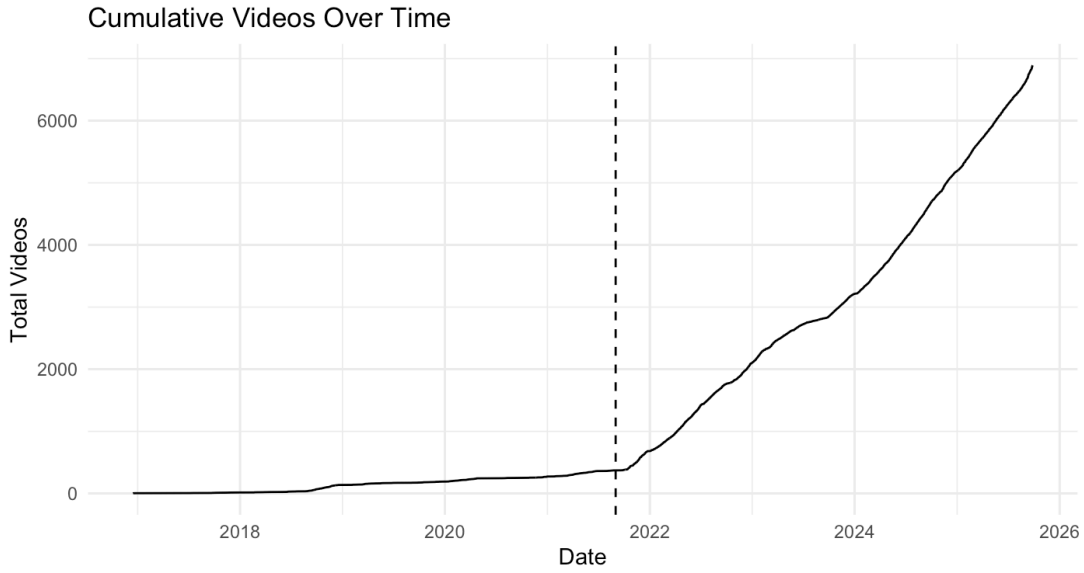


Figure 3. Cumulative Video Uploaded on BP YouTube Channel

BP's expansion began in the first year of the Bolsonaro administration, when it relocated from Porto Alegre to São Paulo in August 2019. Initially, they established their headquarters in the Vila Olímpia district, a major business and financial center. From there, they relocated to

Avenida Paulista, where they expanded their operations to occupy two floors of an office building and increased their staff to approximately 100 employees.

While the pandemic reshaped production conditions, BP adapted by intensifying its offer in terms of services and content production not only of documentary films, but also short videos, podcasts, eBooks, courses and a much more diverse offer of videos, recurring interview and commentary programs on their YouTube channel, consolidating its position as one of the most important media in the broader right wing Brazilian digital media ecosystem. Following this expansion, in 2020, they launched their own streaming service (BP Select) and expanded the film catalog through a partnership with Sony Pictures.

BP's growth trajectory is certainly one of its most notable aspects; however, it is also opaque and difficult to assess empirically due to restricted access to financial records and the inability to independently verify the number of subscribers to its proprietary streaming platform. In August 2019, following a report by Folha de SP, BP's consumer base was estimated at around 20,000 people at the beginning of the year, with annual subscriptions ranging from 480 to 687 reais (approximately US$120–170, based on the average exchange rate in 2019) for premium content (not yet the official BP Select). In September 2020, they reported having 112,000 subscribers; by May 2021, the same newspaper reported significantly different figures, indicating revenue of R$30 million (approximately US$5.6 million at the 2021 average exchange rate), 200,000 subscribers, and a goal of reaching 1 million subscribers in 2022. Revised financial statements approved in December 2022 reported gross revenues of approximately R$66.9 million (US$12.5 million) and net profits of R$12.58 million (US$2.3 million) for fiscal year 2021, enabling the distribution of more than R$11 million (US$2.1 million) in additional dividends to

shareholders. By 2022, they claimed to have reached 377,000 subscribers, which they promoted as larger than traditional mainstream media[34].

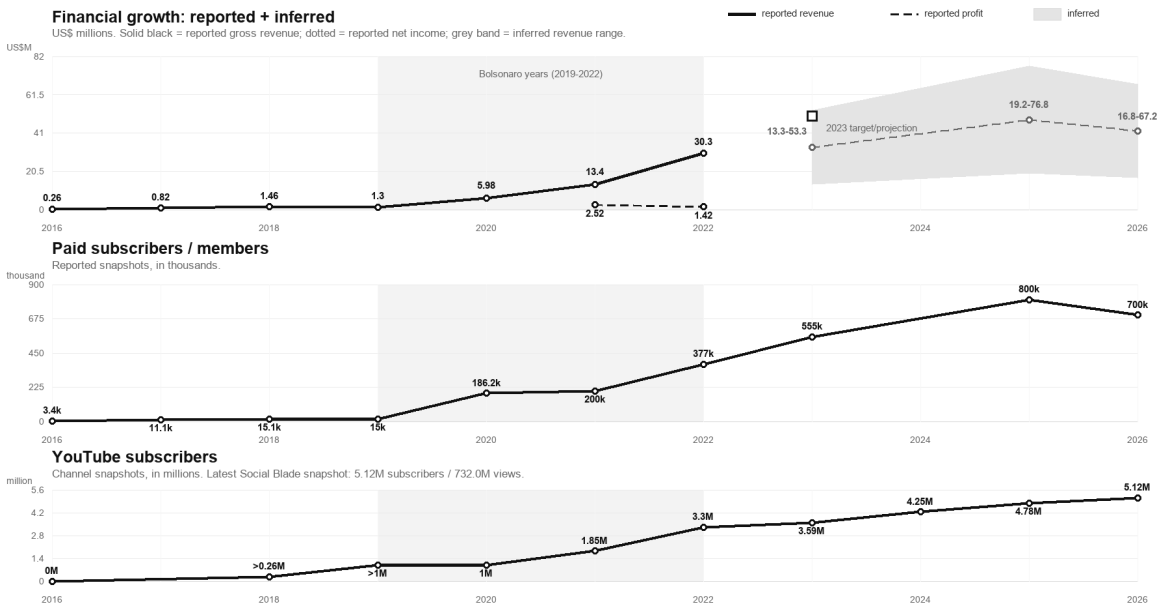


Figure 4. Brasil Paralelo Growth Metrics 2016-2026

Figure 4 provides an overview of BP's growth trajectory from its founding in 2016 through 2026. The financial indicators reported up to 2022 are drawn from official corporate records (JUCESP, the Commercial Board of the State of Sao Paulo 2021, 2022[35]), and figures published in the Brazilian press (Folha/UOL/Exame)[36]. By contrast, the revenue and profit

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[34] https://www.brasilparalelo.com.br/noticias/brasil-paralelo-e-a-empresa-de-midia-mais-assinada-do-pais

[35] Junta Comercial do Estado de São Paulo. (2022). *Brasil Paralelo: Revised financial statements for fiscal year 2021* [Corporate filing]. JUCESP. And Junta Comercial do Estado de São Paulo. (2023). *Brasil Paralelo: Financial statements for fiscal year 2022* [Corporate filing]. JUCESP.

[36] Amorim, L. (2023, February 17). *Com 500 mil assinantes, Brasil Paralelo quer evitar polêmicas e sonha ser "a Disney brasileira"*. Exame. https://exame.com/negocios/com-500-mil-assinantes-brasil-paralelo-quer-evitar-polemicas-e-sonha-ser-a-disney-brasileira/

Boletim da Liberdade. (2018, July 19). *Brasil Paralelo em entrevista exclusiva: conheça a origem dos documentários que fazem sucesso na internet*. https://www.boletimdaliberdade.com.br/2018/07/19/brasil-paralelo-em-entrevista-exclusiva-conheca-a-origem-dos-documentarios-que-fazem-sucesso-na-internet/

estimates for the period from 2023 onward are inferred from the company's publicly claimed subscriber base. These values serve only as approximations in the absence of publicly available financial statements. The YouTube subscriber graph is made from data from Social Blade and the Wayback Machine[37]. The same numbers are summarized in the table 1, using BRL.:

Table 1. BP Reported and inferred revenue, net income, and subscriber metrics, 2016-2025

Year	Revenue (R$ million)	Net income (R$ million)	Paid subscribers / members (thousands)	YouTube subscribers (millions)
2016	1.3	Not reported	3.4	Not reported
2017	4.1	Not reported	11.1	Not reported
2018	7.3	Not reported	15.1	≥0.26
2019	6.5	Not reported	12.3	1.00
2020	29.9	Not reported	186.2	≥1.0
2021	66.9	12.58	197.1	1.85
2022	151.6	7.1	377.0	3.30
2023	279.7 (Inferred)	Not reported	555.0	3.59
2024	201.6 (Inferred)	Not reported	Not reported	4.25
2025	403.2-504.0 (Inferred)	Not reported	800-1,000	4.78

Zanini, F. (2021, May 29). *Produtora Brasil Paralelo vive crescimento meteórico e quer ser "Netflix da direita"*. Folha de S.Paulo. https://www1.folha.uol.com.br/mercado/2021/05/produtora-brasil-paralelo-vive-crescimento-meteorico-e-quer-ser-netflix-da-direita.shtml

Boletim da Liberdade. (2018, July 19). *Brasil Paralelo em entrevista exclusiva: conheça a origem dos documentários que fazem sucesso na internet*. https://www.boletimdaliberdade.com.br/2018/07/19/brasil-paralelo-em-entrevista-exclusiva-conheca-a-origem-dos-documentarios-que-fazem-sucesso-na-internet/

[37] Social Blade. (2026). *Brasil Paralelo YouTube stats*. Retrieved July 23, 2026, from https://socialblade.com/youtube/handle/brasilparalelo and Internet Archive. (n.d.). *Wayback Machine*. Retrieved July 23, 2026, from https://web.archive.org/

The financial statements for the fiscal year ending December 31, 2022, filed with JUCESP in December 2023, show that BP reported gross operating revenue of R$151.6 million (approximately US$30 million). They also indicate that, despite this sharp increase in revenue, net income declined from R$12.6 million (approximately US$2.5 million) in 2021 to R$7.1 million (approximately US$1.4 million) in 2022. Later records document dividend distributions, including R$3.36 million during fiscal year 2024 and R$3.59 million in January 2025, but they do not include full revenue or reported profits figures, which would allow one to reconstruct annual turnover or net profit for the post-2022 period. For this reason, the gray area in Figure 4 is an inferred segment based on publicly reported subscriber counts and a simple annualized subscription-revenue model[38].

BP Select: Building a Subscription-Based Platform

BP's strategy has always relied on a freemium model: free content on YouTube works as a funnel to attract audiences, who are then directed toward paid subscriptions, courses, full interviews, e-books, and premium educational materials. Many YouTube films frequently open with a direct invitation to join the platform. Before the film begins, the spectator is already being interpellated into a collective political mission. Importantly, this engagement request is a very simple, accessible act: subscribing to the platform.

With this strategy, they claim to have received 1 million reais (approximately US$287,000 at the 2016 average exchange rate) in 15 days by releasing their first documentary film in 2016, offering it for free on YouTube, and selling bonus content to subscribers. Balestro

[38] The estimate multiplies the number of paid subscribers reported in public sources by a conservative monthly revenue-per-subscriber range of R$10 to R$40, and then annualizes this figure over twelve months. The resulting values are converted into U.S. dollars using the fixed exchange rate adopted in the figure, R$5 to US$1.

dos Santos notes that this was not an entirely new model, but rather one that was adopted by Olavo de Carvalho (Balestro dos Santos, 2021, p. 87). To appeal to the audience, they still offer a wide variety of programs on their YouTube channel, including traditional TV shows and podcasts, creating a daily programming lineup that really emulates what's successful on YouTube. In each video, the audience is invited to join, subscribe, and pay for a more exclusive and complete experience.

A central component of their financial structure is to count on the support of members, who always had different options to subscribe from courses, donations, or other forms of support. In 2019, for example, they launched a crowdfunding campaign to turn one of their first documentary series *(Brasil: The Last Crusade)* into a feature-length documentary. The collective fundraising effort aimed to raise R$2 million to produce the documentary and distribute it in Brazilian schools[39]. The campaign raised over R$450,000 in the first month, according to a Folha report.[40] However, the proposed feature-length documentary was never release; instead, BP re-released the series in 2022 in a remastered 4K version with additional content to mark the bicentennial of Brazilian Independence.

In fact, they shifted the strategy a little and, instead of crowdfunding specific films, as in September 2021, they officially launched their own platform, initially called BP Select and now simply BP, available as an app for smartphones and smart TVs. Before 2020, BP offered a more expensive subscription of R$49,00 (approximately $ 10), for courses on politics, economics, or

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[39] Brasil Paralelo. (n.d.). *A última cruzada: O filme*. Internet Archive. https://web.archive.org/web/20190927125340/https://www.brasilparalelo.com.br/a-ultima-cruzada-o-filme

[40] Zanini, F. (2019, August 12). Produtora Brasil Paralelo revisa a história em filmes e livros com visão de direita. *Folha de S.Paulo*. https://www1.folha.uol.com.br/ilustrada/2019/08/produtora-brasil-paralelo-revisa-a-historia-em-filmes-e-livros-com-visao-de-direita.shtml

philosophy. Now, the most basic plan is only R$10,00 (approximately $ 2). This effectively transformed supporters from funders of individual films into recurring subscribers supporting BP's larger media production project.

The key strategy in the launch of BP Select was not only to offer the BP "originals" , but to offer a full streaming service for people interested in supporting BP, encompassing a wider range of content, including programming targeted at younger audiences and mainstream international feature films for only 10 reais (2 dollars per month). To do this, they also partnered with Sony Pictures to provide access to a broader catalog of content, including feature movies and other Sony productions.

This approach helped attract conservative audiences to affordable streaming options, especially for children. The idea was to offer "safe content" for children and families, including cartoons and programs they considered appropriate and free of the kind of ideological influence the company's members claim has come to characterize so-called "woke" media production. For that group, they have also produced original content targeted for children – including e-books and a short-animated series called *Pindorama,* about the history of Brazil

So, the strategy is to get membership from people who already pay for a streaming service but would like to switch to a cheaper service and access content free of "woke culture". As Viana says: "Families worry that, while watching something on Netflix, an LGBT theme might suddenly appear. There is no problem with Netflix having its own agenda. But there is a public that wants to trust that the company providing the content is concerned with preserving tradition" (Viana, 2021, apud in Britto, 2023, p. 96).

The launch of BP Select was accompanied by an aggressive marketing campaign branding it as the "Netflix for conservatives[41]. Their goal was to reach 1 million subscribers by 2020, but to this point, it hasn't happened. Now, in 2026, they say they are close to reaching that goal. As the subscriptions were introduced, with subscription tiers starting at 228 reais. Today, subscriptions range from an entry-level plan costing about R$10 per month (approximately US$2) to premium plans costing R$65.90 per month (approximately US$12). The higher-priced plans unlock additional content and services, including licensed films and series, the children's catalog, an audiobook application (Teller), the *Revista BP*, online courses, and downloadable educational materials.

In line with its rhetoric of meritocracy and free-market principles, the company consistently emphasizes that its resources come from subscriptions, not public funding. They proudly say they are funded by their own supporters and members, and they express enthusiastic gratitude to them[42]. According to a comment made by BP to The Intercept Brasil, subscriptions accounted for 98% of the company's total funding in 2022[43]. The company's funding model also includes revenue from YouTube video monetization, the sale of online courses, and other subscriptions to exclusive content and services available on its official website, but subscription revenue appears to be the main source. In fact, YouTube revenue does not appear to be the most important source, given the scale of its subscription-based business.

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[41] Zanini, F. (2021, May 29). Produtora Brasil Paralelo vive crescimento meteórico e quer ser "Netflix da direita." *Folha de S.Paulo*. Folha de S.Paulo

[42] Brasil Paralelo. (n.d.). *Conheça quem financia a Brasil Paralelo* [Video]. YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YIVg4_3evBA

[43] Sayuri, J. (2021, December 9). Brasil Paralelo lança ofensiva judicial para calar críticos e reescrever a própria história. *The Intercept Brasil*. https://www.intercept.com.br/2021/12/09/brasil-paralelo-lanca-ofensiva-judicial-para-calar-criticos-e-reescrever-a-propria-historia/

However, while the company insists it does not receive public funding, it remains unclear to what extent its revenue is derived solely from individual subscribers, and who these contributors are. In a recent newsletter, the company itself noted that some subscribers have "on their own initiative, chosen to purchase additional subscriptions to give as gifts to strangers, friends, or institutions."[44] A similar dynamic appears in its *Mecenas* program, which invites users to pay for their own subscription and to sponsor access for lower-income families, who are then granted free use of the platform. In 2021, one of the BP's expansion strategies was forming partnerships, such as with the G10 das Favelas, for example, by offering scholarships to families with access to their content, framed as an education and development program for families. Through this partnership with the G10 das Favelas, BP made BP content available to 500 families living in Paraisópolis (São Paulo). This initiative allows BP to expand its content from its main subscribers (the educated middle class and elites) to urban and peripheral populations, thereby amplifying its influence. It is also like "cultural patronage," in which wealthier donors can support access for lower-income families. These arrangements complicate any straightforward interpretation of BP subscriber numbers, since access may include individual subscriptions, gifted subscriptions, donations, and subsidized memberships.

Ownership Networks and Corporate Restructuring

BP did not grow only through subscribers and fan support. Its expansion also involved financial restructuring, external investment, bank credit, profit-sharing arrangements, and a complex governance structure. Understanding the company's more complex structures has been a central concern of this research and of other scholars and journalists seeking to understand

[44] (Brasil Paralelo, personal communication, April 25, 2026)

BP. Balestro dos Santos, for instance, was among the first to argue that it is essential to consider the company's organic relationship with think tanks and other business elites to grasp BP's modus operandi, an approach I have sought to echo and expand throughout my analysis.

Connections with business figures such as Hélio Beltrão of the Mises Institute Brazil, a businessman from the energy sector, who appears to have acted at times as a business mentor, and Leandro Ruschel, from Liberta Investments, who has been involved with the company since its inception and was mentioned earlier in this section, are considered to be important elements in the company's structuring, as already discussed. A report by Revista Piauí in 2021 lists other figures who had already served on the company's advisory board. This report mentions Pedro Englert, a partner at StartSe, and Roberto Dagnoni, a partner at Mercado Bitcoin [45].

Formal support for BP is not always publicly visible, in part because open association with the company may entail reputational risks[46]. As a result, relatively few public figures openly identify themselves as supporters of BP. Although some business figures have publicly defended the company in the press[47], much of the company's political-economic connections become clearer only through a few public corporate records.

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[45] Costa, A. C. (2021, August 30). Distanciamento social: A produtora Brasil Paralelo tenta se afastar do bolsonarismo para vender mais assinaturas. *piauí*. https://piaui.uol.com.br/revista/180/distanciamento-social/

[46] As an example, Cristina Junqueira, co-founder of Nubank, faced a lot of social media backlash after sharing an invitation to a lecture by Canadian psychologist Jordan Peterson organized by BP. Following the controversy, Junqueira publicly clarified that Nubank had no partnership or institutional relationship with the company, and shortly thereafter resigned from the advisory board of Ranking dos Políticos, an organization that has maintained links with BP. Full story: https://www1.folha.uol.com.br/colunas/monicabergamo/2024/06/cofundadora-do-nubank-deixa-conselho-de-site-mantido-por-brasil-paralelo.shtml

[47] Businesspeople who defended the company include the already mentioned Hélio Beltrão, Leandro Ruschel, and Gabriel Kanner, heir to the family that controls the Riachuelo retail group and president of Instituto Brasil 200.

In BP documents, another important name who appears not only as a sympathizer or adviser, but as a financial participant is Jorge Gerdau Johannpeter. He is one of the wealthiest individuals in Brazil and a businessman in the metallurgy sector. In a Forbes Brazil ranking, he is listed with an estimated net worth of approximately R$1.39–1.40 billion (roughly US$250–300 million), derived from his stake in the Gerdau Group.

The public minutes of the Extraordinary General Meeting held in May 2022 show that Gerdau became a shareholder of BP by subscribing to 833 newly issued preferred shares through the conversion of a previously granted R$1.5 million (approximately US$295,000) shareholder loan into equity. This transaction made Gerdau a shareholder entitled to financial returns (such as priority in dividend distributions) but without voting rights or control over corporate decisions.

The reference to a “previously granted loan” indicates that sum was not injected by Gerdau at the time of the assembly but corresponds to capital that had already been provided and was now converted into equity. This transaction coincided with a moment when BP is transitioning from a closed, founding structure to a more complex networked organization following the launch of the company's subscription platform and expansion of its business model.

In June 2021, during the sixth amendment to the articles of incorporation, the company changed its legal structure from a limited liability company to a joint-stock company. In this restructuring, the partner Henrique Viana also began consolidating greater power by acquiring a larger share of the company’s stock, thereby increasing his voting rights. In January 2022, at a new General Meeting, they decided to restructure the company by creating a Board of Directors with separate responsibilities. Henrique Viana moved into an executive role, while Lucas Ferrugem and Felipe Vallerin transitioned to the Board of Directors. All of this is established in

the new bylaws approved in April 2022. The structure also includes the creation of a Fiscal Council.

Beginning in April 2022, new individuals appear on the list of attending shareholders as interested parties, including Luan Licidônio Bez and Rodrigo Ventura de Oliveira. Although they do not hold ordinary shares (as indicated in the minutes), their presence suggests forms of economic participation tied to internal roles or pending equity arrangements. Bez, who also holds a degree in Advertising from ESPM joined BP in 2017 as its first marketing employee and later became Chief Revenue Officer. Rodrigo Ventura de Oliveira, who joined in 2019 serves as Chief Financial Officer, and brings a background in entrepreneurial initiatives. His presence signals the incorporation of financial and managerial expertise into the company's structure. In December 2022, another figure—Gonçalo Moreira de Carvalho Fernandes da Silva—joined the company and participated in its profit-sharing scheme.

Another element revealed by the corporate documents is that starting in November 2022, they secured additional funding through the issuance of a bank credit note worth R$5 million with Safra, a multinational financial conglomerate owned by the Safra family, a prominent Lebanese-Brazilian banking dynasty. In February 2023, they took on further credit—R$1 million from the digital banking platform QI SCD—as part of their business expansion. This expansion coincided with the revenue growth discusses earlier and provided evidence that BP's expansion cannot be explained solely by grassroots audience support. Its growth was also sustained by external capital, bank credit, managerial expertise, and formalized structures of a complex corporate organization.

Institutional Scrutiny

As BP grew during the Bolsonaro years, it also became more visible as a target of institutional scrutiny, public criticism, and legal disputes. Because of the nature of some of their films produced between 2018 and 2022 and also because of the political context marked by the COVID-19 pandemic, widespread concerns about online disinformation, and the Bolsonaro administration's repeated dissemination of false and misleading claims, BP started to be seen as part of that Brazilian network of political disinformation and the dissemination of "fake news".

Perhaps the most significant of moment emerged during the COVID-19 pandemic, at a time when the Brazilian Congress initiated an investigation into the actions and omissions of the Bolsonaro administration in response to the public health crisis. BP became the subject of formal scrutiny by the Brazilian Congress through a Parliamentary Inquiry Commission (CPI) investigating the Bolsonaro government's pandemic response. In August 2021, a request was approved to lift the banking secrecy of BP, seeking access to its financial transactions before and during the pandemic, as well as to identify potential connections with companies and individuals[48]. The company was brought into investigation due to its alleged "influence on the political radicalization adopted by the Planalto Palace," as stated in the senators' request for inquiry. The request justified the measure by alleging that these actors had contributed to political radicalization and influenced public opinion by circulating false or misleading information about the pandemic.

The inquiry, however, was later curtailed following a judicial intervention and lots of public criticism (see Magnusson et al., 2023). The measure generated immediate backlash from

[48] Requests (Requerimentos) No. 1228/2021 and No. 1337/2021, authorized the disclosure of the banking and telecommunications records of the legal entity LHT Higgs Ltda. (Brasil Paralelo)

supporters of the company, including from Helio Beltrão and Gabriel Kenner, who framed the investigation as an attack on freedom of expression. In response, the company's founders publicly disclosed information about its funding model, emphasizing that its operations were financed primarily through subscriptions from hundreds of thousands of individual supporters[49]. The controversy eventually cooled after Brazil's Supreme Federal Court limited the commission's access to the company's financial and fiscal records, ruling that materials unrelated to the pandemic exceeded the CPI's mandate[50].

Moreover, during the 2022 presidential election, Brasil Paralelo became one of the legal entities named in an Electoral Judicial Investigation (Ação de Investigação Judicial Eleitoral—AIJE) before Brazil's Superior Electoral Court (TSE). In an interlocutory decision issued by Justice Benedito Gonçalves, the Court found sufficient preliminary evidence to justify interim measures against several media companies that, according to the decision, formed part of an "ecosystem of disinformation" operating in support of Jair Bolsonaro's candidacy[51]. Regarding BP, the decision described the company as a producer and promoter of politically aligned content, emphasizing its use of paid advertising, the release of documentaries with electoral relevance, the construction of an image of "independent media," and the repetition of narratives questioning the credibility of Brazil's electoral system.

The TSE case focused mainly on the documentary *Who Ordered the Killing of Jair Bolsonaro?* released close to the election period. The Court ultimately ruled to suspend the

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[49] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A6P4S-b9npA

[50] Brasil. Supremo Tribunal Federal (STF). *Mandado de Segurança* n. 38.187/DF, Rel. Min. Gilmar Mendes, decisão liminar, 9 ago. 2021.

[51] Brazil, Superior Electoral Court (Tribunal Superior Eleitoral—TSE), *Electoral Judicial Investigation (Ação de Investigação Judicial Eleitoral—AIJE) No. 0601522-38.2022.6.00.0000*.

monetization of BP's channels, redirecting revenues to a judicial account, and ordered the temporary removal of the documentary until after the election, citing the need to protect the integrity of the electoral process. The company and its supporters, however, characterized these measures as censorship.

Beyond its conflicts with the judiciary and the Superior Electoral Court (TSE), BP has also faced increasing scrutiny by a growing number of investigative reports in the alternative press, such as *Intercept Brazil*, *A Publica* and *Revista Piaui;* and from historians and scholars, who have approached the company's productions with a critical lens. Much of this critical reassessment came from scholars and professionals working in fields such as history and education, who have questioned the accuracy and framing of BP's content. Another major focus of criticism, beyond its historical documentaries, concerns the company's intervention during the 2018 electoral cycle, when it produced content that cast doubt on the reliability of Brazil's electronic voting system.

This criticism also came from a more organized and visible counter-discourse movement on social media, with a growing number of content creators engaging in what can be understood as an "information war," producing responses, critiques, and debunking videos with the goal to respond to BP's narratives. One example is the project Brasil Paralerdos, which expanded upon earlier critical efforts by commentators and left-wing YouTubers such as Clayson, Henry Bugalho, and Carlitus Neto, among others. The name is a Portuguese joke on Brasil Paralelo, replacing "paralelo" with "paralerdos", derived from lerdo ("slow-witted" or "dim-witted"), as a satirical insult directed at the company and its supporters.

Litigation and the Information War

In response to these mounting pressures, BP intensified use of legal action against its critics. This strategy can be situated within what has been described in the Brazilian context as "judicial harassment", a practice that expanded significantly during the Bolsonaro years, particularly targeting journalists and individuals critical of the government. In such cases, the publication of critical content is often followed by a proliferation of lawsuits, generating financial and psychological burdens for defendants.

This approach also echoes arguments advanced by Olavo de Carvalho, who openly defended the strategic use of litigation as a political tool. In his framing, legal action functions as a form of punishment, which can be "an immense burden even for an innocent defendant", as it compels individuals to expend resources, gather documentation, and navigate complex legal procedures. Ferrugem, one of BP's founders, has publicly acknowledged that the company uses litigation as an effective weapon against political adversaries[52].

The analysis of those legal cases highlights some important patterns. On one side, it shows how BP (via courts or via extra-judicial notifications) attempted to remove critical content or to secure rights of reply from media outlets or academic publications that had published unfavorable coverage. They have reportedly issued formal notices demanding retractions from researchers and authors[53], traditional media outlets, such as Grupo Globo and Folha de S.Paulo,

[52] https://x.com/brparalerdo/status/1515395914600439809

[53] including cases against Eduardo Pereira, a master's student in History at the Federal University of Bahia (UFBA); Flávio Henrique Calheiros Casimiro, a professor at the Federal Institute of Southern Minas Gerais (IFSULDEMINAS); Karine Rodrigues Firmino, a master's student in Political Science at the Federal University of São Carlos (UFSCar); and Mayara Balestro, who at the time was a master's student in History at the State University of Western Paraná (UNIOESTE), as mentioned by The Intercept Brasil - https://www.intercept.com.br/2021/12/09/brasil-paralelo-lanca-ofensiva-judicial-para-calar-criticos-e-reescrever-a-propria-historia/

as well as left-leaning media organizations, including Brasil 247. The company also escalated its response into the criminal sphere, pursuing legal action against the digital content creators behind the Twitter profile *brasilparalerdos*. In these cases, despite the judicial harassment, Brazilian courts have generally interpreted and applied the law to guarantee freedom of expression and the free circulation of ideas and criticism.

On the other hand, there have also been attempts to remove BP's content from circulation based on allegations of copyright infringement and unauthorized use of image rights. These include claims brought by the renowned Brazilian photographer Sebastião Salgado[54] and by KondZilla, a major producer in the Brazilian funk music industry, both alleging that BP was using their creative work without proper authorization. In these cases, courts have generally ruled in favor of the company and against the content removal.

In most of these rulings, Brazilian courts have held an interpretation that prioritizes freedom of expression and the circulation of ideas, particularly considering the often explicitly political nature of the debates and themes addressed in BP's productions. If BP produces political content and intervenes in public debate, then its productions are also subject to criticism, commentary, and contestation. While BP and its supporters frequently frame the company as a victim of censorship, the judiciary has often protected both the circulation of BP's own content and the right of journalists, scholars, and critics to publicly contest it.

At the same time, these dynamics are not without limits. For instance, in a lawsuit brought by the Partido Socialismo e Liberdade (PSOL), the court found that a publication by BP

[54] In this instance, YouTube removed a BP video from its platform following a copyright infringement complaint filed by Salgado, doing so without a prior judicial order. The case was subsequently taken to court, where the tribunal ultimately ruled in favor of BP, determining that the platform could not remove the content without a judicial decision. As a result, the video was reinstated.

had distorted the party's legal actions before the Supreme Court, falsely claiming that it sought to legalize abortion up to the ninth month of pregnancy. The ruling determined that such claims constituted misinformation and caused reputational harm, ultimately leading to a condemnation for moral damages. In another case, during the 2022 general election, the Supreme Court ordered the removal of a disinformation electoral video produced by BP. Conversely, BP has also obtained favorable judicial decisions in disputes involving false or defamatory claims about the company. Cases like this demonstrate that, while Brazilian courts tend to uphold freedom of expression and resist prior censorship, this protection is not absolute. When the circulation of content involves demonstrably false claims that damage reputation, judicial intervention becomes a necessary solution.

Such legal disputes also involved BP's Wikipedia entry, where the company contested its public characterization and sought to reshape how it was described, leading to a civil lawsuit against at least one Wikipedia editor who made changes to the BP page. From the perspective of BP, a significant portion of these descriptions has been framed as a "left-wing attack" against the company, and this set of disputes is documented on the BP discussion on Wikipedia[55].

These dynamics reflect some of the information wars and tensions in a rapid digital communication system, in which competing claims over truth, reputation, and harm are mediated through legal and platform-based mechanisms. In this context, BP ultimately benefits from the legal framework that protects BP's own right to produce and circulate political content also safeguards the rights of journalists, scholars, activists, and citizens to criticize, contest, and challenge its narratives.

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[55] Wikipedia contributors. (n.d.). *Talk: Brasil Paralelo*. In *Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia*. Retrieved August 29, 2026, from Wikipedia discussion page https://pt.wikipedia.org/wiki/Discussão:Brasil_Paralelo

Post-Bolsonaro Realignment and Transnational Expansion (2022-2026)

After Bolsonaro's defeat and the inauguration of Lula's center-left government, BP appears to have adjusted its strategy in response to institutional scrutiny and the changed political environment. The company partially distanced its public-facing brand from the most overtly conspiratorial and coup-aligned sectors of Bolsonarism, while continuing to mobilize conservative audiences and anti-left discourse. In this context, the company released a statement affirming that it is neither pro-Bolsonaro nor aligned with any political ideology, and that accusations of partisanship are unfounded attempts to discredit its work[56]. It sought to reposition itself as a conservative media enterprise operating outside the political cycle, increasingly adopting a more traditional form of journalism and media organization, and becoming critical of the new government.

After all, as demonstrated in this chapter, BP is a media company with profits, investors, business interests, and professional networks to maintain. For this reason, BP did not openly endorse the anti-democratic mobilizations that followed the 2022 general elections after Bolsonaro's defeat, suggesting a strategic effort to distance itself from the more radical and openly coup-oriented strands of Bolsonarism. After the elections, BP quickly released a statement recognizing the results[57]. During the campaign itself, one member of the company

[56] Redação Brasil Paralelo. (2024, November 29). *A Brasil Paralelo é bolsonarista?* Brasil Paralelo. Brasil Paralelo https://www.brasilparalelo.com.br/artigos/a-brasil-paralelo-e-bolsonarista

[57] Oliveira, J. (2022, October 31). Cinema celebra vitória de Lula e diz que Bolsonaro foi "zero à esquerda" na cultura. *Folha de S.Paulo* https://www1.folha.uol.com.br/ilustrada/2022/10/cinema-celebra-vitoria-de-lula-e-diz-que-bolsonaro-foi-zero-a-esquerda-na-cultura.shtml

even attended a dinner with President Lula from the Worker's Party, whom they would go back to calling corrupt the very next day.[58]

Over the course of these years, an important step was also taken toward internationalization, positioning itself within the expanding ecosystem of the global right. In 2024, the company released a film about the Israel–Palestine conflict with subtitles in English, French, Hebrew, and Spanish, signaling a clear move toward reaching audiences beyond Brazil. BP also began to feature a growing number of foreign researchers, authors, and political commentators in its productions, expanding both the geographic scope of its sources and its connections to transnational conservative intellectual networks. This shift reflected the company's strategy of positioning itself within the expanding global right-wing ecosystem, particularly after Donald Trump's victory in the 2024 U.S. presidential election.

In 2025, an important step is also taken toward the U.S.-facing expansion of BP, particularly with the production of a film aimed at American audiences—*God Complex*—which premiered in a special event in Miami in 2025 and was later screened in a special event with guests in Washington, D.C, and is currently available for American audiences on YouTube,

In fact, this process had already begun earlier, in August 2022, with the creation of a U.S.-based LLC, which was dissolved in 2023. The dissolution was, in fact, a process of reorganization. In December 2022, records indicate the establishment of a Delaware-based corporation under the name *BP Max Entertainment Inc.*, alongside the development of associated branding such as *Big Picture* and *Big Picture Originals*.

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[58] Bergamo, M. (2022, September 28). Brasil Paralelo aplaude Lula em jantar, mas o xinga de corrupto em live no dia seguinte. *Folha de S.Paulo*. https://www1.folha.uol.com.br/colunas/monicabergamo/2022/09/brasil-paralelo-aplaude-lula-em-jantar-mas-o-xinga-de-corrupto-em-live-no-dia-seguinte.shtml

The registration of domains and the establishment of corporate entities in the United States signal efforts to build an international-facing infrastructure, potentially oriented toward international markets. In the United States, the company rebrands both its platform and its production arm under the name *Big Picture Originals*, adopting a more modest launch strategy than its expansion in the Brazilian market. At the same time, they show some articulation and connections with conservative influencers and media outlets.

The release of *God Complex*, for instance, received limited coverage in American right-leaning media, including a brief mention on The Daily Wire and segments on *NTD Evening News*[59] and *The Epoch Times*. The film release event featured the presence of conservative figures, such as Dinesh D'Souza, a well-known conservative filmmaker in the United States and director of *2016: Obama's America*. D'Souza shared a link of the *God Complex* on his Facebook page. Other conservatives in attendance were Mike Benz, one of the film's main characters, as well as representatives from Turning Point USA. In Washington, additional attendees included George Landrith, president of the conservative think tank Frontiers of Freedom; and Xi Van Fleet, a Chinese-born American author and activist known for drawing parallels between Maoist China and contemporary progressive politics in the United States.

According to Henrique Viana, a partner at BP, the launch event signaled an alignment with international conservative networks. As he stated, "we have learned that it is impossible to win this struggle if it is not also fought here, in the United States—the country that still

[59] Wang, S. (2025, October 11). *'God Complex' unpacks rise of censorship in US.* NTD. https://www.ntd.com/ntdplus/god-complex-unpacks-rise-of-censorship-in-us_1096032.html

guarantees freedom in the world."[60] This framing echoes what appears to be BP's longstanding narrative: a "crusade" against the alleged capture of traditional media by the left and the silencing of conservative voices and perspectives, an issue the *God Complex* presents as a global problem. In Brazil, the film received only limited media coverage, including a brief note in aligned right-wing outlets such as *Gazeta do Povo*. From an academic perspective, however, there is still very little published work on the film to date, revealing a gap in the literature that this study seeks to address in the next chapter.

Conclusions

This chapter analyzed BP's growth and argued that the company should not be understood solely as an ideological media initiative, but as a commercially structured enterprise networked with business elites and libertarian and conservative networks. Although they often frame their story as the result of young students' entrepreneurial drive coming out of a private university, this chapter demonstrates that the founders drew on prior experience with organizations focused on leadership training, entrepreneurship, and economic libertarianism. They took advantage and benefited from networks with key figures in organizations such as Instituto Mises Brasil along with the influence of Olavo de Carvalho's course and culture war rhetoric. The presence of figures such as Leandro Ruschel, Hélio Beltrão, and Jorge Gerdau Johannpeter indicates that BP's trajectory cannot be explained solely by entrepreneurial initiative but must be understood as part of a wider political-economic formation.

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[60] Redação Brasil Paralelo. (2025, October 10). *Histórico: Brasil Paralelo em Miami para o lançamento do primeiro documentário nos EUA*. Brasil Paralelo. https://www.brasilparalelo.com.br/noticias/historico-brasil-paralelo-em-miami-para-o-lancamento-do-primeiro-documentario-nos-eua

The chapter also showed that BP started during the 2016 impeachment protests against Dilma Rousseff and accelerated during the Bolsonaro years, when a new right-wing digital ecosystem became more directly connected to state power and street mobilizations. During the Bolsonaro administration, the company benefited from government endorsement and institutional access, which coincided with the expansion of its production capacity and the launch of BP Select. These transformation of BP from a relatively small independent documentary producer came to build it into a larger conservative educational platform.

Finally, the post-Bolsonaro period further reveals the company's capacity for adaptation and sustained growth as a right-wing media enterprise. Facing institutional scrutiny, public criticism, legal disputes, and a changed political environment, BP sought to reposition itself as a more professionalized conservative media company while also exploring transnational expansion through U.S. and international structures and productions.

CHAPTER V:

BRASIL PARALELO'S DOCUMENTARY DISCOURSE

In the previous chapter, I employed a political economy framework to analyze BP as an ideological and commercial media enterprise. In this chapter, I shift the focus from the organizational structure to examine the narratives, rhetorical strategies, and aesthetic choices through which BP's documentary films legitimize and promote right-wing ideology. This move allows for an examination of the strategies mobilized in its productions. It also helps to probe how they are articulated with the political-economic structures discussed earlier.

When I began writing this chapter, I was confronted with several possible ways of organizing it. I started with a chronological approach, moving from earlier to more recent productions, which felt the most straightforward. However, during this process, I decided to take a different route, grouping the BP filmography around key thematic and structural axes. These axes relate to thematic groups that reveal important aspects about BP's ideological agenda. It shows what BP is trying to convey about Brazilian society and the wider history of the Western world, identifies the perceived enemies of their project, and offers important clues about the political and social effects they seek to generate through their films.

A second organizational challenge of this chapter concerned the corpus itself. As I progressed with the dissertation, BP's production pace accelerated further, with many new films released between 2024 and 2026. By September 2025, when I started the data collection, BP's YouTube channel had nearly 7,000 publicly available videos, totaling more than 1,000 hours of content - the equivalent of roughly 42 continuous days of programming- and had accumulated approximately 542 million views, 46.8 million likes, and 1.9 million comments.

It's important to note that their YouTube channel hosts not only documentary films but a range of projects and formats, including talk shows, seasonal episodes, podcasts, video-logs with a host, and a variety of genres such as humor, news, interviews, and crime, exploring a much broader range of topics, many "emulating" what performs well on YouTube[61].

Before turning to the documentary corpus itself, I sought to explore the thematic universe in which these films are situated a little further. Although the units of analysis in this dissertation are BP's documentaries, examining this larger corpus could provide important contextual information about the recurring themes and discursive patterns surrounding them. To accomplish this, I used the complete dataset of videos scraped from BP's YouTube channel through YouTube Data Tools. At this stage of the research, the goal was not to analyze every individual video in depth, but to identify thematic patterns that could structure this large body of content. I therefore created a social network map using the tags associated with each video as the basis for network construction. This exploratory visualization served as a roadmap for understanding the principal thematic clusters that characterize BP's topics, before proceeding to the close analysis of the documentary corpus.

In the color-coded network shown in the figure below, nodes represent video tags, and edges represent connections among videos that share a tag. This network reveals a coherent thematic landscape centered on topics such as American and Brazilian politics, the Supreme

[61] Examples include *Conversa Paralela*, a talk-show-style interview program about controversial topics; *Sabatina*, a limited series of interview with right wing figures; *Contraponto*, another program focused on interviews; *Insight BP*, a vlog-style program centered on history; *Rasta News*, in which a digital influencer persona ("Rasta") comments on national news with humor and irony; *Investigação Paralela*, a non-fiction series that explores elements of the crime and investigative genre by presenting alternative interpretations of high-profile cases; and *Red Pill*, focused on the world of cinema. (for more on the podcasts and the language of BP see Ferraz & Gambaro, 2025)

Court, universities and education, religion, conspiracy theories, and others cultural topics related to their main universe. Lula is linked to Brazilian politics and Latin American relations (the red group), while Bolsonaro is associated with national political controversies, especially conflicts with the Supreme Federal Court (the green nodes). Trump and U.S. politics are also mentioned, with connections to Brazilian political debates (the purple nodes). Education and universities are a separate cluster (the black nodes), with recurring references to alleged ideological indoctrination. The aqua-green cluster focuses on the Israel–Palestine conflict, while the orange cluster contains general tags that recur across videos. The cyan-blue cluster consists of tags associated with BP's media ecosystem, including references to the Catholic Church, Christmas specials, and one of the company's podcast hosts

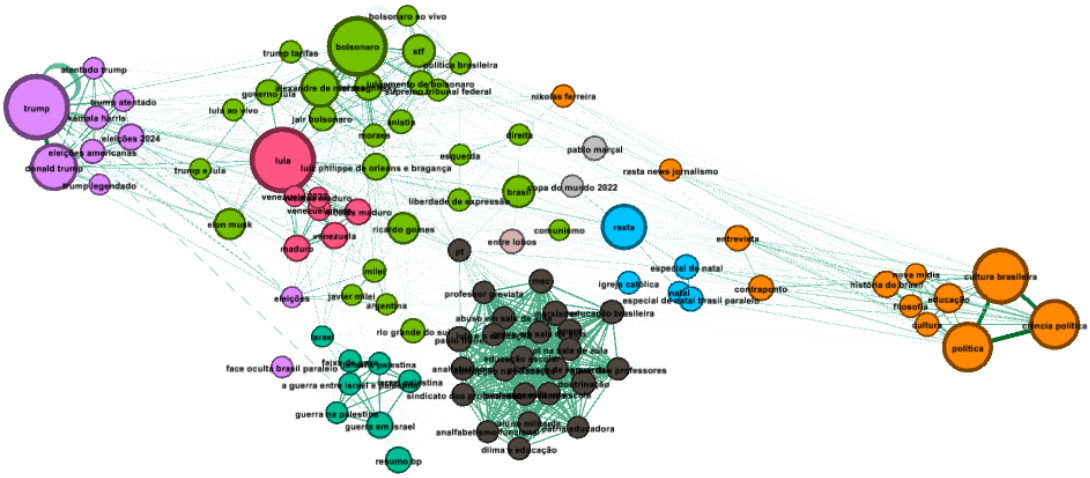


Figure 5. A Tag Network of BP YouTube Channel Video Tags (Main tags only)

Overall, the network supported the assumption that the channel focuses on highly polarized political issues, engaging with culture war topics that mobilize the audience. With that evidence, I decided to build this chapter examining how these thematic and ideological orientations develop, adapt, and are rearticulated across different phases of BP's documentary film production.

In the following pages, I present a deeper analysis of five analytical axes identified in the large-format documentary films selected for the corpus. An important remark is that this chapter does not aim to assess the historical accuracy of BP's documentary films, a task more properly situated within the domain of historiography, a task that has been successfully undertaken by many historians from Brazil (Avila, 2021b; Bonsanto, 2021; M. Cleto, 2022; M. P. Cleto, 2024). From a communication scholarship perspective, my focus is on examining how these documentary films construct discourses and shape conservative and alternative understandings of the social world. What I argue here is that BP builds an alternative system of reality, which I have defined as the "parallel epistemology" (Francischelli, 2025), and in the following pages I identify and group different dimensions of this parallel epistemology and examine how they are constructed and articulated through BP's use of documentary form.

Axis 1: Conspiracies and Internal Enemies

One of the early and fundamental strategies of BP film was the construction of immediate political adversaries, often associated with left-wing ideologies and social movements. This orientation can be traced back to the company's founding during the mobilizations surrounding Dilma Rousseff's impeachment in Brazil, and it remains present, traversing the Bolsonaro administration, the pandemic, and the company's current international expansion.

For this reason, this first axis of analysis concerns the construction of internal enemies and the conspiratorial narratives surrounding them. Across BP's documentaries, left-wing political parties and political actors, social movements, schools and universities, the mainstream media, the electoral system, and even judicial institutions—particularly the Supreme Court, will consistently be represented as forces responsible for the decline of traditional society and the corruption of Brazilian political and cultural life.

Important to note that BP's first productions connected several right-wing political activists and commentators who opposed the Workers' Party and the institutional architecture of Brazilian democracy (the welfare state). Thus, the early films are the most overtly reactive in the corpus, having been produced in direct response to the impeachment of Dilma Rousseff in 2016, the 2018 and 2022 general elections (generally supporting Bolsonaro and his agenda), the pandemic administration, and the growing tensions between the Bolsonaro administration and the judiciary.

Rejecting the left – Brazilian politics framed under anti-communist rhetoric

BP's first project, titled *Congresso Brasil Paralelo* (2016), consisted of a series of interviews on Brazilian politics, economics, and history. It was not yet a documentary in the conventional sense, but a collection of interviews with those figures ideologically aligned with Brazilian conservatism. The interviewees included Olavo de Carvalho, Hélio Beltrão, and other political actors who were on the rise, such as then–federal deputy Jair Bolsonaro (prior to his presidency), Marcel van Hattem, Arthur do Val, Janaína Paschoal, Luiz Philippe de Orléans e Bragança, and journalists who gained prominence during the mobilizations surrounding Dilma Rousseff's impeachment and the general opposition to Workers' Party governments.

What becomes apparent in these early productions is the presence of what Balestro dos Santos terms "permanent members", a set of intellectuals and activists aligned with the BP libertarian-conservative cause. They participate in multiple productions, including documentary interviews, articles, podcasts, and other audiovisual content. They share strong anti-communist positions, opposition to the Workers' Party (PT) in Brazil, and the defense of radical free-market and conservative political and cultural values. In a sense, BP early productions functioned almost

as a form of media service for that new right-wing movement, documenting and disseminating ideas among people aligned with the criticism of the Workers' Party administration.

BP founders publicly acknowledged that it was after this somewhat experimental format that they decided to fully commit to documentary production, noting that it could be a powerful tool, since they were pursuing a format designed to be both didactic and emotionally engaging. In 2017, they expanded the *Congresso* initiative by releasing a standalone episode focused on the impeachment of Dilma Rousseff. The production was designed to defend the process and contest criticism that framed the impeachment as a parliamentary coup d'etat. While the other episodes had online distribution, this episode premiered in March 2017 through theatrical screenings in Cinemark venues in São Paulo and Porto Alegre, organized as exclusive events, featuring guest speakers, panel discussions, and promotional experiences for supporters

In 2018, they advanced their political and economic reading of Brazil with *O Dia Depois da Eleição (2018) and Teatro das Tesouras (2018).* The first was developed around the figure of Leandro Ruschel. As previously discussed, he is a core supporter of BP and a major social media articulator of the new Brazilian right-wing project. As the sole interviewee of the film, he combines autobiographical reflections with a monologue in which the Brazilian left is presented as a constant threat. In this framework, the 1964 military regime is portrayed as a legitimate response to the communist threat, while contemporary politics is understood as an ongoing culture war. The documentary series in five episodes, also presents a strong defense of the libertarian economic perspective, advocating free markets, entrepreneurship, and financial self-reliance as protections against an uncertain political future.

The second production is *Teatro das Tesouras (2018)*. Released in August 2018, it is also a documentary series with seven different episodes that analyze the seven presidential elections

in Brazil since the end of the military regime (1964-1985). It draws on a thesis advanced by Olavo de Carvalho, which holds that there is no genuine opposition between the traditional political parties in Brazil. According to this argument, the apparent political divide between left- and right-wing parties, so far, has represented two sides of the same coin, excluding an authentically right-wing alternative. This kind of position marks a rupture from traditional politics and helps position the emerging Brazilian right as an anti-system force. It also reflects an asymmetrical understanding of polarization: as the new right moved further to the right, and rhetorically relocated the traditional neoliberal right to the left.

Parallel Investigations and the Spread of Conspiratory Claims

In 2018, in the context of a polarized general election pitting the Workers' Party against Jair Bolsonaro, BP began adopting a discourse more aligned with disinformation networks and the Bolsonaro presidential campaign. One of the most controversial moments was when they released a documentary titled "*Dossiê Urnas Eletrônicas*" (2018) with conspiratorial claims about the vulnerability of Brazil's electronic voting system. This release was well aligned with Bolsonaro's discourse at that time, when he started questioning the integrity of Brazil's electronic voting system. It would later become a central element of Bolsonaro's rhetoric during his administration and afterward, culminating in the events that led to the attempted coup of January 8, 2023[62].

[62] For a full timeline of the events related to the electoral fraud claims and attempted coup see CHIODI, Alexsander Dugno.; BERNARDI, Ana Julia Bonzanini. A ameaça antidemocrática como instrumento de barganha no governo Jair Bolsonaro (2019-2021). Revista Uruguaya de Ciencia Política, v. 32, n. 1, p. 129-150, 31 maio 2023. Available at <http://rucp.cienciassociales.edu.uy/index.php/rucp/article/view/574>.

The production presented itself as an “investigation” that questioned the reliability of Brazil’s electronic voting system, arguing that it could not be proven fraud-proof. Later, this idea of “parallel” investigation would also become a “format” in which BP released a series of videos targeting international political actors, social movements, and even true crime stories, bringing a parallel investigation around high-profile cases and personalities. In fact, as I argue, it is just another part of the parallel epistemology that appears in almost every documentary film.

At the 19-minute mark of the *Dossier Urnas Eletrônicas*, Hugo César Hoeschl, a former attorney for Brazil's National Treasury and a prominent conspiratory figure within the Brazilian right, is presented as an expert. He invokes a mathematical method based on the Newcomb–Benford Law to argue that there was a 73.14% probability of fraud in the most recent presidential election, and he claims that this conclusion is supported by "international studies." However, both the study methodology and its conclusions were subsequently challenged by other scholars (Figueiredo Filho et al., 2022) . The Brazilian Supreme Electoral Court (TSE) also rejected his assertions as invalid, forcing BP to remove this content.[63]

Although the documentary was later removed, it remained online for weeks alongside with other cuts, ranking among the most viewed content on YouTube. According to The Intercept Bazil, BP’s videos about electoral fraud have accumulated more than 2.5 million views for a while[64]. These numbers likely underestimate their overall reach, given their circulation by forwarding files on platforms such as WhatsApp, where content dissemination is harder to

[63] https://www.estadao.com.br/estadao-verifica/video-com-suspeitas-sobre-eleicoes-de-2014-usou-lei-matematica-que-nao-prova-fraude/

[64] Pavarin, G. (2018, October 17). Ele está por trás da maior “operação antifraude” das urnas. Mas frauda o próprio currículo. *Intercept Brasil*. Intercept Brasil https://www.intercept.com.br/2018/10/17/hoeschl-antifraude-urnas/

quantify. This campaign was also amplified by the network of right-wing influencers, including Bia Kicis and Danilo Gentili, helping extend the reach of the voting fraud idea across multiple social media platforms and accounts.

During the pandemic, BP also released a *7 Denúncias* (2020), a two-hour documentary questioning public health measures aimed at combating the spread of the virus, such as mask usage and social distancing. In that context, the Bolsonaro administration pursued a policy without restrictions during the pandemic but faced resistance from the Supreme Court, which ruled that decisions should be in the hands of local administrators (governors and mayors). The release of the film in June 2020 led critic Fábio Zanini to argue that the company "seemed to have embraced its role within President Bolsonaro's digital shock troops"[65]. The release of this film was one of the main reasons why BP was into the mentioned investigative process conducted by the Brazilian Congress.

Following the tensions between the Supreme Court and the Bolsonaro administration, regarding pandemic control policies BP also decided to direct some of its criticism straight to the Court. In August 2020, they released *Os Donos da Verdade* (2020), an 80-minute documentary targeting each minister and criticizing the court rulings on fake news networks, taking down profiles and accounts accused of spreading disinformation and false news.

In 2022, they would revisit the criticism towards the Supreme Court, in the release of a new film titled *A Crise dos 3 Poderes* (2022). This documentary criticized the privileges of "bureaucrats and politicians" who allegedly exploit the public machine. It portrays them as

[65] Zanini, F. (2020, July 3). *Documentário conservador critica combate à Covid e poupa Bolsonaro*. Saída pela Direita, *Folha de S.Paulo*. https://saidapeladireita.blogfolha.uol.com.br/2020/07/03/documentario-conservador-critica-combate-a-covid-e-poupa-bolsonaro/

parasites feeding off the state while claiming to investigate “the roots of the Brazilian political crisis.”

Axis 2: Historical Revisionism

While the productions mentioned in the past section are related to the Brazilian political context, being more reactive and tied to the political conjuncture, BP has also been producing films that seek to reinterpret the history of Brazil and Western civilization. Those are films that usually analyze the past to understand the present through a conservative lens. It is not like identifying a conjunctural enemy in the present, but revealing what they frame as a “secret truth” about the national and international history and contemporary crisis.

In fact, those efforts were already present from the company's first production, but they would evolve into more ambitious projects, starting with *Brasil: A Última Cruzada*, which remains one of the company’s emblematic productions. This 6-episode doc-series, produced in 2017, explores key events from Brazil’s colonial past and has been widely analyzed by historians and scholars as a revisionist or “alternative” account of the Brazilian colonial past and history (Carvalho & Rovida, 2020; M. Cleto, 2022; Moraes & Cleto, 2023; Oliveira Brito & Rodrigues Junior, 2021).

Once again, the project drew on the participation of various politicians and intellectuals aligned with Brazilian conservatism. According to Carvalho and Rovida (2020), the series cannot be considered a documentary per se, but rather a propaganda product with strong ideological potential, aimed at advancing a conservative vision of Brazilian history. For Oliveira Brito and Rodrigues Junior (2021), it can be understood as a form of “alt-history,” borrowing from the political logic of the alt-right, simplifying the past into an emotionally charged narrative driven by heroic individuals and moral conflicts, lacking accurate historical analysis.

Most historians studying this production accounted for the distortion of historical events, oversimplification of political concepts, and the promotion of a simplistic worldview that opposes "good" (European and Christian values) to "evil" (everything else). These same forms of revisionism will also appear in other BP's historical productions, as they start to engage more with historical documentary films and large-format series. Often, those films will explore an idealized past mobilized in service of a desired political future; in a certain sense, they use the past as an instrument to explain present conditions and contemporary conservative struggles, in terms closely related to culture-war dynamics and with a very didactic tone.

My analysis here cannot account for a detailed level of all production, but other films in the corpus are worth mentioning in this category. The first is *Guerra do Imaginário* (*War of the Imaginary*), divided into three episodes and released in August 2022. This film, introduces the work and biographies of three writers associated with British Christian conservatism: J.R.R. Tolkien, G.K. Chesterton, and C.S. Lewis. According to critic José Reinaldo Lopes, the series presents "important historical distortions and a few omissions, " reframing these authors through the lens of the contemporary Culture War, as if their writings and intellectual trajectories were directly connected to present-day conservative political struggles and anti-leftist cultural battles.[66]

[66] Oliveira, J. (2022, October 27). Brasil Paralelo distorce obras de Lewis, Tolkien e Chesterton em série. *Folha de S.Paulo* https://www1.folha.uol.com.br/ilustrada/2022/10/brasil-paralelo-distorce-obras-de-lewis-tolkien-e-chesterton-em-serie.shtml

Nazism and Fascism as left-wing movements

More recently, BP returned to an emphasis on historical revisionism, with two ambitious historical projects centered on major themes: *History of Fascism* (2025) and *History of Communism (2024)*. Both are large-scale docuseries featuring interviews with international intellectuals discussing the fundamental political aspects of fascism and communism. The first is a three-episode series released in September 2025, and the second is a 6-part series released in March 2024.

A new element in those productions is the presence not only of the "permanent members,", but also of a series of internationally recognized scholars and specialists. The invited interviewees include scholars of fascism, communism and totalitarianism, such as Ronald Suny, Norman Naimark, Stanley Payne, Frank Dikötter, Richard Bosworth, and Simon Sebag Montefiore. As those films were released more recently, BP strategy appears to be to seek for more legitimacy beyond its original Brazilian conservative circle, helping to build an image of intellectual rigor and authority.

However, the "alternative history" framework remains evident. One of the biggest arguments in both series is the construction of a moral equivalence between fascism and communism; both framed under the category of "totalitarianism." Throughout the documentaries, Nazism is portrayed less as an expression of the far right than as a revolutionary and collectivist project; therefore, it is implicitly connected with radical left-wing movements. [67]

[67] In fact, this is not the first time BP raises this polemic, in 2019 Ernesto Araújo, Bolsonaro's former Minister of Foreign Affairs, was largely criticized by stating that Nazism is left-wing ideology in an interview for BP. He is also intellectually grounded in the Olavo de Carvalho ideological circle. In an interview for a podcast, Araújo explicitly argued that Nazism should be understood as a left-wing movement.. Available here: https://youtu.be/2Y1Nn6ZopMQ?si=Ijj0H-DpvuCEFr1R&t=1160

Throughout both series, the two ideologies are presented as emerging from the same collectivist impulse: the expansion of state power, the subordination of the individual to mass politics, and the destruction of traditional Christian and Western values through revolutionary projects.

Fascist and communist regimes are also portrayed as relying fundamentally on propaganda and indoctrination to shape public consciousness and sustain political control. However, BP tends to leave unexamined the ways in which forms of persuasion embedded within capitalist mass culture and commercial media systems may also operate ideologically, often appearing as more diffuse or "invisible" forms of propaganda.

While arguments of this kind had long circulated in marginal internet forums, blogs, and conservative networks, productions such as those of BP help bring these interpretations into more mainstream political spaces. One of the recurring arguments throughout *The History of Fascism* is that the term "fascist" has been emptied of historical meaning and transformed into a political weapon used to delegitimize contemporary right-wing and conservative movements. In this sense, the documentaries attempt to discredit the current use of the term by associating its popularization with left-wing propaganda, suggesting that accusations of fascism are often exaggerated, especially when applied to political leaders such as Donald Trump or Bolsonaro.

Christianity, Family, and Moral Order

The framing of BP films is built around very simple moral binaries and highly biased interpretations of history and politics, which is precisely where the notion of revisionist documentary filmmaking becomes relevant. Revolutionary movements, Marxism, secularism, modernism and collectivist ideals are repeatedly associated with disorder, violence, and civilizational decay. On the other hand, European traditions, Christianity, monarchy, and conservative social values are framed as forces of stability, freedom, and moral order.

Christianity is portrayed as a superior civilizational force, a superior foundation of Western civilization, whereas atheism and revolutionary political projects are framed as sources of decline, authoritarianism, and social disintegration.

Another project related to that alternative history framework is *The Pope Who Defeated Communism (2025)*, filmed in Poland and released in August 2025. Here, the same moral equivalence between Nazism and communism reappears, this time through the trajectory of Pope John Paul II, reconstructed from testimonies of individuals associated with him. Again, the production frames communism as a philosophy fundamentally opposed to Christianity and portrays the Pope as a heroic figure engaged in the struggle against communist ideology.

In BP historical series, the divide is not between right and left, but between defenders of Christian, Western, and traditional civilization on one side, and revolutionary, secular, and collectivist movements on the other. Many of the BP documentary films will explore this moral struggle, framing revolutionary processes as inherently destructive and morally corrupt.

This framework is explored in films that analyze mental health. In 2023 BP released *A Fantastica Fábrica de Sanidade*, a three-episode series that links the contemporary "epidemic" of depression to the spiritual emptiness of modern life, arguing that social media, television, consumerism, and material pursuits have distanced people from family life and from a connection with the sacred. The series also relies on interviews with foreign specialists—something that increasingly became part of BP's aesthetic and rhetorical strategy, helping to construct an image of international legitimacy and signaling ambitions of internationalization. What is particularly revealing, however, is the narrative resolution of the series: the story ultimately culminates in a pregnancy that symbolically "saves" a family from depression. It is

difficult to imagine a more overtly conservative moral conclusion, reaffirming traditional family values, motherhood, and spiritual reconnection as the ultimate solution to existential suffering.

Exalting the Brazilian Military

Sometimes the historical revisionism strongly merges with the political project. In 2019, they released the film that to this day, remains their most-viewed documentary film on YouTube: *1964: O Brasil entre Armas e Livros***,** which deals with one of the most violent and repressive moments of the Brazilian national history: The Military Dictatorships (1965-1985). The central argument of the film is that the 1964 military intervention was a necessary act to save Brazil from an imminent communist threat and preserve national order. However, existing studies have consistently highlighted both the fragility of this central thesis, and how BP selectively uses decontextualized historical sources to construct a conspiratorial narrative (Avila, 2021b; Balestro dos Santos, 2021; M. P. Cleto, 2024; Holanda, 2024a, 2024b; Nelli Borges, 2019; Picoli et al., 2020; Santana & Magalhães, 2022).

The film exaggerates the likelihood of a communist takeover in Brazil, tracing it to the Russian Revolution and the context of the Cold War. In fact, this is not a new thesis; it echoes a narrative previously advanced by the military, especially in the book *Orvil*[68] , an obscure book that accused the Brazilian left of crimes and conspiracies to justify repression and state violence. Orvil was produced in the late years of the military regime, particularly in response to the report *Brasil: Nunca Mais*, which documented widespread torture and human rights violations. For João Cezar de Castro Rocha, the ideas behind *Orvil* eventually reached the

[68] https://www1.folha.uol.com.br/ilustrada/2020/05/orvil-livro-secreto-da-ditadura-inspira-guerra-cultural-de-bolsonaro.shtml

highest spheres of government and became central to Bolsonaro and the right wing culture war agenda.

More importantly, the production of *1964: O Brasil entre Armas e Livros* by BP is not an isolated case of historical reinterpretation, but coincides with the rise of Jair Bolsonaro and the new Brazilian right movement to power in 2019. The downplaying of state violence, the reframing of perpetrators as victims, and the silencing of evidence of repression align with that new political moment. There is a connection that reinforces what the Bolsonaro administration symbolized: the return of military influence in government, with Bolsonaro himself a former army captain.

The film's release was also marked by controversy. Premiering on April 2, 2019, exactly 55 years after the congressional ratification of the military coup, it led to protests organized against pre-screenings scheduled in commercial theaters and in some universities across Brazil (Cleto, 2024). BP responded to the criticism, framing the opposition to the film as censorship and creating a marketing campaign around it. Even today, the film streaming on YouTube begins with a short prologue that claims the documentary was censored and prevented from circulating in universities and exhibition venues (Nelli Borges, 2019).

The incorporation of criticism into a promotional logic will become BP's “modus operandi.” It helps promote their productions as a suppressed truth which the left hegemony tries to silence. Those claims are usually followed by a “call to action” for the audience to participate and subscribe to support their mission. In this sense, resistance, particularly from academic institutions, is rearticulated as censorship and transformed into political and symbolic capital, reinforcing the perceived legitimacy of such productions (Cleto, 2024). Negative reception and

criticism are transformed into a marketing asset aligned with the dynamics of social media controversy-driven visibility.

In August 2024, BP released another historical series focused on the history of the Brazilian Army, titled *Amada e Ultrajada* (*Loved and Outraged., 2024*). Following a pattern already recognizable in their productions, the series presents a long, chronological narrative connecting the colonial period to contemporary Brazil, this time framing the Army as a central actor in the formation of the nation and state [69]. The final episode turns to recent political events and addresses the contemporary image crisis facing the Armed Forces. Compared to some of their previous productions, the series adopts a much less interventionist tone and even includes criticisms of sectors of the Brazilian right that incorrectly portray the military as a moderating power within the Republic and who supported a military coup in 2022. At the same time, the series largely avoids examining the extensive participation of military personnel within Bolsonaro's government.

Axis 3: Enduring Cultural War

In my literature review, I discussed how political polarization in Brazil is closely connected to the dynamics of culture wars. These cultural conflicts mobilize emotions, identities, and moral values, becoming intertwined with political identities. As I have discussed, this culture war framework was introduced and popularized in Brazil by Olavo de Carvalho, who came to occupy a central role as an intellectual reference for this national right-wing politics and for the

[69] The Battle of Guararapes (1648–1649) is traditionally viewed as the symbolic origin of a distinct Brazilian military identity, bringing together diverse social and ethnic groups in a common military effort.

Bolsonaro movement. According to this framework, there is a leftist hegemony operating across diverse institutions such as schools, universities, popular culture, social movements, non-governmental organizations, mainstream media and even in the catholic church (as for example the liberation theology).

Beginning during the Bolsonaro administration and continuing afterward, BP produced a series of films and projects that question, criticize, and at times openly attack the Brazilian educational system, social movements, and the arts, according to this culture war interpretation. These productions portray schools and universities as spaces dominated by ideological indoctrination, cultural relativism, and progressive pedagogical theories, allegedly responsible for the moral, intellectual, and civic decline of the country;

This civilizational threat is often subsumed in the concept of "cultural Marxism". This Marxist hegemony promotes left-wing values that destroy the traditions and the "real" good values that BP is trying to recover. Those films often mobilize elements commonly associated with conspiratorial thinking, suggesting the existence of hidden ideological agendas operating behind social movements, especially in relation to the perceived erosion of traditional family structures and Christian social values because of DEI policies, critical race theory, LGBTQ+ protections, gender identity or reproductive rights.

This "anti-woke" rhetoric is also part of a global movement that emerged alongside the contemporary right-wing agenda. The arguments advanced in BP's films closely resonate with strands of traditional and contemporary American conservatism, particularly with efforts to restore a more patriotic interpretation of American history and to oppose what conservatives describe as "woke" ideology. These themes are prominently articulated in Project 2025, a policy blueprint developed by the Heritage Foundation and allied organizations that advocates

restructuring the federal government while dismantling diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives and other progressive policies in federal institutions and public education.

The result is a documentary universe structured around simple moral binaries, in which complex political, social, and historical issues are reduced to a struggle between good and evil. Across different productions, recurring oppositions emerge: the West versus its enemies, freedom versus tyranny, truth versus deception, beauty versus decadence, tradition versus subversion. Such framing leaves little room for ambiguity, contradiction, or the coexistence of competing interpretations. BP films intervene in this symbolic battlefield (as presented in "The War on Imaginary") to inform audiences and correct what are portrayed as false or ideologically distorted understandings of the world, replacing them with the "correct" epistemological framework.

Environmentalism as a Left-Wing Threat

A good example of how this culture war framework is applied to can be seen in one of the films produced during the Bolsonaro administration that received much attention: *Cortina de Fumaça* (2021). Amid growing criticism of the environmental policies of the Bolsonaro government (a moment when Brazil is breaking records in deforestation and the rise in wildfires[70]), the film constructs a nationalist, anti-environmentalist discourse in which ecological concern is reframed as a "smokescreen" concealing the economic and geopolitical interests of foreign governments, NGOs, activists and the media.

[70] Freitas, A. (2021, August 6). *Amazônia tem terceiro maior recorde de desmatamento na década*. CNN Brasil. CNN Brasil

The general framing is that NGOs and ecological movements have instrumentalized Indigenous movements to defend hidden interests, supposedly opposed to Brazilian national interests, which are essentially identified with agribusiness interests. The film dispute data about deforestation and marks a position against the ecological and Indigenous movement.

The film is well-made and is one of the biggest productions from BP. However, it is closely aligned with the policies of the Bolsonaro government on the subject. The film's institutional proximity to the Bolsonaro administration is also evident in the participation of Damares Alves, then minister of Women, Family and Human Rights, and Marcelo Xavier, then president of the National Indian Foundation (FUNAI). It was a film promoted by pro-government politicians at the time and aligned with ruralist and agribusiness interests, represented in the narrative through the religious metaphor of humanity as "God's gardener.". Despite evidence of agrobusiness support for the production, determining exactly how the production was financed remains a challenge.

Universities and the Production of Ideological Hegemony

Beyond the environment, and certainly the most important culture war axis, revolves around productions focused on Brazilian education. Here again, the central argument is the alleged left-wing hegemony within Brazilian intellectual life and educational institutions, spanning elementary, secondary, and higher education.

The first major production within this educational framing appeared in 2020, when BP released the trilogy *Pátria Educadora* (*Educator Homeland, 2020*)[71]. With a reported budget of 2 million reais (approximately US$ 390,000), the three-part series claims to unveil "the greatest

[71] The title *Pátria Educadora* is an allusion to a slogan used by Dilma Roussef government.

exposé in history" [72]: how the left infiltrated and dominated Brazilian education.. To support this argument, the production features interviews predominantly with conservative intellectuals and right-wing figures, with a significant presence of figures associated with Olavism, Bolsonarism, and the anti-Freire/anti-left educational agenda.

Overall, the series constructs a conspiratorial narrative by connecting highly disparate phenomena, including Brazil's poor performance in international education rankings, claims that public universities are costly and produce low impact, "ideologically biased" research, and anecdotal examples of academic work on gender and sexuality. The second film in the series focuses entirely on the figure of Paulo Freire, portraying his pedagogy and its alleged connection to cultural revolution as a major ideological source of these otherwise distinct problems.

The series was widely criticized for its historical distortions (de Britto, 2023; Felinto, 2023; Hasmann & Carvalho, 2025; Paulo, 2020; Santos & Pereira, 2020; Sousa De Moura & Damasceno, 2023). As Felinto (2023) argues, *Pátria Educadora* constructs a history of Western education centered on the progressive decline of traditional pedagogical values and authority, portraying developments such as the Enlightenment, secularization, and Marxism as key drivers of this process (pp. 4, 8).

BP's initial plan was to release *Patria Educadora* using theatrical screenings and aligning the launch with the anniversary of the installation of the military regime just like they had done with *1964* . However, this strategy was disrupted by the COVID-19 crisis, and the film was ultimately released online YouTube. The BP productions around education did not stop there. In 2024, they returned to this agenda with the release of a two part film titled *Unitopia*, focused on

[72] Brasil Paralelo. (n.d.). *O fim da história | Pátria Educadora – Capítulo 1 | Filme completo* [Video]. YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EU5sAWPKgMc

researchers and professors supposedly persecuted or canceled. In this project, they accuse social movements and agendas linked to identity and diversity politics of having transformed universities into places of ideological indoctrination, even going so far as to claim that "9 out of 10 professors in North American universities are leftists". As I am writing this dissertation, in 2026, the focus has shifted toward free public primary education, with a film titled *Pedagogia do Abandono* (*Pedagogy of Abandonment, 2026*), which addresses the alleged neglect of daycare centers and public schools.

While attacking universities and public education throughout many productions, BP also appears to be enthusiastic about homeschooling models and even created its own teacher training programs, having launched the course *Escola da Familia*, which guides parents on how to educate children at home. Such measures are consistent with a conservative vision of education that privileges individual responsibility over collective forms of public education. These initiatives can also be understood in the context of attempts to exert greater control over classroom discourse in initiative such as "*Escola sem Partido*", that encourage parents to monitor what is being taught to avoid "indoctrination". By promoting mechanisms of reporting and surveillance directed at teachers, the right-wing movement seek to restrict critical pedagogical approaches and discourage forms of critical thinking, social and political critique.

The Delegitimization of Social Movements

Another target of BP's enduring cultural war is contemporary social movements. This orientation becomes visible beginning in 2020 with the release of *As Grandes Minorias* (2020). In this three-part film series, BP first addresses the antifascist movement and its activities in Brazil and the United States. In the second episode, *Geração sem Gênero*, the focus shifts to debates surrounding gender and sexuality, emphasizing controversial topics such as transgender

participation in sports and presenting "gender ideology" as a civilizational threat. Finally, the last episode centers on the Black Lives Matter movement in the aftermath of George Floyd's murder and the protests that spread across the United States. This episode portraits the demonstrations primarily through the lens of social disorder and urban violence, at times legitimizing state repression during moments of political turmoil.

As Grandes Minorias is another attempt by BP to establish a moral equivalence between left-wing social movements and authoritarian political formations, particularly through the argument that both rely on tactics of intimidation, coercion, or violence. Feminist movements are framed as increasingly influential across both public and private life, portrayed as an element of social destabilization. In the same way, antifascist and Black liberation movements are portrayed as violent and authoritarian.

Another interesting aspect is many BP's production is that they are consistently articulated in relation to major events unfolding in Brazil and globally, functioning almost as a form of "response" and a counter-position to what media, academic and scientific progress says about a given issue. When Black, feminist, and anti-fascist movements took to the streets to protest police violence, authoritarianism, or to demand expanded rights, BP responded by producing this series of films that seek to discredit these movements. When the Brazilian Supreme Federal Court advanced discussions surrounding the decriminalization of abortion in 2023, BP released a documentary titled *Duas Vidas* (*Two Lives, 2023*), openly against abortion rights. Likewise, when Congress intensified its attacks against the Landless Workers' Movement (MST) — one of the largest social movements fighting for agrarian reform in Brazil — the company released another documentary titled *MST: Terra Prometida* (*MST: Promised Land, 2025*).

The same dynamic can be observed in relation to the broader Latin American context. BP released films about Argentina, Nicaragua, and, as I'm writing, in 2026, they are launching a new documentary about El Salvador. What becomes noticeable is how the company continuously produces content in direct response to ongoing political and social developments, maintaining an intense production agenda and relying on a relatively standardized and simplified documentary format that facilitates fast production pacing circulation.

Culture, Arts and the Civilizational Decline

Another front in the BP (and Brazilian right-wing ideology in general) enduring cultural war is the field of the arts and cultural production. BP have produced at least two documentary series discussing "art" in a more elaborate way. The first is *A Primeira Arte* (April 2021) and the second is with *A Sétima Arte* (October 2021). In the artistic domain, BP advances a defense of a "pure" traditionalism, as if there once existed a classical art and musical tradition that was later corrupted by postmodern values. This notion again reflects a conservative ideology centered on the idea of a civilization in decline, marking a position against more avant-garde or experimental developments in artistic practice, an idealized cultural past against a supposedly degraded present.

In *A Primeira Arte* – a three-episode documentary series, classical music is positioned as a superior artistic form associated with melody, harmony, and refinement, whereas contemporary popular genres such as Brazilian funk are portrayed as symptomatic of cultural decline, reduced to rhythm and repetition, lacking musical complexity. This debate also extended beyond the audiovisual sphere into the legal field, particularly after KondZilla — one of Brazil's most influential funk producers — filed a lawsuit against BP for the unauthorized use of copyrighted material in the production.

In *"A Sétima Arte,"* the focus is not on music but on cinema and film. This is a seven-part documentary series in which BP constructs a narrative in which cinema emerges as a universal mass art form that was later appropriated for political purposes through Nazi, Soviet, and American propaganda. According to the series, however, the decisive turning point occurs in the late twentieth century, when progressive agendas begin to infiltrate cultural production. In this framework, progressivism is portrayed as a parasitic force that gradually empties classic works of their original meanings and transforms cinema into a vehicle for what BP frames as progressive or "woke" ideological indoctrination (Checchia, 2021).

The same logic appears once again, to the point of becoming somewhat repetitive throughout BP's productions: the idea that culture and the arts have been dominated by the left and therefore require a restoration that recovers traditional values. In fact, one of BP's stated missions is to "restore the good values, ideas, and sentiments in the hearts of all Brazilians"[73].

BP praises tradition while simultaneously expressing an aversion to modernity, including postmodern and decolonial perspectives. At times, cultural traditionalism approaches a defense of aesthetic fundamentalism, grounded in the valorization of religious and classical artistic traditions. In the case of cinema, Checchia (2021) argues that restoration is articulated through the defense of tradition and a distinctly Christian conception of heroism, in which heroes embody sacrifice, moral virtue, and service to the community.

Modern art is frequently framed as a "rupture with classical values of beauty". The historical shift from sacred to secular art towards modernism is portrayed negatively, associated with the rise of humanism, individualism, and the loss of transcendent spiritual values. Many of

[73] Redação. (2024, April 8). *What is Brasil Paralelo? Learn about the company's full history*. Brasil Paralelo. Brasil Paralelo https://www.brasilparalelo.com.br/noticias/o-que-e-a-brasil-paralelo

BP productions frequently rely on decontextualized images of artistic performances and contemporary artworks to attack and discredit these modern and postmodern forms of artistic expression, presenting them as evidence of moral, aesthetic, and cultural decay.

Produced in 2022, *O Fim da* Beleza (The End of Beauty, 2022) builds exactly this line of argument. In a three-episode documentary series, the argument is that contemporary art has lost its traditional sense of beauty and harmony because it has become excessively politicized and militant. In similar lines, the short film *Era Uma Vez Carnaval* reinforces the idea that modern society has become morally decadent and promiscuous, criticizing the freedoms associated with Brazilian carnival traditions.

Finally, a recurring target of BP's productions concerns public funding for culture and the arts. More broadly, this has become a central issue in Brazilian right-wing politics, where public investment in artistic production is frequently portrayed as an illegitimate use of taxpayers' money that should instead be directed toward areas such as health, education, or public security. BP consistently reinforces this narrative, emphasizing that the company receives no public funding for its productions and presenting this as evidence of its independence and sustainability.

To criticize corruption and the alleged misuse of public resources in the cultural sector, BP released a documentary film titled *Aos Amigos da Lei (2023)* as a direct critique of the Rouanet Law, Brazil’s principal mechanism for financing artistic and cultural production. The film is an attack on the institutional structures that support the production and circulation of cultural works in Brazil, using specific controversial cases to delegitimize the funding system as a whole. In this framing, the criticism is directed at the legal mechanism itself, but more importantly at the supposed ideological bias of cultural institutions and artistic production, an

argument further reinforced by BP's newsletters and marketing campaigns (Molin & Kniess, 2025).

Axis 4: Crime and Punitive Conservatism

Another theme that increasingly emerges in BP's productions from 2022 onward, aligned with broader right-wing political agendas in Brazil, is public security and criminality. Given that crime and violence are among the major concerns of Brazilian citizens and voters, these themes carry strong potential for political mobilization and electoral appeal. In this context, BP released *Entre Lobos* (2022), once again adopting a documentary series in a trilogy format, centered on narratives of crime and public insecurity. The general argument is that crime is an existential threat to the nation. The series explicitly presents the perspective of victims and police officers, in contrast to what it portrays as a traditional media environment supposedly more sympathetic toward criminals, romanticizing violence. The production also constructs a heroic, sacrificial image of the police officer, at times glorifying death in service, framing police activity as a moral and patriotic duty.

Here, another warfare imaginary emerges, this time framed as a "war against crime", structured around the defense of aggressive policing, the expansion of civilian access to firearms, and punitive approaches to public security, all articulated through the voices of police figures, right wing politicians and other actors associated with the Brazilian right. This orientation continued in later productions such as *Rio de Janeiro: Paraíso em Chamas* (2025), which functions almost as a continuation of *Entre Lobos (2022)*, and later *Impunidade* (2026). Together, these films reinforce a conservative law-and-order agenda focused on public security, while criticizing the judiciary for decisions perceived as limiting police power and, supporting impunity. Some productions also connect criminality to cultural spheres, especially funk and hip-

hop music, for allegedly glorifying criminal lifestyles and contributing to moral and social disorder.

Axis 5: The Transnational Culture War

Although many of the productions mentioned earlier already had an international ambition, I reserved this last section for a discussion of how BP sees this culture war in the international context. In this regard, beyond producing the already mentioned historical documentaries featuring international scholars, BP has also increasingly turned its attention to U.S. politics and has expanded its coverage of the Middle East as tensions involving Israel, Iran, and the United States escalated. This can be understood as an effort to position Brazilian conservatism within those transnational debates.

BP's first international production, *O Fim das Nações (The End of Nations, 2020)*, was released in the context of the 2020 U.S. elections—Trump vs. Biden and offered in an English-language version. It is a three-part documentary series with a structure quite typical of BP: first, an idealized image of a strong and cohesive civilization is constructed; second, a process of internal decay emerges; and finally, the narrative suggests that this decline paved the way for the contemporary political crisis. Here, the notion of internal enemies corrupting the nation from within, already present in films about Brazilian politics, is transposed to the U.S. context with a narrative about an internal "collapse" of the United States.

The End of Nations identifies the 1960s as this civilizational breaking point. Throughout the episodes, several historical processes are articulated: the Vietnam War, the student movements, civil rights struggles, the counterculture, feminism, and sexual transformations, all understood as evidence of cultural fragmentation threatening the United States' tradition, family, religion, and patriotism. By juxtaposing footage of protests and episodes of unrest during the

Trump years with archival images from the 1960s, the series suggests that recent conflicts are a culmination of a long process of moral and civilizational decline initiated in the 1960s.

In 2024 BP produced another film about the U.S. elections (*The History of the American Parties, 2024*) with a more pedagogical tone. Also in a three-episode format, this series attempts to teach Brazilian viewers how to interpret contemporary U.S. politics. The film relativizes the fact that presidents can win without securing the popular vote, emphasizes the "federalist spirit" of the U.S. system, and even presents a simulation suggesting that Bolsonaro would have won by a larger margin if Brazil had an Electoral College like the United States. This is a very simple format, relying on a presenter-driven structure edited with archival footage. It does not include any interviews, which makes the film sound less like a "historical documentary" and more like a political course on US politics for Brazilian audiences.

Another example important example in this transnational turn can be seen in *From the River to the Sea* (2024), a two hour documentary produced in the context of the Israel–Hamas war. The film presents the conflict as a civilizational struggle between the Judeo-Christian West and its enemies, particularly radical Islamism, which is framed as a global threat.

Consistent with BP's culture war framework, *From the River to the Sea (2024)* is interpreted through moral binaries opposing Western freedom and democracy to eastern terrorism and extremism. Considerable attention is devoted to the Hamas' October 7 attacks, with detailed accounts of violence and testimonies from Brazilian-Israeli survivors. By contrast, the humanitarian consequences of the war in Gaza and the Palestinian devastating experiences receive less attention, resulting in a narrative that privileges the Israeli perspective and victimhood. Conspiratorial atmospheres also emerge throughout the film, particularly the

suggestions that the conflict is linked to the erosion of confidence in Western culture and the possibility of an escalating global confrontation.

Finally, in 2025, they released *God Complex*, which marked their desire to move even closer to the United States and to internationalize the BP brand, particularly considering Donald Trump's new administration since 2024. The film focuses primarily on issues surrounding internet freedom of speech and advances an uncompromising defense of the United States as a global model of democracy to be emulated worldwide. In the next section, I prioritized a "thick" reading of *God Complex* which, to this day, remains underexplored in the existing literature about BP.

God Complex: The Industrial Censorship Complex

One important shift in *God Complex* is that, in earlier productions, the BP culture war was mainly framed around education, history, or politics; here, the conflict is relocated to a technological arena. The enemies remain largely the same: global scientific, technological, and corporate elites that allegedly organized themselves to fight against disinformation and, in doing so, began censoring anti-establishment voices. In such a way, the film recycles the conspiratorial sentiment present in earlier productions. However, if previous films, a conspiratorial atmosphere was cultivated against traditional education, academia, or established interpretations of history; in this one, that conspiratorial character appears as a so-called "censorship industrial complex." This complex comprises state actors, big tech companies, academics, NGOs, the media, and international organizations. All of them, according to the narrative discourse, are interconnected within a coordinated machine designed to silence conservative voices questioning the dominance of those very elites and political establishment.

The film discusses the existence of "government agencies" embedded within social media platforms, alongside "software that monitors online discourse," forming an invisible, totalizing system of control over online discourse. The central argument is that during the Biden administration, the United States was importing the Chinese model of technological control, gradually eroding individual freedoms and freedom of expression. By the end, Trump is presented as a major exception and as a savior figure capable of confronting and dismantling this system.

As in most BP films, the film constructs this central threat — the "censorship complex" — as an expanding global system tied to corporate elites as a form of revealed/suppressed truth. This system can shape major political events, including the 2020 U.S. election, in which Trump lost to Biden, and the 2022 Brazilian election, in which Bolsonaro lost to Lula.

COVID also reappears in this film as a moment when this alleged system of control begins operating and reaches ordinary citizens. Statements such as "It all began under Covid" or "Covid is the most prominent example… of total control" frame the pandemic as a trigger event that supposedly legitimized extreme measures and authoritarian forms of governance. The film argues that any form of content moderation—such as regulating disinformation or anti-vaccine discourse—is censorship.

The argument is confusing and often contradictory, as the film constructs the idea of "global elites" as a coordinated force of censorship and control. At the same time, the solutions rely on other elites: conservative right-wing politicians such as Trump are portrayed as the figures capable of recovering and defending those lost freedoms. In this sense, the film is not criticizing the power of elites but disputing which elites should be in command. In practice, the documentary is less concerned with a universal defense of freedom of speech and more with the

perception that conservative voices had lost hegemony on digital platforms because of content moderation. The film ultimately seeks to legitimize a different constellation of political, media, and technological elites, presenting figures such as Trump as the natural leaders of this alternative power bloc.

The conflict is also framed through the contrast between China and the United States. China is associated with communism and appears through a frame of demonization. Expressions such as “learned behavior from China” and descriptions that censorship and control “feel like back in China” are mobilized as a warning of Chinese authoritarian control. China becomes the anticipated image of what the United States could, supposedly, turn into if governance, regulation and control over social media continue to expand. By the end of the film, this framing becomes especially emotional through two testimonials from Chinese women describing how their families were persecuted by the Chinese government. Their testimonies are followed by archival footage depicting labor camps, prisons, and scenes of authoritarianism, reinforcing the film’s attempt to associate debates over platform regulation with the imagery of totalitarian oppression.

The Christian faith also permeates much of the documentary’s argument, serving as one of its central foundations. The film invokes the idea that freedom rights are “rights given by God,” while arguing that censorship is a challenge to God as the ultimate source of authority when speech is controlled. In BP framework, most conflicts are not only political, but also metaphysical. Disagreement is not simply an error or divergence, but something morally corrupt or even evil.

The rhetoric becomes deeply moralized, with phrases such as “good guys win” and references to “evil in the world.” By the end of the film, this emotional and spiritual framing

becomes more explicit, culminating in a highly affective closure that combines references to God, patriotism, and the American national anthem. All of these reinforcing the idea that the United States — and conservative Christianity in particular — represents the final barrier against civilizational decline. The final image is a quote from Charlie Kirk, the U.S. conservative activist, who was assassinated in September of 2025 during a talk rally at Utah Valley University.

The film advances the idea of an international conspiracy, which helps explain why it constantly shifts across different national contexts, including Brazil. The documentary constructs a transnational framing of an organized global right-wing movement in which Trump's being "silenced" becomes equivalent to Bolsonaro's being "silenced." Within this worldview, the United States operates as a global civilizational model capable of pulling societies either toward success and freedom or toward failure and global censorship. Each nation appears merely as a battlefield in this global war, with the United States positioned as the principal actor and center of the conflict. Brazil is not approached through its own historical specificities or political context. Instead, it functions primarily as evidence supporting the larger global theory.

Common Narrative Strategies

Now that we have examined the context and content of most BP documentary productions (in terms of themes, topics, and ideological framings), I shift the analysis in this final section of the chapter toward questions of form. While there is frequent overlap between films' subjects and topics, these continuities are also evident at the formal level. BP repeatedly mobilizes similar structures, aesthetic choices, and modes of argumentation in a recognizable formal logic that organizes the company's documentary output.

Brasil Paralelo's Documentary Formula

The first thing to note is that the company relies on highly efficient, streamlined production to sustain a frenetic pace of output. Such a system allows the group to rapidly produce content on emerging political topics, ensuring its products are released while these debates are still occupying news cycles and public attention.

Take, for example, the current moment, when they just released a 2+hour series about the history of Iran, as a new war just started between the United States and Iran. Maintaining this production pace demands substantial financial resources, a specialized workforce, and a professionalized production infrastructure. Over the years, the company evolved from a small production operation into a medium-sized media firm with hundreds of employees. In January 2021, BP reportedly had 44 collaborators. By early 2023, however, *Exame* reported that the company employed approximately 240 people, down from a peak of 292 employee

Another way to understand how this accelerated rhythm is possible is by looking closely at the films' formal construction, since there is a remarkable degree of standardization and repetition across productions. All these productions are built on a common structure: the identification of a crisis and the revelation of a hidden cause (usually from the past) that explains it. The narrative is constructed with expert validation (interviews) and moral and emotional escalation from editing archives and soundtracks. For the most part, he aesthetic experimentation seems to be less important than the articulation of the political message and emotional tone across BP films.

Nevertheless, at times, BP invest heavy in technical sophistication. This becomes noticeable in works that feature more stylized graphic design, motion graphics, and animated sequences created specifically for the project. The more sophisticated films are made possible by

BP's ability to allocate additional creative and financial resources to productions considered strategic. Some professionals occupy especially prominent roles in those productions. Asaph Hiroto, for example, appears repeatedly in central creative and technical positions, serving as director, art director, and editor on the most important BP documentary films. Whatever one may think of the ideological content, some of BP's documentary films – especially the historical project - are technically accomplished and produced with substantial financial and organizational investment.

In other cases, the productions follow the logic of "fast-food", with films produced for YouTube to capture users' attention on recent controversies or political topics. This is the case of *Duas Vidas* (2023), for example, a short documentary on abortion, released when the Supreme Court was voting on reproductive rights. In the most "fast-food" films, there are no interviews at all, leaving only narration ("the voice of god") accompanied by archival images, historical footage, photographs, newspaper headlines, broadcast news excepts, or other visual references that reinforce the central argument. In those cases, the films are very simple in form, generally using only voice-over and juxtaposing archival materials, with little sophistication.

Emotional and Technical Appeals

For the documentary film's narrative to work properly, a specific rhetorical strategy is also necessary, and BP employs two distinct rhetorical strategies. The first is the emotional appeal, where good and evil will all battle followed by strong visuals and soundtracks. The second is the technical-bureaucratic appeal, in which reports, historical facts, dates, names, and interviews with specialists are often presented at an accelerated pace.

The emotional appeal is usually achieved through a tense, dramatic soundtrack, intense visual and sound effects, graphic design that explores strong contrast colors such as red and

black, strong chiaroscuro and shadow, crafted cinematography, and extensive use of archival footage. There is also an often tense, emotionally charged vocal performance, particularly in the dubbed versions, that reinforces an atmosphere of urgency and revelation throughout the narrative.

To appeal to emotions, they are also skilled at promoting certain evidence, selecting stories that enhance emotional appeal, and editing them to further increase that appeal. There are selective framing strategies, with a selection of arguments and evidence, while other issues are not discussed. *God Complex*, for example, eliminates counterarguments that could show how social media were instrumental in mobilizing people to attack administrative buildings in the USA on January 6th and in Brazil on January 8th, riots that ultimately could threaten election results in both places. Those events, which could be debated and analyzed, supporting a different argument, are ignored or briefly mentioned.

The editing is also very effective in this sense. Editors can use a rhythmic montage of music, archives, and visual effects to combine elements and create an effect that makes the audience feel dazed/surprised, or shocked. They achieve that impact by intensifying the rhythm of cuts or the soundtrack in some parts and slowing it in others. In many films, editing create a sense of urgency, progressive revelations, almost like a thriller. The visual editing can be very impressive, as landscape shots and b-roll sequences are very sophisticated for BP's premium productions.

The rational appeal is done by exploring the authority element of documentary films, especially the use of interviews with renowned specialists. In most films there will be lots of interviews, and moments without voice are relatively rare; Academic credentials, professional

titles, and affiliations are frequently foregrounded to convey an aura of legitimacy and objectivity to every interviewee.

BP tends to reinforce the impression that their films are grounded in the interviewees' expertise rather than their ideological alignment. An efficient strategy is to blend recognizable non-aligned public figures with lesser-known or ideologically aligned voices. Then, the interviewees' testimonies are edited and organized, as if they formed a single coherent discourse, with a narrator sewing up the full argument if necessary.

In the company's earlier productions, the pool of experts tended to be drawn from a relatively narrow circle of ideologically aligned commentators, which Balestro dos Santos identify as the core members (Balestro dos Santos, 2021). Over time, however, BP expanded its roster of pundits, increasingly incorporating internationally recognized scholars and experts with stronger academic or professional credentials. This diversification enhanced the appearance of neutrality and authority in face of much criticism the company was facing.

Although the films frequently feature numerous specialists, journalists, and commentators, perspectives that fundamentally challenge the central thesis are rarely included. As a result, the documentaries often project an image of pluralism while remaining enclosed by a relatively narrow range of acceptable interpretations. In *From The River to the Sea (2024)*, for example, the vast majority of voices given space in the film belong to figures aligned with an Israeli national-security framework: retired military officers and former intelligence officials Palestinian perspectives, by contrast, are represented by a only one interviewee explicitly affiliated with the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, alongside the prominent inclusion of Mosab Hassan Yousef — a person whose biography makes him a particularly

persuasive and frequently recurring voice in pro-Israel and conservative circles because he is a former Muslim, the son of a Hamas co-founder, and a vocal and open critic of Hamas.

Another important element is that these films often do not engage with the most established specialists in the subjects they discuss. For example, the documentary about depression (*A Fantastica Fabrica de Sanidades,* 2023) does not feature the leading Brazilian researchers working directly on those topics, and the series *The History of Communism* avoids important scholars in the field. If the viewer is not already a specialist in the subject, it becomes difficult to distinguish serious arguments from more dubious claims or specialists. This can easily confuse non-specialized audiences. For example, *The History of Communism* claims that Marx advocated a communist state, even though, in classical Marxist theory, communism ultimately implies a classless, stateless society based on collective ownership. In *God Complex*, similarly, the argument that the United States supposedly "learned the Chinese model" is conceptually vague and inconsistent.

Most productions rely heavily on archival materials, combined with this didactic, authoritative voice-over from the narrator or an expert. Often, b-roll and archival footage are highly literal, directly illustrating what the interviewee or narrator describes. These strategies are common to what Nichols describes as the "expository documentary mode," contributing to the legitimacy and authority of the film's presentation of reality. The interviews are edited to facilitate the interpretation of events. At the same time, however, many productions overexploit this didactic posture. In this sense, they do not always operate as documentaries in the classical sense of an open-ended journey or an investigation genuinely receptive to uncertainty, contradiction, or discovery. Many of BP's films have such a rigid ideological framework that critics often characterize them as primarily propaganda.

The films largely operate within the expository mode of documentary, but perhaps more precisely, they function as a form of militant expository documentary. The narration constantly guides the audience, directing what should be understood, how it should be interpreted emotionally and ideologically, and how audiences should behave. Everything converges toward a single thesis, producing a "closed text," with little room for ambiguity or interpretive openness. In classical documentary traditions, evidence and interpretation are often treated as distinct dimensions: archival materials, testimonies, or images may be presented in ways that still allow for multiple readings. In these productions, however, evidence already arrives as interpretation, and there is virtually no interpretive ambiguity.

Narrative Disorientation

One of the most important rhetorical manipulations is that viewers often barely notice how the films move from one subject to another. The productions are long and touch on multiple complex topics, going back and forth and shifting rapidly across places, historical periods, and political topics. Distinct issues begin to appear naturally interconnected, such as Covid-19 and censorship, or China and platform-based mechanisms of speech regulation. It is a controlled form of disorientation that complicates the idea of disinformation. *God Complex*, for example, goes from London to the US, Poland, and Brazil, making it hard to follow the narrative, verify, or rationalize the facts. Sometimes the audience can't check facts or understand claims as they are just overwhelmed by the emotional appeal of the editing, which creates the feeling that everything is somehow connected.

One particularly important aspect here is that navigating these films often resembles the experience of a user scrolling through TikTok, YouTube, or other platformized media environments, jumping from one subject to another. In many ways, the films emulate the

experience of navigating the contemporary social media feeds, with rapid transitions, fragmented excerpts and the continuous linking of seemingly disconnected issues. In fact, many parts of the documentary films are going to become short viral videos on social media. The difference is that this logic is now reformulated through the aesthetics of cinematic visuals, feature or series films, with polished editing, sound and visuals.

At times, the narrative itself is poorly constructed, with weak arguments, oversimplifications, or inconsistencies. In this moment, the music and visuals can operate as a persuasive device and maintain narrative flow. Interestingly, the rhythm accelerates precisely when the argument's underlying logic begins to weaken. Conversely, when the production seeks to establish more credibility, the pace tends to slow: interviews become longer, shots linger, and certain speakers are given extended space to project expertise.

This dynamic frequently operates by combining true premises with questionable facts or decontextualized data. In this process of orientation and disorientation, montage plays the central role. Rapid editing, accelerated associations, and dramatic musical scoring work together to construct a sensation of revelation. The result resembles the structure of an investigative documentary, producing the feeling of uncovering hidden truths, a dynamic frequently associated with conspiratorial documentary forms.

Calls to Action

Another important aspect, especially in the way many of the films begin, is how BP constructs the spectator as a political agent. Viewers are invited to “fund the resistance,” to become historical witnesses. They advertise with lines like “if you want to look back and say, I was there when we fought back.” Also implies that subscribers are joining an independent community free from corporate influence — even though this claim is itself highly questionable,

since the films are produced by a corporation operating through a subscription-based business model and advancing a strong ideological agenda.

BP always emphasizes that their productions depend on audience support, creating a constant sense of urgency — “If you don’t support us, this will be our last film” There are also direct calls such as: “Will you watch from the sidelines… or be counted among those who stood up?” The films often begin and end with this same call to action. The audience is invited to engage, subscribe, and take part in the political mobilization itself, which is tied to their business model, since participation ultimately means subscribing to the platform and financing the project of this militant capitalism.

In one sense, this is simply part of the business model. Like many YouTube channels, the channel wants users to subscribe, activate notifications, like, and share. This is part of the struggle for visibility within the attention economy, but in BP’s case, there is also a direct financial dimension: they depend on subscribers because the subscription itself is the foundation of their business model. But beyond that, the spectator is positioned almost like a player who can participate in a collective mission whose ultimate reward is victory in the “cultural war.” As this chapter has shown, many of BP’s films relate to cultural and political disputes, including electoral campaigns, attacks on the Supreme Federal Court (STF), and conservative mobilizations around issues such as abortion, gender, public education, and law enforcement.

The call to action appears across multiple productions. In *Pátria Educadora*, for example, the launch was accompanied by a strong appeal urging viewers to subscribe to BP’s platform as if the company itself were at risk of disappearing if it failed to reach its target. A similar logic appears in *1964: O Brasil Entre Armas e Livros*, and *From the River to the Sea (2024)* where the audience is invited to participate and collaborate. In *The God Complex*, however, the strategy is

somewhat different because the imagined spectator is explicitly from the U.S.— “Americans like you.”

But BP film production does not seem to be attempting to persuade ideological opponents or convert skeptics. Instead, their audience is already ideologically preconfigured: conservative, family-oriented, distrustful of mainstream media, and open to narratives about political persecution against them. They address viewers who are already predisposed to accept these assumptions, reinforcing and mobilizing an existing political identity rather than converting new publics. Consistent with what Francesca Tripodi describes as the "do your own research" rhetoric (Tripodi, 2022), BP frequently invites viewers to "engage with the evidence" and "decide for yourself," presenting its films as exercises in independent inquiry. As I have argued here, however, the films often have a very selective framing and the evidence presented is biased, so BP is encouraging audiences to validate conclusions that are already strongly guided by the film's selective framing.

Conclusions

Immersing myself in the universe of BP films revealed the thematic universe of the contemporary Brazilian right and, to some extent, its articulations with a global right-wing movement that has been a concern for scholars in different fields. While there is a lot of convergence in topics related to culture wars, such as gender, abortion, electoral fraud, social movements, Latin America, militarism, traditionalism and others; there are also important distinctions. For the Brazilian conservative movements, migration is not a big concern, while anti-communism (in the form of anti-Workers Party rhetoric and Cultural Marxism) is much more central.

One of the most revealing characteristics of BP parallel epistemologies is their intellectual schemes begin by identifying a contemporary crisis and then consistently turn to the past to locate the actors responsible for it. In doing so, they explain the modern world's social decline, moral corruption, and civilizational crisis, while also establishing the moral paradigms from which to understand that reality. Their intellectual schemes are very revealing of contemporary right-wing politics.

Despite the claims of neutrality, this chapter have revealed how BP productions are not politically neutral. Their films produce and reproduce a collective imaginary associated with sectors of the contemporary right—at times paranoid/conspiratory, at times more institutionally respectable, and at times openly denialist/negationist. In its more radical manifestations, this ideological universe can even take explicitly monarchist and Christian-conservative forms.

Important to note that their productions are not necessarily anti-intellectual in their form. On the contrary, they are carefully crafted documentaries that mobilize academic language, expert interviews, archival materials, and relatively sophisticated, deep historical narratives. However, all utilized to construct an alternative reality that supports right wing revisionism, and conservative social, cultural, and political claims.

Across a different set of documentary productions, it was possible to identify some of the logics, structures, and rhetorical devices that constantly reappear, even as the films move across different topics and thematic regimes. Many of these documentaries appear to begin not from an open-ended investigation traditionally associated with documentary filmmaking, but from previously established conclusions or ideological agendas, subsequently selecting interviews, archival materials, and evidence that primarily confirm their positions. As Avila (2020) argues, the issue is therefore not simply one of “fake news” or direct falsification, but a much more

complex process involving omission, decontextualization, selective framing, and the construction of those parallel epistemologies or alternative systems of knowledge production.

CHAPTER VI:

BRASIL PARALELO AND PLATFORM LOGICS

In the previous chapters, I have analyzed the history of BP (the company) and a corpus of their documentary films (the content). Now, I'm turning attention to the channel, or the medium, by which their products circulate. The goal of this chapter is to address the third research question by examining how Brasil Paralelo leverages digital platform affordances to expand its reach and sustain audience engagement. I am also interested in assessing whether the theories of social media and political dysfunction can be understood through the BP case study, thereby helping tie together the broader argument of this dissertation.

BP relies on an entire digital ecosystem in which users navigate YouTube videos, a private platform available on smartphones and smart TVs with more than 1 million downloads, big social media channels and groups, newsletters, and other forms of direct communication. The company has also created a sophisticated system of search engine optimization, micro-targeted advertising, and a network of political figures who recommend its content and channels.

To approximate the experience of an ordinary user interacting with BP I immersed myself in this media ecosystem by subscribing to BP's platform and engaging with its digital environment. The goal was to develop a more empirical and observational understanding of what it means to navigate these communities and media spaces in practice.

To understand how they benefit from social media platforms and dynamics, I have developed an observational design to map YouTube recommendations to understand the experience of a regular YouTube user navigating BP documentaries' universe. I created accounts that emulated the viewing habits and navigational tendencies of left-leaning, centrist, and right-

leaning users. This strategy helps me to measure what the experience of watching BP content on YouTube is, and to assess how the algorithm suggests those types of content.

BP Select: Inside the Platform

To begin the analysis, I subscribed to BP's streaming platform, BP Select, for 1 year through an installment payment plan of 12 monthly payments of 10 reais (approximately U$2.00). I also subscribed to the company's newsletter, which is freely available to anyone. In the welcome email and onboarding materials, BP emphasizes that its catalog is "the highest rated on IMDb," while framing its productions as "trustworthy" and appropriate for families to watch together, implicitly suggesting that other streaming platforms may not be equally reliable or safe.

Entering the BP ecosystem immediately points to the presence of sophisticated digital marketing and user-retention strategies. Users are constantly bombarded with easy-to-digest texts composed of short, direct sentences that continuously aim to persuade them to upgrade to a lifetime membership, purchase an additional course, or subscribe to other services offered by the company.

Immediately after subscribing, the first elements presented to the user are a thank-you message and an "exclusive gift": the offer to become a "lifetime member", a permanent subscription that promises access to all BP original productions "for the rest of one's life" without ever paying again. The offer is presented with a news article from *Exame* magazine discussing how streaming prices had increased by as much as 70%, citing companies such as Netflix, Prime Video, Disney+, and Paramount+. Against these higher monthly subscription fees, BP offers its "lifetime membership" as an opportunity to secure permanent access to a streaming service before prices rise further. The offer is presented as temporary, creating a sense of urgency associated with digital marketing strategies.

From the very first interaction, it becomes evident that audience conversion and retention are central components of BP's media strategy. The plan I have subscribed to, is a low-priced entry subscription, marketed as R$10 per month but structured as an annual commitment. This reduced the perceived barrier to the first purchase, and reduces barrier for a better product, such as a lifetime subscription, and enabled the company to anticipate receivables and reinvest the resulting cash in further expansion.

Once inside the platform, the difference from the YouTube experience became clear. On YouTube, BP's content is more fragmented: trailers, excerpts, short clips, interviews, promotional materials, and various short videos connected to recent news and their documentary films. BP Select, by contrast, offers the company's complete catalog of films, including more premium offerings. The platform functions as a gated community, where BP controls the conditions under which users choose what to watch.

From a technical standpoint, the infrastructure aligns with the standards used by major streaming services such as Netflix, Globoplay, and HBO Max. It offers adaptive segmented streaming, just like the industrial standard used by major streaming services, which delivers videos at multiple quality levels based on the user's internet connection. It also offers protected video access, where media files cannot be downloaded, and it uses tokenized or temporarily signed streaming links, just like every professional service. In general, BP has invested in sophisticated technology to compete with contemporary digital entertainment ecosystems.

Although BP's own films receive the greatest prominence in the landing pages, the platform also offers access to a catalog of professionally curated films and documentaries. This catalog offers a wide variety of films for every taste, including major Hollywood hits such as *La La Land* and *Knives Out*, inspiring religious movies like *Paul, Apostle of Christ*, *The Letters of*

Mother Teresa, and *Father Stu*, as well as intense action and thriller titles such as *Sicario*, *Fury*, and *Patriots Day*. The collection has dramas, political stories, classic films, biblical films, family-friendly films, and award-winning productions. For an ordinary subscriber, it is an affordable option for a diverse streaming experience for all audiences, not just a political-ideological media archive. The platform also includes a separate section for courses and educational programs, although these were not available under my basic subscription plan.

This structure is important because BP Select operates as a "walled garden," with full access to the BP archive available only through subscription to the company's controlled infrastructure. This model reduces dependence on third-party platforms and helps shield the company from moderation practices, demonetization, content removal, or visibility restrictions that frequently affect controversial or misleading political content on platforms such as YouTube. By reducing its dependence on YouTube, BP also gains greater control over data collection and audience analytics. Through its proprietary platform, the company can potentially monitor who watches specific content, for how long, which titles generate more engagement, and how users navigate across the catalog. These behavioral data can also be linked to subscription and payment information, enabling highly detailed audience profiling and targeted engagement strategies.

A final remark is that it is evident that audience participation varies across platforms. While BP's YouTube videos often receive thousands of comments, videos hosted on its proprietary streaming platform typically attract only dozens. This difference may simply reflect the differences in audience size due to barriers to accessing the private platform and the greater visibility YouTube affords. However, it may also point to other dynamics at work on YouTube, such as algorithmic amplification, right-wing militancy, coordinated mobilization, or other mechanisms that amplify interactions on social media platforms.

In either case, by building its own “mini-Netflix,” BP positioned itself as independent of Big Tech companies and their moderation systems. At the same time, the company continued to rely heavily on the advertising and visibility infrastructures provided by platforms such as Meta and Google to bring users into its ecosystem. Rather than competing with other streaming services, BP's platform functions as a membership infrastructure: subscribers gain access to a curated archive of BP productions alongside licensed commercial content while simultaneously supporting the company's ongoing audiovisual production. More importantly, the platform enables BP to cultivate a community around its worldview and establish direct relationships with its supporters through first-party data, payment systems, and communication channels, strengthening both its financial sustainability and organizational autonomy.

Direct Communication: Newsletters and Text Messages

Beyond its streaming platform, BP also has a free-access news portal and maintains an infrastructure for direct communication through newsletters and a centralized Telegram channel. For the research, I joined the company’s Telegram channel, which at the time had approximately 60,000 members.

BP’s telegram channel is not large compared to BP's subscriber base. However, Telegram plays an important role for Brazilian right-wing political users because it has always been known for weak moderation rules. And on this platform, BP is still one of the biggest political channels. Perhaps this is one of the reasons BP’s Telegram channel is highly centralized: users are not allowed to participate or post, and communication is restricted to official announcements distributed directly by the organization. For the company, it works as a feed of news and traffic to their news portal, YouTube channel, and other commercial offers, directing the audience to the company’s media ecosystem.

During the period of observation, I also signed up for the email newsletter and got communication from different segments of the organization, from 2024 to 2026, including general BP newsletters, member-exclusive communications, and messages related to other commercial initiatives such as Teller, the BP Book Club and *Projeto Mecenas*. The messages frequently encourage recipients to perform specific actions: watch a newly released documentary, attend a live event, participate in a survey, upgrade a membership plan, purchase a product, or take advantage of a limited-time offer.

Email and Telegram are central in the company's audience retention strategy and to cultivate a sense of belonging. Many messages address subscribers by name and invoke categories such as members, founders, supporters, or participants in a larger mission. Invitations to provide feedback, respond to surveys, and share opinions reinforce the perception that subscribers are active participants in a community. The communications also consistently revolve around themes closely aligned with BP's editorial identity. Topics such as geopolitics, China, Venezuela, Israel, censorship, crime, education, Christianity, and classical culture are mobilized as points of interest to sustain engagement between major content releases. This was one of the main ways for BP to cultivate a direct relationship with its audience and transform their attention in long-term and constant engagement.

Micro-Targeted Advertising: BP's Propaganda Machine

Direct messages, apps, and newsletters are useful for reaching an audience already engaged with the BP universe, but what is BP's strategy for bringing new people into it? This is achieved by micro-targeting advertising, one of BP's most important strategies. The company not only understands the strategic importance of digital marketing but also seems willing and financially capable to invest heavily in it, being one of the Brazilian companies that invests the

most in Meta advertising on social and political issues, with investments comparable to those of major political campaigns.

As widely recognized, Meta and other platforms commodify audiences by offering highly segmented publics to advertisers, allowing campaigns to target users based on behavioral, demographic, ideological, and affective profiles (Tufecki, 2019). This business model relies on hyper-segmentation of audiences, and any company can buy or pay to display ads on platforms, charged per click, impression, view, or conversion.

Heavy investments in Facebook and Instagram ads have enabled BP to efficiently reach new audiences, generating awareness and then redirecting users to the company's ecosystem. From 2020 to the time of writing (May 2026), BP invested more than 27 million reais (US$5,3 million) in marketing through ads Meta classified as political on Facebook. Most of this spending, however, occurred by 2024, when the total had already surpassed 24 million reais (US$4.6 million).

Based on Meta Ad Library data, it is possible to estimate both the total number of advertisements and the monthly advertising spend. Because Meta provides spending and impression ranges rather than exact figures, these values should be interpreted as estimates. Using the lower and upper bounds reported for each advertisement, it is possible to calculate minimum and maximum spending levels and identify trends in the company's advertising activity over time, as presented in the graph below.

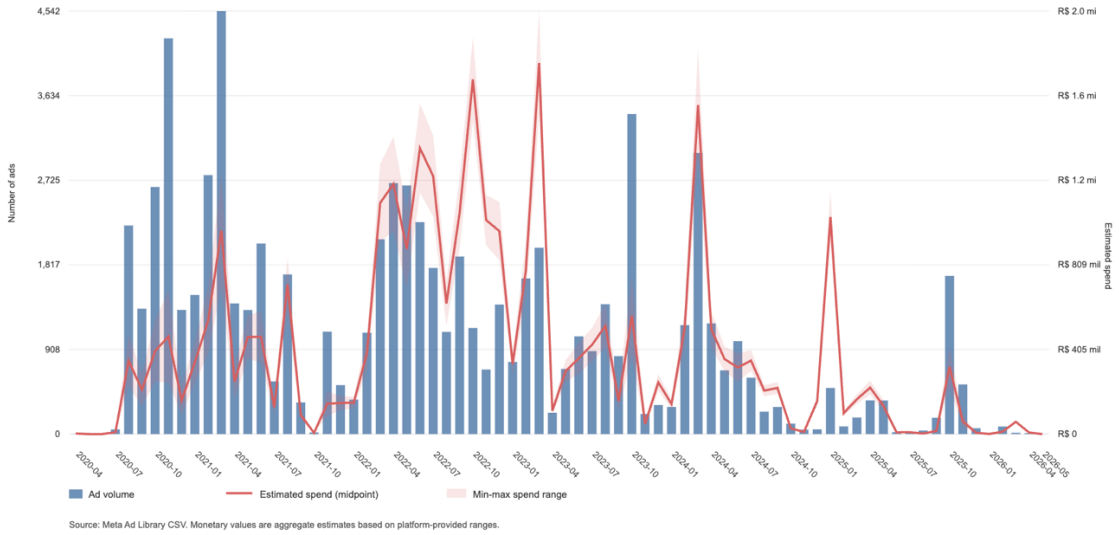


Figure 6. BP monthly Ad Volume and Estimated Spending on Meta in (Brazilian Real)

The graph reveals important patterns. First, there are spending spikes in March 2022, 2023, and 2024, suggesting recurring campaign cycles tied to content releases, or organizational campaigns. Whether intentional or coincidental, these peaks occur during the same period, coinciding with the month associated with the anniversary of the Brazilian military coup of 1964.

Second, 2022 stands out as an exceptional year for advertising expenditure. Spending increased substantially during the months leading up to the Brazilian presidential election, remained elevated throughout the electoral period, and continued at high levels in the immediate aftermath of the election. Expenditures then declined considerably in 2023, beginning in 2024 with almost no activity except for a few peaks.

Finally, there are relatively few high-spending months that account for a disproportionately large share of total estimated advertising expenditures. This indicates that resources are concentrated in marketing campaigns around specific films and product releases. Such data open an important avenue for future research that could help us better understand some of those campaigns. For instance, some researchers have already pointed out that BP was

very involved in an anti-abortion campaign, peaking in 2023 with the release of “Duas Vidas” – a documentary film against abortion released during a time when the Supreme Court was voting on a decision that could impact the topic[74]. In another report, Roseann Kennedy revealed that during the Argentinian presidential election, BP spent resources to promote a film supporting the right-wing candidate Javier Milei[75]. The dataset is revealing because it shows that BP launches campaigns that target specific themes specific moments.

In the advertising data, the same thematic units identified in the documentaries reappear. It contains criticism of mainstream journalism, anti-left discourse, defenses of traditional family values, anti-abortion positions, public security concerns, freedom-of-speech claims, Christianity, environmental issues, feminism, racial politics, gender, the MST, and Marxism.

Unsurprisingly, the content receiving the greatest advertising investment consists of BP's own films and documentaries. Among the productions that received the most ad investment are some of their most political films such as *Entre Lobos*, *The Hidden Face of Feminism*, *The Right in Brazil*, *Smokescreen,* and *The Crisis of the Three Powers*, each with expenditures exceeding R$1 million (approximately US$180,000) on Meta platforms. These amounts are larger than the distribution budgets typically available to independent documentary productions in Brazil.

The language employed in these campaigns is highly charged, criticizing "legacy media," "Globo," "the press”, claiming they will reveal what "the media won't show you." These advertisements frequently portray mainstream media institutions as untrustworthy actors that

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[74] Motoryn, P. (2024, June 21). Brasil Paralelo já gastou meio milhão de reais em anúncios contra aborto. *Intercept Brasil*. Intercept Brasil

[75] https://www.estadao.com.br/politica/coluna-do-estadao/brasil-paralelo-bombou-documentario-pro-milei-com-propaganda-vista-17-milhao-de-vezes/

conceal important truths from the public. Similarly, the Supreme Federal Court (STF) is also constantly criticized for its interventions in the political sphere.

The ads are an important tool for BP's political-cultural mobilization, but they are also an investment with an expected return on audience monetization. Most ads do not simply direct traffic to BP videos or the YouTube channel. More often, ads steer users to landing pages connected to membership checkout, subscription plans, platform access, paid courses, release events, and other paid content. Ads incorporate marketing techniques focused on conversion and audience capture. Once a user clicks the link, they are presented with exclusive offers, free e-books, newsletter subscriptions, or invitations to join the platform. Terms such as "exclusive access," "special report," and "unique opportunity" are commonly used as clickbait and to engage audiences.

Demographics of Meta ads

The Meta Ad Library also provides estimated audience data for advertisements, enabling identification of the publics BP is attempting to reach. The data reveal that campaigns are predominantly directed toward male audiences, particularly those aged 25 to 54 years old (65%[76]), located in the southeast and south of Brazil. The Meta Ad Library does not provide information on income, occupation, education, or social class, but this demographic profile is consistent with audiences possessing higher levels of economic and cultural capital. This may indicate an effort to reach individuals who occupy influential positions within their communities and social networks, functioning as "opinion leaders" - intermediaries in the circulation of those political and cultural ideas.

[76] The analysis was made from demographic distribution of ads, weighted by the medium of impression.

Despite the male-targeting, it is interesting to observe that there are campaigns specifically targeting women. The ads associated with women's rights, gender violence, and mental health were targeted at women, whereas political topics appear to be mobilized to a male audience. Interestingly, ads with the term "feminism" were targeted heavily at the male audience, promoting an anti-feminist framing.

Google ads

BP also uses Google Ads for its micro-target campaigns. However, Google Ads' available data is not organized in a public tool as comprehensive and accessible as Meta's Ad Library. One useful source is a transparency report released by Google on June 23, 2022, as part of an electoral transparency initiative for the 2024 Brazilian regional elections. The report compiled political advertisements circulating on Google's services and revealed that BP was the fifth-largest political advertiser on Google at the time, spending approximately R$1.57 million (US$285,455) across 3,242 advertisements. BP's expenditure, although substantially lower than the spending associated with major presidential campaigns, which reached figures of more than R$20 million (US$3.64 million), is comparable to that of major state-level political campaigns.

Google's data indicate a geographic concentration like that observed on Meta. The state of São Paulo received the largest share of advertising exposure, while other states in the South and Southeast regions accounted for most of the remaining investment. The temporal pattern of expenditures was also like that observed on Meta, with spending concentrated around a few major campaigns, particularly in March 2023 and in 2022, coinciding with the Brazilian electoral cycle.

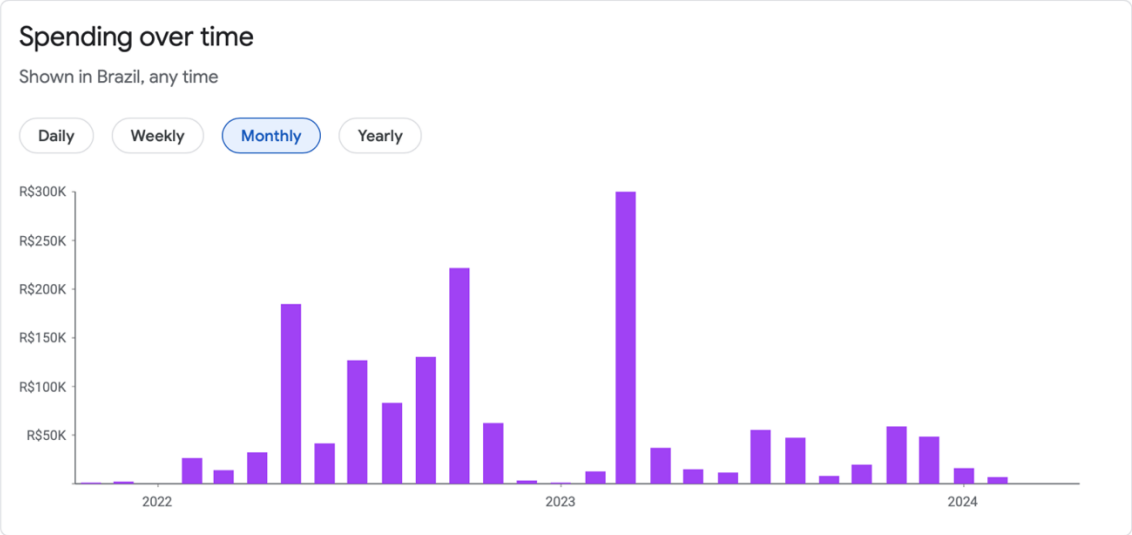


Figure 7. BP Google Ads spending over time

It is important to note that this ranking refers specifically to advertisers classified by Google as political advertisers, a label that BP has often contested. Nevertheless, within Google's transparency framework, the organization was categorized as a political advertiser, as both Google and Meta classify BP as a political advertiser based on the nature of their content. Although BP does not formally endorse specific candidates or political parties in every campaign, many of the central figures featured in its productions are politicians or public officials associated with Brazil's right-wing political movement.

Following a 2024 ruling by Brazil's Superior Electoral Court (TSE), political advertising campaigns were no longer subject to the same transparency reporting requirements, making it more difficult to track these expenditures over time. Despite this limitation, there is still data that show how BP has continued to invest heavily in Google Ads. When considering advertisements classified under "all topics" rather than only political advertising, the organization has published more than 20,000 paid advertisements on Google's platforms. However, these advertisements have substantially less data available. Unlike political ads, which include information such as

estimated spending, impressions, and geographic distribution, advertisements classified under "all topics" do not provide these metrics. As a result, while it is possible to observe the volume and content of these campaigns, it is no longer possible to account for the financial investment with the same degree of precision.

An interesting aspect of this strategy is the intensive use of Google Ads across both Google Search and YouTube, which is also one the world's largest search engines. These YouTube ad campaigns can be displayed across diverse YouTube channels and videos, including channels that are not ideologically aligned with the organization. This allows BP to reach users who might never encounter its content organically, even those navigating around left-wing channels. On YouTube, this often takes the form of promoted video campaigns that start before a user plays a video or in the recommended tab, which resemble ordinary recommendations or suggested content by the algorithm/platform.

Search Engine Optimization (SEO)

Beyond the YouTube ads, BP invests and work to be placed on top of Google searches. This is done by buying search keywords and managing the organization of their websites and pages to maximize visibility in the search results. The company knows that ranking highly when users search for political topics is fundamental, so they bid on keywords to compete for placement in sponsored search results. Through this auction-based model, BP pays for visibility when users search for specific terms, with costs typically determined on a cost-per-click basis. As a result, they can secure prominent placement on the first page of search results, increasing the likelihood that users encounter their content regardless of whether they were originally searching for the organization itself or just trying to do their own research on political themes.

They have a sophisticated understanding of search engine optimization (SEO) practices. Many of the articles, news and the general communication are structured according to widely recommended SEO principles, including short paragraphs, accessible language, clear headings, and easy-to-read content. At the same time, their videos and webpages have multiple keywords and tags associated with them to help connect with other links and perform well in search results.

BP understands that visibility in the digital sphere is influenced by strategic investment in search optimization. Even when users search specifically for BP, the organization pays to appear at the top of Google's search results. This makes it harder and more expensive for critics to compete for the same visibility, for example, to place a critical article about a film or the company's discourse. By bidding on every topic of their interest, the company increases the cost per click (CPC) associated with terms such as Marxism, feminism, "Che Guevara", or "What is Happening in Venezuela?", just to mention a few examples.

The strategy extends to keywords associated with several topics linked to BP's enduring culture war. Brazilian students doing online searches about the history of feminism movement, Paulo Freire, the Brazil Military Dictatorship, or the Colonial History, may probably first find some of BP's conservative interpretations of these subjects, including articles with titles such as "Military Dictatorship in Brazil or Military Regime? Understanding Once and for All the 1964 Coup" or "Che Guevara: Biography, Achievements, and Crimes" and other conservative framings and alternative history. A student seeking to learn about the history of Nazism or communism after a classroom discussion may encounter BP content among the top search results, not necessarily because it is the best source available, but because the organization has invested resources to secure that visibility through keyword advertising and search optimization.

This responds to the debates about information quality and visibility within digital search ecosystems. BP spends substantial amounts on advertising, generating revenue for Google and Meta that, in return, provide visibility, traffic, and access to the targeted audiences. From the perspective of the political economy of communication, this reflects what Dallas Smythe described as the commodification of audiences (Smythe, 1977). Platforms transform users into marketable audiences that can be purchased, and BP purchases access to those audiences to sell its products and ideology. What remains less clear, however, is whether this mutually beneficial commercial relationship can serve the public interest or promote the quality and diversity of information available.

Affiliated Marketing

Another component of BP funnel strategy that was very important in the beginning of their operation is affiliate marketing. Affiliated marketing is, in simple terms, when social media influencers promote a product and get a percentage for every conversion of a product sold through their channel. BP have largely used this strategy through a network of social media influencers, content creators, and public figures with large followings and aligned interests. Those accounts promote BP's products to their own audiences. In return, they receive a commission for each subscription or conversion generated through their unique referral links. This model allows the company to expand its reach through intermediaries, thereby driving audience growth and subscription sales. According to Luan Bez, marketing director of BP, affiliated marketing had at one point accounted for approximately 25 percent of BP's revenue[77].

[77] In an interview for the ROI Hunters podcast – available https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m4LtWWp-_m4

This strategy is facilitated by a large network of conservative influencers, media personalities, and political figures with whom BP has maintained relationships since its early years. It includes influencers and commentators such as Leandro Ruschel, Rodrigo Constantino, Caio Coppolla, Flávio Morgenstern, Luiz Camargo, and Ernesto Lacombe, as well as political figures such as Eduardo Bolsonaro, Bia Kicis, Marcel van Hattem, Gustavo Gayer, Arthur do Val, and Antonia Fontenelle. The affiliate programs allow each person to share BP's content with their own audiences and encourage followers to subscribe to the platform.

Many of these individuals are connected to BP as collaborators, advisory board members, or interviewees, often participating in its productions In general, they are nodes in the large right-wing network in which actors promote one another within the same ecosystem. It is not always a strong alliance, but it tends to intensify during major political campaigns. Through these connections, they can keep reaching and expanding conservative audiences and communities (as friends of my friends are my friends). Many of these figures remained aligned around the political project associated with Bolsonarism. However, the affiliated program lost relevance because several affiliated personalities became involved in political disputes and divisions among themselves after Bolsonaro's defeat in 2022.

The YouTube Recommendation Algorithm (YRA)

In this last section, I turn my analysis to YouTube's recommendation system. To better understand how BP benefits from YouTube's structure and affordances, I conducted an observational study to examine how YouTube recommends videos to users after they engage

with one of BP's documentary films (see the Methodological Section). My goal was to examine potential bias in the YouTube Recommendations Algorithm (YRA) and determine whether it could amplify the so-called filter bubbles, echo chambers, or radical pathways.

Starting from a common documentary seed—the anti-abortion film *Duas Vidas*—it was possible to observe how YouTube's recommendations operate across three different profiles I created. Figure 9 depicts the resulting directed network, in which each node represents a video and each edge represents a recommendation tie from a source video to a recommended video. The central node is the BP documentary film "*Duas Vidas,"* and the network extends through first- and second-degree recommendations generated by the YRA. In total, the network consists of 199 nodes (recommended videos) and 330 directed edges (recommendations), capturing the flow of recommendations outward from the seed video.

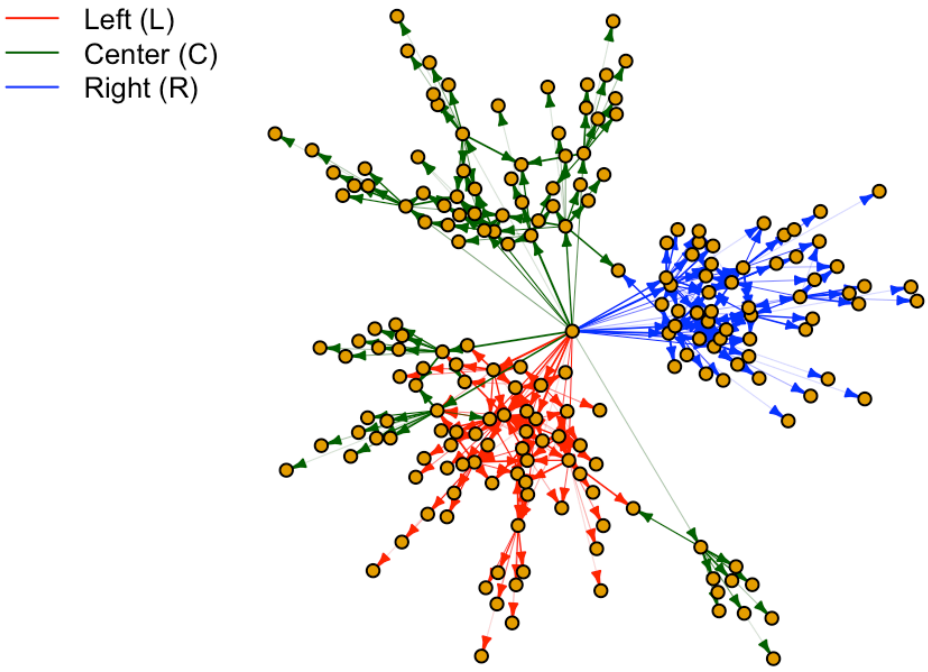


Figure 8. Network of recommended videos in the proxy experiment

The graph shows an interconnection between the left (red[78]) and the center (green) users' journey, with some recommended videos converging. On the other hand, the right-wing proxy user (blue) appears more isolated in its universe of recommended videos. The graph confirms that each user will receive a different set of recommendations based on their preferences, as there is a clear distinction in what is recommended for each user, creating three relatively distinct clusters.

On another level, the network shows that the profile trained with right-wing preferences has a more cohesive, self-contained recommendation network than the others. This pattern reflects the structure of the right-wing Brazilian YouTube bubble, which consisted of a highly interconnected set of large channels, ideologically aligned and relatively large in audience size, creating a dense network of mutual references. As a result, recommendations from the seed video seem to remain within a closely connected cluster of right-wing content creators. While a left-wing recommendation bubble also exists, it is smaller and less cohesive or isolated. For this reason, there is overlapping between the recommendations received by the centrist and left-wing proxy users.

To further explore the structure of these recommendation networks, I classified the 106 distinct channels that appeared in the recommendations according to their political alignment. I wanted to check whether the recommendations received by each proxy user reflected the user's

[78] In Brazilian political symbolism, red is strongly associated with the political left, particularly due to the historical influence of the Workers' Party (Partido dos Trabalhadores, PT) and broader socialist/progressive movements. In this study, red is therefore used to represent left-leaning profiles. Blue is used here to represent right-leaning profiles, which may appear counterintuitive to U.S. readers, where blue is typically associated with the Democratic Party and red with the Republican Party.

initial political orientation and whether a user's recommendation journey placed them in a sort of echo chambers, where all opinions are the same.

Once again, this analysis revealed important differences among the proxy users. In the right-wing profile, for example, *O Giro de Notícias* emerged as the most central channel in the recommendation network, despite not being among the primary channels followed during the training phase. On the other hand, *Jovem Pan*—a major outlet and one of the most prominent channels in the training phase did not emerge as equally central in the recommendation network. This suggests that recommendations may elevate certain actors and depress others within the same ideological ecosystem, for reasons worth exploring further. In the left-wing profile, by contrast, there was considerable overlap between the channels used for training and those that became central in the recommendation network.

Based on the channel classification, it was possible to compare whether a user's recommendation journey places them inside an ideologically aligned echo chamber, as shown in Figure 9. This time not only are the edges colored, but the nodes as well. Right-wing channels are painted blue; left-wing channels are painted red, and mainstream media center channels are painted green. The gray nodes are channels that are unrelated to politics or that could not be classified politically. To explore the importance of each channel, I also plotted a graph in which the channels are scaled by in-degree (recommendations received, ranked according to the list) in Figure 10.

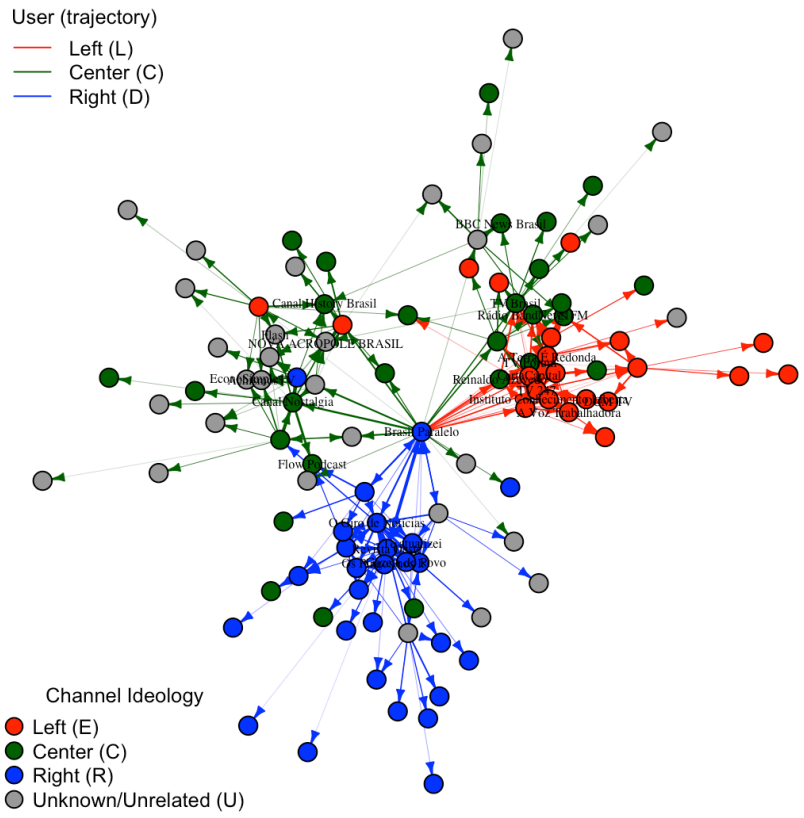


Figure 9. Channel-level recommendation network with ideological classification of channels

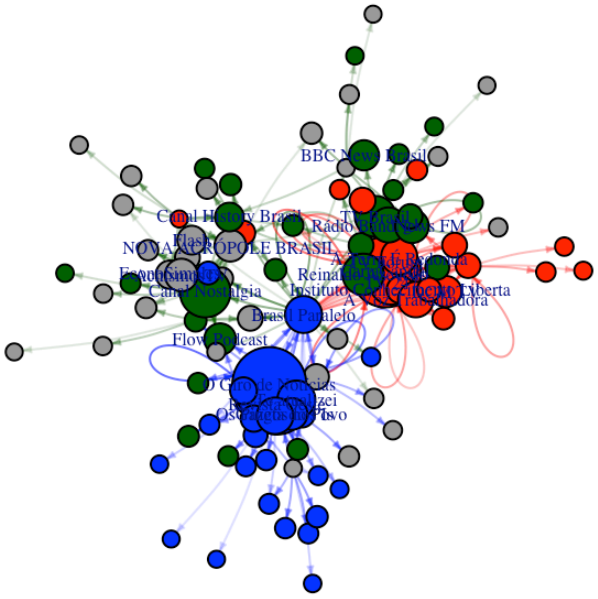


Figure 10. Channel-level recommendation network with ideological classification scaled by weighted in-degree centrality

What the images reveal is that the journey of the blue user (right-wing) pushes them deeper into right-wing channels, while the journeys of center and left-wing users include recommended content that is not necessarily political (the grey nodes), or even show greater integration across different types of content from the central (mainstream media channel).

A surprising finding is that, even though right-wing users inhabit a highly aligned, conservative bubble, the algorithm appears to prioritize channels and personas rather than themes. In fact, the specific topic of the seed video—abortion—does not appear to be particularly relevant for the recommendation system. In the data set, there is essentially nothing related to the abortion topic itself. Although a few health-related themes appear, such as a documentary about ayahuasca rituals or drinking habits ("why Brazilians drink so much alcohol?"), there is virtually no content addressing reproductive rights.

The limited engagement with the initial topic (abortion) in a single video was not enough for the algorithm to identify it as a meaningful theme across recommendations. It was also possible to see the use of coded keywords for the topic, such as the word "aborto" (abortion) written as "4b0rto," which the channel BP itself uses—likely as a strategy to bypass YouTube's safety filters and avoid shadow-banning. This could be one reason for the lack of connection with related videos on abortion, because the platform might be limiting or blocking visibility on this topic, but it does not seem to be the main explanation here.

It is worth noting that, during the training period, the dominant theme circulating that week was public safety due to a major police operation in Rio de Janeiro that resulted in the deaths of 121 people[79]; because of this operation, discussions about the legality of and alleged

[79] A major police operation known as *Operação Contenção* was launched in Rio de Janeiro on October 28, 2025, targeting criminal organizations. The operation, officially resulted in 121 deaths.

excesses in armed police operations were the topic that appeared most frequently in the recommended videos. Additional factors shaping the political environment at the time are also reflected in the dataset, including coverage of the COP30 conference in Belém, escalating tensions involving the Brazilian Supreme Court (STF), and the imminent possibility of Bolsonaro's arrest due to the January 8th 2022 coup attempt.

These elements reflect the news environment during the data-collection period and indicate that the YRA prioritizes ongoing political events and recent news content in its recommendations over thematic continuity. Across the entire dataset, the posting date of the video emerged as one of the most decisive factors in shaping the recommendation network. Regardless of user orientation, YouTube tended to prioritize recent uploads, suggesting that temporal recency interacts with ideological alignment to structure the overall flow of recommendations.

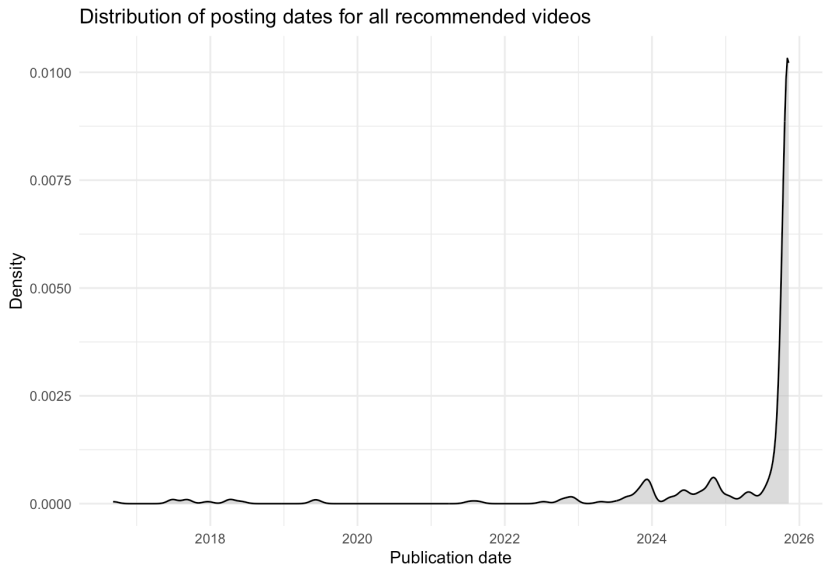


Figure 11. Distribution of posting dates for all recommended videos

However, in relation to the videos recommended on right-wing channels, the politicization of topics and their alignment with the right-wing discursive agenda became quite evident. Instead of criticizing the Supreme Federal Court (STF) for placing abortion on the political agenda, as it occurs in the seed BP video, most of the recommendations in the right-wing dataset criticize the Court for attempting to limit the scope of state police operations, particularly in the case of Rio de Janeiro. In this sense, there is a strong thematic continuity within the right-wing bubble: the persistent criticism of the STF, which had already appeared in earlier BP documentaries, such as *Os 11 Supremos (2020)* and *A Crise dos Três Poderes (2022)*.

The original first-degree recommendations showed no sensitivity to the framing, topic, or argumentative structure of the seed video on abortion. For users positioned within the more radical left and right bubbles, the recommendations overwhelmingly focused on the week's hot topics and the political aspects associated with it, often packaged with sensationalist thumbnails and titles emphasizing urgency or exclusivity (e.g., "breaking," "exclusive," or "now"). In more general terms, YRA prioritize recency and immediacy, and not thematic continuity, as nothing related to the initial topic of abortion was further recommended. However, because it filters content based on political preferences, the recommendation system might still reinforce information environments in which the same news is interpreted through markedly different ideological agendas..

Interestingly, the centrist profile behaved somewhat differently. Its first-degree recommendations included a small number of documentaries, long-form reports, and news features. Although these were not about abortion, they at least shared a similar documentary language and occasionally surfaced older videos. This pattern likely reflects the training condition of that profile, which interacted more with mainstream journalism and long-form

reporting. In contrast, the more ideological channels on the left and right operate within strong opinion/editorial ecosystems, composed largely of vlog-style political commentary videos.

Once we open the analysis to second-degree recommendations, the sample expands dramatically in multiple directions. Even so, the dominant pattern persists: the algorithm continues to prioritize urgent, contemporary political discussions without returning to the topic of abortion. For every new degree, the scale of expansion grows exponentially, making it increasingly difficult to identify coherent thematic trajectories. Future research could benefit from large-scale computational modeling to capture more detail about the structure of these networks.

The Co-tag networks

To better interpret the differences in user trajectories across thematic domains, I also used the tags associated with each video to construct a new set of networks in which tags function as nodes and edges represent the co-occurrence of tags within the same videos. This is possible because each video has tags, and given the set of videos in each set of recommendations, it is possible to generate three undirected, weighted graphs, where edge weights capture the frequency with which pairs of tags appear together.

This allows for comparing the co-tag structure across the videos recommended for each user and evaluating the thematic sphere within their recommendation pathways. The three networks differ substantially in density and clustering (see figure 13). Density captures the extent to which tags are shared across videos (how many links exist), whereas clustering reflects the tendency of related tags to form tightly connected thematic groups.

Although absolute density values are relatively low, as expected in large networks with many possible connections, there are important differences across the profiles. Both the left and

right networks display higher density than the center network, indicating that the recommended videos share an overlapping thematic grammar. However, when focusing on the largest connected component (a group of nodes in a network that are all connected to one another), the right network's big component is substantially denser (0.096) than the left (0.066), indicating a more tightly interconnected and redundant thematic structure.

The Center user (C) tag network is more dispersed, with less co-occurrence of tags, more components (12) and a greater number of individual tags (1169 distinct tags compared to approximately 420 in the other networks). The vocabulary here is less redundant and less structurally organized, suggesting recommendations that are more heterogeneous and less thematically consistent over time. The thematic clusters are weakly interconnected, producing a fragmented ecosystem with low redundancy and limited thematic overlap. In other words, the center user's journey shows weaker thematic continuity, with few strong patterns and several weakly connected or isolated tags. This suggests a diffuse thematic environment with little internal structure or continuity.

The Right user (R) network exhibits the highest density within its largest connected component, indicating a highly interconnected and redundant thematic structure. At the same time, a smaller proportion of nodes (63%) belong to this component, with several additional disconnected clusters. This combination suggests a modular structure composed of dense, self-contained thematic "packets," in which tags repeatedly co-occur within stable, relatively isolated domains. It was also the network with more tags per video, reflecting efforts to increase discoverability through search optimization and recommendation systems.

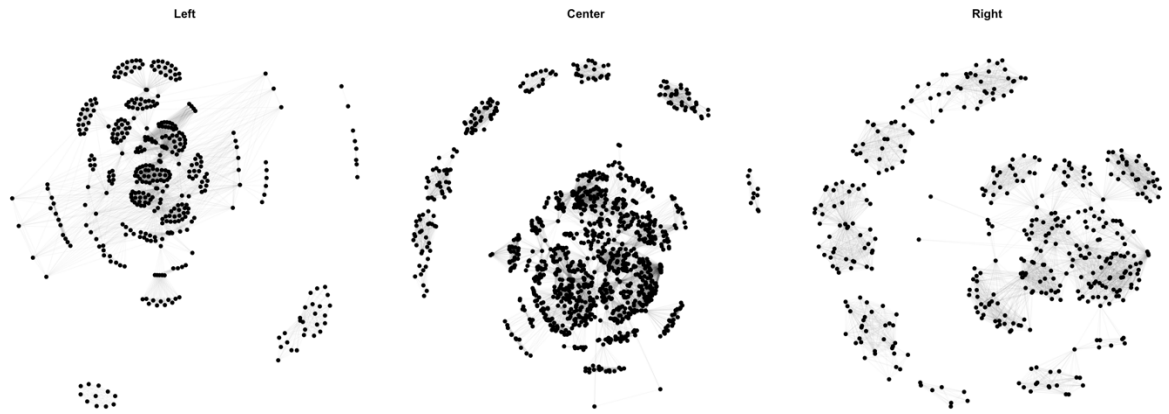


Figure 12. Co-tag networks for left, center, and right user profiles. Nodes represent video tags and edges indicate co-occurrence within the same video.

To further examine the internal organization of these networks, I applied a Louvain community detection algorithm to the largest connected component of each network. The results reveal distinct patterns of thematic grouping across the three big components. Modularity values are high across all the networks (Left = 0.73, Center = 0.84, Right = 0.75), indicating that all three networks exhibit well-defined community structures. The center network exhibits the highest modularity, suggesting that its thematic communities are more clearly separated.

At a more qualitative level, the co-tagging networks reveal differentiated thematic patterns across the Left (L), Center (C), and Right (R) trajectories. In the left network, the vocabulary is anchored in institutional politics, with the most important tags such as *"CPI"*, *"Brazilian politics"*, and *"politics"*, along with a constellation of terms related to organized crime and public safety, which align with the main topics of the week.

In contrast, the C network features a distinct core, organized around cultural, conversational, and some entertainment-oriented content. Highly central tags include *"podcast"*, *"history"*, and *"curiosities"*, along with references to widely known public intellectuals and

comedians. The prominence of these tags suggests a vocabulary less political, oriented instead toward general knowledge, humor, informal conversation, and pop-philosophy.

The Right network, meanwhile, is dominated by a clearly political-institutional axis centered on conflict, judicialization, and political public figures. Tags such as *"STF/Supreme Court"*, *"Alexandre de Moraes"*, *"Jair Bolsonaro"*, *"Jovem Pan"*, and *"Lula"* function as major hubs, accompanied by terms related to Congress, the economy, and corruption. These clusters are characteristic of a discursive ecosystem structured around institutional politics, political polarization, and conflict between political actors and judicial institutions.

From the heat map of video tags and titles in all data set (figure 14) , it becomes evident that "Lula", the president of Brazil, is the most frequently used term, alongside other political figures such as Moraes (from the Federal Supreme Court), Trump (U.S. president), Jair Bolsonaro (former Brazilian president), and Cláudio Castro (governor of Rio de Janeiro). In addition, general political terms such as "politics," "Brazilian politics," and "news" appear repeatedly across the dataset.

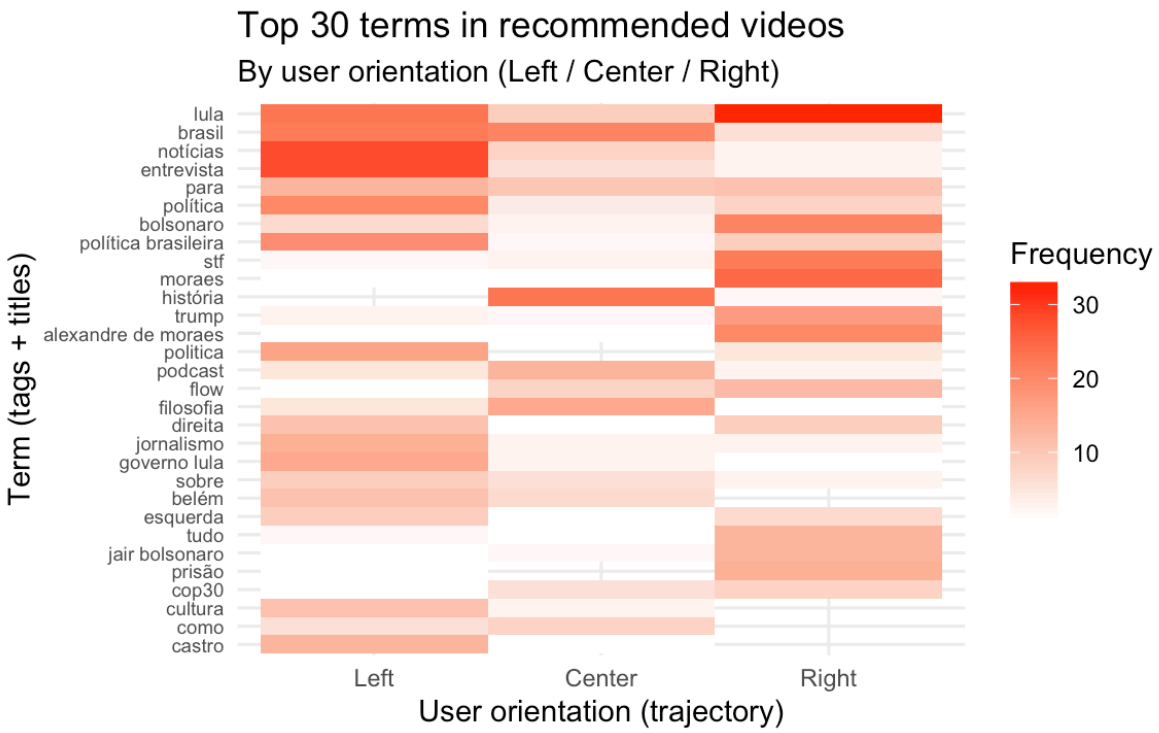


Figure 13. Heatmap – Top 30 terms in recommended network

To sum it up, the tag networks suggest structural differences between ideological ecosystems. The centrist profile generated a much larger variety of distinct tags, while the right-wing network displayed fewer unique tags but much higher repetition across videos. This pattern reflects the strategic use of recurring political keywords in commentary-driven channels, which often optimize their content for search and recommendation visibility.

Brasil Paralelo's Digital Ecosystem: A Flowchart

My digital ethnography across the BP universe revealed a universe in which BP's content is produced and circulates across multiple platform ecosystems. The main goal of BP is to convert ideologically receptive audiences into paying subscribers to BP's proprietary platform.

The strategy starts with producing a diverse range of media products, including documentary and feature-length films, children's content, online courses, interviews, podcasts, and other audiovisual materials. These products are distributed selectively across BP's proprietary streaming platform and major social media platforms, particularly YouTube, and promoted through direct messaging on Telegram, mail newsletter, social media and targeted advertising on Meta and Google. Not all this content is made freely available, however. Major documentaries are released free on YouTube and serve as large-scale audience-acquisition events. Courses, extended editions, complementary materials, and other exclusive products remain within BP's paid ecosystem.

According to BP's marketing director, Luan Bez[80], the documentary releases form the top of the company's sales funnel, sometimes attracting approximately one million views in a single day. The films feature repeated calls to action that explain BP's work and mission and direct users to a low-priced entry plan. Once they subscribe to this service, users are offered premium plans and services via email marketing, pop-ups, and other digital marketing channels.

BP documentary films, therefore, operate as an ideological product and a media product. Most content is followed by a call to action in the beginning and in the middle of the film. Viewers are frequently encouraged to subscribe, register, purchase memberships, join the streaming platform, enroll in courses, or engage with other products and services offered by the company. In this sense, free content on social media serve as audience-acquisition and conversion channels that direct users to BP's proprietary ecosystem, where monetization opportunities are greater and less dependent on third-party platforms.

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[80] ROI Hunters. (2021, February 20). *Como o Brasil Paralelo chegou em 180 MIL assinantes na sua plataforma* (No. 67) [Audio podcast episode]. Available at - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m4LtWWp-_m4

From each documentary or film, many excerpts and elements are repurposed into short-form content for social media (shorts, clips, highlights, and promotional fragments), which are subsequently disseminated across multiple digital platforms, including YouTube Shorts, Instagram, Facebook, TikTok, and X, as well as the news website. This content is further amplified through networks of aligned influencers, content creators, journalists, and political actors who can redistribute the material to their own audiences.

The circulation process is reinforced through paid advertising campaigns. BP promotes its content through micro-targeted advertisements on Meta platforms and YouTube, increasing visibility among specific audience segments. At the same time, platform recommendation systems might further amplify content exposure by recommending BP videos alongside other conservative and right-wing channels, or by promoting to all users via advertising. There are also carefully structured search engine optimization strategies that help place BP content at the top of search results.

Finally, audience engagement—including views, likes, comments, shares, reactions, and other forms of interaction—generates signals that contribute to algorithmic visibility. These engagement metrics increase the likelihood that content will be recommended to additional users, creating feedback loops that enhance reach and audience growth. In this sense, BP fans and audiences can be classified as prosumers, i.e., politically active users who simultaneously consume and produce digital content.

The visual representation of this process of commodification of right-wing ideology on digital systems is represented in the flowchart below (figure 14). The grey lines indicate the general circulation of content, from production to multiplatform distribution. In the center, there are the drivers of amplification, such as algorithms, prosumers and ads, which help sustain and

increase BP's engagement. Ultimately, the goal is to move users from public-facing content to BP's proprietary platform, where they can subscribe, purchase, or donate through philanthropic programs such as the *Projeto Mecenas.* The red arrows show the general flow of resources, whether financial or not. BP operations are also sustained by socioeconomic and political networks, while helping sustain them economically or politically.

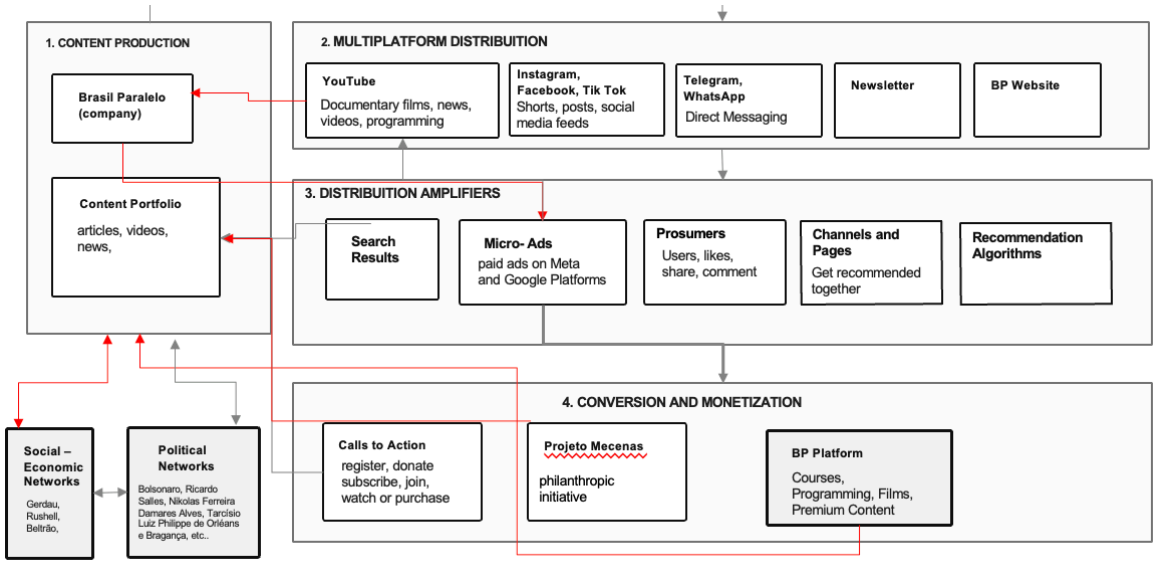


Figure 14. BP's Flowchart

While both YouTube and BP benefit economically from this process, their objectives differ. YouTube monetizes attention through advertising revenue generated by user engagement across the platform. BP, by contrast, seeks to convert platform audiences into paying subscribers and customers within its proprietary media ecosystem. Thus, although both actors monetize attention, BP's streaming platform ultimately serves as the central destination and the primary source of revenue in this communication model. The relationship between ideology and marketplace is therefore reciprocal. BP responds to a pre-existing demand for conservative media while simultaneously cultivating that demand, transforming ideological identification into audience loyalty and, ultimately, subscription revenue.

Conclusions

One of the central goals of this chapter was to understand how BP explores the affordances of digital platforms and how it benefits from them. From the literature review, there was a suggestion that the YouTube algorithm, in the way it filters and organizes information, could be an important factor driving political polarization, radicalism, or the spread of more conservative content. To better understand it, I designed a study that compared the types of videos recommended on the BP YouTube channel across different user profiles, looking for evidence consistent with the hypothesis of filter bubbles or political radicalization.

A central component of the analysis was the interpretative/qualitative examination of first and second-degree recommendations. Even within this relatively small sample, it became clear that the algorithm did *not* prioritize continuity with the seed video's initial topic (in this case, abortion). Instead, the dominant logic was to reinforce the ideological bubble associated with each user profile. Although the recommended videos often shifted away from the initial topic, the political alignment of the channels remained consistent with each user's training profile, a pattern that was particularly strong within the right-wing channel cluster, which was embedded in very denser and cohesive network, suggesting a more self-reinforcing informational environment.

A surprising finding is that the most frequently recommended videos were recent and closely tied to ongoing political events, consistent with an interpretation of YouTube as a kind of an “open-air television” ecosystem, where the platform seeks to keep viewers continuously updated on unfolding events. The system appears to behave like a very personalized news and political commentary feed, foregrounding recency and ideological affinity over any thematic coherence.

The YRA appears to be less concerned with thematic relevance to the original video and did not consistently push users into a clear pipeline of anti-abortion or pro-abortion radicalization. Instead, it seemed more focused on maintaining user attention through politically aligned content, particularly news-oriented and commentary-driven channels. This finding is consistent with the filter bubble and echo chamber hypothesis. In fact, the visual and structural patterns observed in this study provide concrete visual evidence that recommendation systems can organize content in ways that reinforce ideological clustering.

Although this is not a deterministic radicalization pathway, it provides evidence of algorithmic clustering consistent with filter-bubble dynamics and potential echo-chamber effects, which could be conducive to more radical, ideologically hardened forms of political perception as users are repeatedly exposed to politically aligned perspectives. The evidence resonates with Nguyen's (2020) description of epistemic bubbles: informational environments in which alternative viewpoints become structurally less visible. It also provides evidence for why BP users, in particular, and consumers of highly ideological media, in general, may become more susceptible to false or misleading information when claims are reinforced by existing ideological attachments and repeatedly validated within a relatively closed informational environment.

As a commercial enterprise, BP cannot be understood only by its ideological messaging. Its primary objective is not to accumulate views but to attract users to its proprietary platform. To achieve this, BP relies on a range of conversion strategies, with investments in digital advertising being the most significant. In addition, the company makes extensive use of direct communication channels, such as messaging apps, as well as release events and a network of influencers and digital content creators that help promote its films, often through coordinated, and highly targeted campaigns.

CHAPTER VII:

CONCLUSIONS

In this dissertation, I demonstrate that BP should be understood as both a media company and an ideological think tank with political and economic ambitions. Utilizing the framework of critical political economy of media I have uncovered some of BP's connections and networks of political and economic actors tied to free-market groups and conservative networks, as well as the strategic use of documentary film language and digital platform affordances.

My research has analyzed the emergence and growth of BP, as well as its adaptations, repositioning, and strategic plans, and how they are related to structural, historical, and material conditions. Key moments include the Brazilian political crisis starting in 2013, escalating in 2016 with the launch of BP, traversing the Bolsonaro election and administration, during which the company grew significantly, and a repositioning after Bolsonaro's defeat in the 2022 general elections. It culminates now in a moment of international expansion tied to the United States re-election of Donald Trump and his conservative politics.

BP emerged from pre-existing neoliberal and conservative networks that had already been setting the intellectual and political foundations of Brazilian conservatism and economic liberalism, long before the company's founding. As I have argued throughout this dissertation, BP should be understood as part of a much larger ecosystem of conservative actors, intellectuals, journalists, business leaders, and digital influencers. These have reorganized and re-united around 2013-2016 to challenge the political dominance of the Workers' Party in Brazilian politics and the advance of its progressive agenda and benefited from the expansion of digital communication and the internet in Brazilian society.

The analysis also demonstrates that BP's success cannot be explained solely through its political connections or financial resources. Its growth was also enabled by the strategic use of documentary storytelling to produce alternative interpretations of history, politics, and national identity, finished in a commercial product to bring audiences into their platform. I have argued that this is not simply the dissemination of misinformation, but rather that the company has developed a coherent epistemological framework that combines historical revisionism, culture-war narratives, emotional appeals, and claims of hidden truths into a persuasive narrative structure, which I have termed “parallel epistemologies”.

The company’s epistemology became a successful product for conservative actors and audiences in Brazil. At the same time, these narratives do not circulate in a vacuum. Their dissemination depends upon digital infrastructures capable of connecting BP to its audiences and other actors, sustaining engagement, and reinforcing ideological commitments over time. The findings suggest that platform environments such as YouTube tend to be use as a space for promotion and facilitate the formation of highly cohesive ideological ecosystems in which audiences repeatedly encounter similar narratives and the same interpretative frameworks. In this ecosystem, BP can be understood as a central node. It connects these different players and channels, exploring a diverse set of conversion strategies. BP uses documentary film release events, newsletters, influencer networks, and, more importantly, substantial advertising expenditure, which aims to convert ideologically aligned people into subscribers to its proprietary streaming platform.

I have demonstrated throughout this dissertation that what distinguishes BP, is its ability to deploy the language of documentary and, at times, fiction filmmaking, to mobilize stories in service of narratives that resonate within contemporary conservative politics. This is evident in

the case of abortion, which was analyzed in the proxy experiment. The same strategy extends to a wide range of issues, including gender, women's roles, economics, public security, religion, and other themes that occupy a central place in the conservative imagination and were discussed in chapter V. The company can transform political and ideological positions into emotionally engaging narratives and commercial products. It circulates these stories across multiple digital platforms, reaching audiences far beyond traditional political spaces. Although rooted in Brazilian political culture, BP engages in discussions across other societies, increasingly bypassing traditional institutions and building alternative media ecosystems that influence public discourse and shape new political agendas and identities. Another interesting aspect is that while the company started in Brazil discussing domestic topics, it is now expanding internationally, suggesting that right-wing ideological circulation does not operate exclusively from the Global North to the periphery, but can also involve peripheral actors aligned with and contributing to the global right-wing ideological core.

Theoretical and Methodological Contributions

I believe the combination of political economy and critical discourse analysis has proved a sophisticated way to understand the relationship between platforms and new forms of political communication, specifically the effects of social media and their relation to several of the political dysfunctions discussed in the literature review. It is a sound alternative to studies that have explored data, surveys, or experiments to measure media effects without considering the political-economic context. In fact, it is very simplistic to assume that the use of social media is causing the crises that capitalism and democratic political systems are currently facing. The connections are evident, but causality can’t be determined by a techno-determinist reading. The

political economy approach has proven to be more sensitive to the historical, cultural, political, and economic context, which is one of the key contributions of this research.

The concept of parallel epistemology, as an alternative regime of truth, can be very fruitful for future research and conceptualization on disinformation, documentary films, and, especially, the understanding of right-wing digital media and cultural production. It is not just disinformation, but a regime that builds stories through selective omission, decontextualization, strategic framing, emotional storytelling, and the mobilization of expert authority and its very appealing for pre-aligned audiences.

Examining BP through multiple analytical lenses offered an innovative framework for understanding, in broad terms, how ideological media companies operate within contemporary digital ecosystems. While this dissertation does not advance prescriptive policy recommendations, the findings point to the importance of greater transparency and liability from both platforms and content producers, particularly regarding algorithmic recommendation systems, advertising strategies, and the financial networks that sustain those ideological media enterprises. The fact that Meta (and Google for a while) had data about political advertising reveals the importance and the value of platform transparency initiatives, making it possible for researchers, journalists, and civil society to investigate and understand the dynamics of political communication.

Ultimately, BP is not an isolated Brazilian case of an emerging right-wing media but one that resonates with the rest of the world. It is part of a global transformation in which contemporary political actors increasingly operate as media movements in the platformed attention economy, which provides the infrastructure through which these projects expand. The case reveals how digital media reduced barriers to alternative media and empowered actors with

both a strong political agenda and economic support. They no longer depend on traditional media channels, editors, or newspapers to build a community and share a message.

In this context, the political power is now attached to the capacity to create those channels and feed them with content and stories that resonate with the audience. Elections are tied to disputes on memory, history, national identity, and general epistemological consensus. The political development of those stories is now just as important as the political campaigns, and this study has shown that in this context, documentary filmmaking and other narrative formats have become important technologies of persuasion, with renewed interest. Understanding these transformations is essential for understanding contemporary Brazil and the changing dynamics of politics in the platform age.

Limitations and Future Directions

Important to note that the film corpus in this dissertation is only a fraction of all the content produced by BP, which excludes narrative films, children's programming, podcasts, video formats, and especially the much larger volume of short videos and YouTube content production. The accelerated production pace starting in 2022 makes it difficult to conduct an exhaustive analysis. BP production is very attuned and attentive to the specific events and trending topics occurring around the globe.

My analysis here, therefore, represents a snapshot of this constantly changing environment in a channel that uploads dozens of videos daily. Future research should focus on other forms of ideological production and account for specific campaigns and topics they have been exploring across different time frames. Since 2023, BP has also been producing fictional films, releasing *Oficina do Diabo*, an (unofficial) adaptation of *The Screwtape Letters* by C. S. Lewis, and, as of 2026, the moment I am writing this dissertation, BP is releasing yet another

fictional feature film, *Um Domingo Sem Deus*. In this sense, narrative films may become an important area for future research, as they are more elaborate and difficult to produce and activate a different range of skills and techniques. Analyses of those narrative films could explore the new frontiers of Brazilian conservative filmmaking, a topic that is likely to receive much more attention in the years to come.

It must also be noted that the full economic and structural understanding of the company depends on sources that are not necessarily publicly available; most of the data used in this dissertation is limited by availability. Future research should continue exploring those sources and seek ways to delve deeper into primary sources through interviews and data collection. It is also certainly going to be very fruitful to understand BP in comparison with other ideological media companies from Brazil and around the globe, in particular its connection with U.S. players such as PragerU, Turning Point, Daily Wire, and other ideological global media.

Regarding digital ethnography and the analysis of digital data, using proxy accounts limits the generalizability of findings, as manipulated accounts cannot fully reflect the experience of real users. In practice, YouTube recommendations are influenced by a wide range of inputs, including past viewing history, likes, comments, searches, cross-platform activity within Google services, and long-term behavioral patterns. As a result, Proxy accounts do not possess the extensive behavior records typically associated with real users' accounts, and real users may experience more nuanced recommendation environments that this study design cannot fully capture. This research is also limited because it does not shed light on the impact of BP on subscribers' and followers' perceptions, which could only be assessed through interviews or the analysis of commentaries on their own platforms and on YouTube.

An interesting development emerging from this research is the growing use of documentary filmmaking by partisan and politically engaged media organizations. In Brazil, left-leaning outlets such as Brasil de Fato, ICL Notícias, and The Intercept Brasil have also increasingly invested in documentary productions designed for online distribution . This shows an opportunity for documentary filmmaking in the digital age and shows how the genre continues to play an important role in shaping political identities and public debate. Future studies could examine this growing corpus of digital political documentaries comparatively, exploring how distinct ideological actors employ documentary conventions and platform strategies to advance competing political projects.

Finally, platform studies need to pay attention not only to the owners and controllers of the infrastructure but also to the players that occupy the infrastructure itself. As much of the literature concentrates on algorithms, AI, and other forms of data governance, this research demonstrates that it is also necessary to understand who produced content, with what resources, and which political projects they are tied to. Platforms do not produce content; they operate as intermediaries interacting with players and organizations that learn to explore their economic, technical, and cultural logics.

APPENDIX A -

BRASIL PARALELO DOCUMENTARY CORPUS ANALYZED IN THE STUDY

Table 2. Brasil Paralelo documentary catalog, synopses, topics, and distribution

Title (Portuguese / English)	Release	Director(s)	Eps.	Synopsis	Topics	Distribution
Congresso Brasil Paralelo (Parallel Brazil Congress)	Dec-16	Filipe Valerim, Lucas Ferrugem, Henrique Viana	6	BP's inaugural project is a set of interviews with conservative and libertarian politicians, intellectuals, journalists, and activists to diagnose Brazil's political crisis, economic, and cultural condition. It emphasizes taxation, corrupt politicians, deteriorating public services, forgotten national symbols, and an alleged left-wing monopoly over historical memory. The series establishes the anti-left, free-market, and culture-war vocabulary that would organize the company's later documentaries.	Brazilian Politics	Both — complete series on YouTube
Brasil a Última Cruzada (2017) (Brazil: The Last Crusade (2017))	Sep-17	Lucas Ferrugem, Henrique Viana, Filipe Valerim	6	This six-part series retells Brazilian history through "The Cross and the Sword," "Vila Rica," "The Guillotine of Equality," "Independence or Death," "The Last Reign," and "The Vargas It is a celebration of Portuguese sacrifice, honor, courage, and overseas expansion. The heroic Christian and monarchical structure present the past as a suppressed source of patriotic pride while minimizing conflict and converting history into a conservative explanation of Brazil's present.	Brazilian History	Both — complete series on YouTube
O Dia Depois da Eleição (The Day After the Election)	Jun-18	Filipe Valerim, Henrique Viana, Lucas Ferrugem, Rodolfo Taylor	5	This five-part series combines Leandro Ruschel's commentary with a history of elections, political-economic crises, and recovery plans. It teaches viewers to anticipate government-induced risks, protect themselves from political decisions, and exploit market opportunities. Its practical financial advice is embedded in a libertarian account in which the left remains a persistent threat.	Brazilian Politics	Both — complete series on YouTube
O Teatro das Tesouras (The Theater of Scissors)	Aug-18	Filipe Valerim, Henrique Viana, Lucas Ferrugem, Rodolfo Taylor,	7	The series revisits Brazil's eight presidential elections from 1989 through 2014 through Olavo de Carvalho's "two blades of the same scissors" thesis. Each episode is organized around an election year, presenting apparent competition between established parties as an illusion produced by moderate and radical wings of the same hegemonic force. This framing recasts the emerging conservative right as the only authentic anti-system opposition.	Brazilian Politics	Both — partial series on YouTube
Dossiê Urnas Eltrônicas (Operation Anti-Fraud / Voting Machines Dossier)	Oct-18	Filipe Valerim, Henrique Viana, Lucas Ferrugem,	1	Presented as an independent investigation, the film questions the reliability of Brazil's electronic voting system and claims that its security cannot be conclusively demonstrated. Key claims were later rejected by electoral authorities, and the production was removed.	Disinformation, Elections, Electronic Voting	Neither — production removed
1964 Entre Livros e Armas (1964: Brazil Between Books and Arms)	Apr-19	Filipe Valerim	1	The film reconstructs the Cold War context of the 1964 military coup and frames military intervention as a response to an imminent communist threat. By privileging anti-communist testimony, it shifts attention away from dictatorship, torture, and state repression and toward the legitimation of military action.	Brazilian History, Military	Both — complete film on YouTube

Title (Portuguese / English)	Release	Director(s)	Eps.	Synopsis	Topics	Distribution
Patria Educadora (The Educating Nation)	Mar-20	Filipe Valerim, Lucas Ferrugem,	3	This three-part documentary traces the historical development of public education, from its institutionalization to contemporary debates over educational policy in Brazil. It argues that Brazilian schools have been shaped by the influence of Hegelian philosophy, Marxism, Paulo Freire, militant teachers' unions, and left-wing political movements, while contrasting these perspectives with a liberal conception of education centered on the pursuit and transmission of truth. The series presents public education as a central arena in Brazil's ongoing cultural and ideological disputes.	Education	Both — complete series on YouTube
7 denúncias (Seven Claims)	Jun-20	Filipe Valerim	1	Released during the COVID-19 pandemic, the documentary organizes seven allegations around the tension between public-health restrictions, individual liberty, and governmental power. Its framing challenges masks, distancing, and other interventions while aligning health policy with broader suspicions of institutional overreach during the Bolsonaro administration.	Disinformation, COVID-19	BP platform only
Os Donos da Verdade (The Owners of Truth)	Aug-20	Filipe Valerim, Lucas Ferrugem	1	The documentary examines debates over freedom of expression, censorship, and institutional authority in Brazil. Centered on the Supreme Federal Court's actions against online disinformation, it argues that state institutions have increasingly assumed the power to determine what is true or false, framing such interventions as threats to free thought and democratic debate.	Brazilian Supreme Court (STF), Brazilian Politics	BP platform only
Fim das Nações (The End of Nations)	Oct-20	Filipe Valerim, Lucas Ferrugem	3	A three-part series examines the decline of the United States amid the crises of 2020, including the COVID-19 pandemic, economic disruption, social unrest, and political polarization. It argues that these developments weakened American global leadership, creating conditions for the rise of new powers and the emergence of a multipolar world order.	United States, Geopolitics	Both — complete series on YouTube
As Grandes Minorias (The Great Minorities)	Nov-20	Henrique Zingano	3	This trilogy examines three distinct targets: antifascist movements, gender politics, and Black Lives Matter. Include discussions of protest tactics and symbols, “gender ideology” in schools and public institutions, transgender rights and language, and the deaths of Michael Brown and George Floyd. By treating these movements principally as coordinated left-wing agendas seeking privilege and power, the series gives limited space to structural inequality and histories of exclusion.	Identities, Social Movements	Both — complete series on YouTube
A Queda (Argentina) (The Fall (Argentina))	Mar-21	Lucas Ferrugem	3	A three parts that series explains Argentina’s movement from prosperity to poverty and political instability, using the country as a warning for Brazil. Its foregrounds populism, state expansion, inflation, and economic intervention, transforming Argentina’s crisis into a cautionary narrative for a Brazilian audience aligned with market liberalism.	Latin America	Both — complete series on YouTube
A Primeira Arte (The First Art)	Apr-21	Henrique Zingano, Filipe Valerim	3	Presented by pianist Álvaro Siviero, the series explores music as a universal language. Interviews with international musicians support a conservative aesthetics in which harmony, inherited forms, and transcendence are contrasted with the fragmentation and commercial pressures of modern culture.	Art	Both — complete series on YouTube
Cortina de Fumaça (Smoke Screen)	Jun-21	Filipe Valerim	1	The documentary investigates Amazon fires and disputes accounts that attribute environmental destruction primarily to agribusiness and government policy. It frames environmental concern as a field of political manipulation and foreign interest, turning contested evidence into a “hidden truth” narrative that delegitimizes environmental organizations and mainstream reporting.	Environment	Both — complete film on YouTube

Title (Portuguese / English)	Release	Director(s)	Eps.	Synopsis	Topics	Distribution
A Sétima Arte (The Seventh Art)	Oct-21	Lucas Ferrugem	7	This series examines cinema's power to entertain, educate, and shape the moral imagination. It treats film not as neutral culture but as a strategic arena in which values and political identities are formed, placing the history of cinema inside BP's wider argument that contemporary art participates in civilizational and ideological conflict.	Art, Cinema	Both — partial series on YouTube
Fim da Beleza (The End of Beauty)	Feb-22	Marco Aslan	3	The series traces changing concepts of beauty and argues that modernity produced a radical rupture in art, architecture, and everyday perception. Its account associates classical order and transcendence with civilizational health, while presenting modern and contemporary aesthetics as symptoms of fragmentation, relativism, and cultural decline.	Art, Aesthetics	Both — Episode 1 on YouTube
A Face Oculta do Feminismo (The Hidden Face of Feminism)	Apr-22	Guilherme Freire	1	The film presents feminism as a movement with a public face of equality and solidarity and a second, deliberately concealed face. Its selective genealogy treats diverse feminist traditions as a unified ideological project threatening traditional family and gender roles.	Identities, Feminism	BP platform only
Entre Lobos (Among Wolves)	Jun-22	Sílvio Medeiros	3	This public-security trilogy asks why Brazil became fertile ground for violent crime, centering victims, police officers, and security officials. It portrays criminality as an existential national threat and police work as heroic sacrifice, advancing punitive policing and civilian armament while giving less space to structural explanations or abuses of state violence.	Public Security	BP platform only
Guerra do Imaginário (War of the Imagination)	Aug-22	Guilherme Freire	3	Through biographies of G. K. Chesterton, C. S. Lewis, and J. R. R. Tolkien, the trilogy depicts twentieth-century cultural conflict as a largely invisible battle over imagination and Western values.	Culture Wars, History	Both — episodes available on YouTube
A Crise dos Três Poderes (The Crisis of the Three Powers)	Sep-22	Lucas Ferrugem	3	The documentary asks whether Brazil's democratic crisis originates in the executive, the judiciary, or Congress, but ultimately concentrates on unelected bureaucrats and political elites portrayed as exploiting the state and obstructing governability. Its anti-establishment framing continues BP's criticism of the Supreme Court and presents institutional conflict as evidence of systemic capture.	Brazilian Supreme Court (STF), Brazilian Politics	BP platform only
Brasil a Última Cruzada (edição bicentenário) (Brazil: The Last Crusade (Bicentennial Edition))	Oct-22	Filipe Valerim, Henrique Viana, Lucas Ferrugem	5	Produced for the bicentennial of independence, this is a revised version of the 2017 edition.	Brazilian History	BP platform only
Teatro das Tesouras 2018 (The Theater of Scissors 2)	Oct-22	Asaph Hiroto	1	This documentary continues the Theater of the Scissors series by examining the 2018 Brazilian presidential election. It argues that Jair Bolsonaro's victory disrupted the long-standing electoral dominance of the Workers' Party (PT) and the Brazilian Social Democracy Party (PSDB), ending what the film portrays as a managed political rivalry. According to the documentary, the election marked a decisive break with Brazil's previous political establishment.	Brazilian Politics	BP platform only
Quem Mandou Matar Bolsonaro (Who Ordered Bolsonaro's Assassination?)	Oct-22	Lucas Ferrugem, Henrique Viana, Filipe Valerim	1	Structured as a parallel investigation of the 2018 stabbing of Jair Bolsonaro, the production revisits unanswered questions and alleged connections surrounding the attacker and left wing parties. Its investigative-thriller form builds a conspiratory atmosphere, encouraging viewers to see the case as evidence of concealed political coordination.	Brazilian Politics, Disinformation	No longer available
A Camisa Mais Pesada do Mundo (The Heaviest Jersey in the World)	Nov-22	Diego Rosa, Silvio Medeiros	1	The documentary reconstructs the Brazilian national football team as a shared repository of memory, pride, and national identity, moving from historic triumphs to the trauma of the 7–1 defeat.	Football (Soccer)	BP platform only

Title (Portuguese / English)	Release	Director(s)	Eps.	Synopsis	Topics	Distribution
Varig A Caixa preta (Varig: Brazil's Black Box)	Dec-22	Henrique Zingano	1	The film recounts the rise and collapse of Varig, once Brazil's flagship airline, and asks whether its bankruptcy was an ordinary business failure or a politically produced "murder". It associates bureaucracy, state decisions, and institutional failure with Brazil's repeated inability to fulfill its promise of greatness.	Aviation, Brazilian Business History	BP platform only
A Fantastica Fabrica de Sanidade (The Fantastic Factory of Sanity)	Jan-23	Lucas Araújo	3	This three-part investigation links depression and psychological distress to social media, consumerism, materialism, and the loss of spiritual and family bonds.	Mental Health	BP platform only
Nicarágua Lberdade Exilada (Nicaragua: Freedom in Exile)	Feb-23	Andrhey Ferreira	1	This documentary examines the contemporary political crisis in Nicaragua under the government of Daniel Ortega. Combining historical background with interviews featuring exiled journalists, opposition figures, religious leaders, and victims of political persecution, the film portrays the Ortega administration as an authoritarian regime characterized by repression, censorship, and human rights abuses. It also situates Nicaragua's trajectory within broader debates about left-wing politics in Latin America and its connections with leaders such as Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva.	Latin America	BP platform only
Era uma Vez Carnaval (Once Upon a Time, Carnival)	Feb-23	Lucas Araújo	1	The special traces Carnival's origins, transformations, and contemporary meanings while asking what the festival has gained and lost. I	Brazilian Culture, Carnival	BP platform only
A Direita no Brasil (The Right in Brazil)	Mar-23	Henrique Viana, Lucas Ferrugem	3	The three-act series reconstruct the return of the Brazilian right to public life, the impeachment of Dilma Rousseff and rise of Jair Bolsonaro, and the movement's defeat in 2022. The final act considers Bolsonaro's difficulties with Congress and traditional media, the meaning of the January 8, 2023 demonstrations, and future strategies.	Brazilian Politics	BP platform only
Infliltrados Venezuela (Infiltrators: Venezuela)	Jul-23	Lucas Araújo	1	Filmed covertly with mobile phones, the production assembles testimony from residents, dissidents, and opposition figures to depict the scale of Venezuela's political and humanitarian crisis. Organized around BP's recurring anti-socialist framework of state collapse, repression, and truths allegedly hidden by conventional media.	Latin America	BP platform only
Aos Amigos a Lei (To Friends, the Law)	Aug-23	Silvio Medeiros	1	The film investigates Brazil's Rouanet cultural-incentive law, asking whether public support reaches marginalized artists or instead rewards celebrities, favored regions, and politically connected projects. It frames cultural policy through patronage and scandal, reinforcing the idea that state-funded art forms an ideological ecosystem insulated from ordinary Brazilians.	Art, Rouanet Law, Brazilian Politics	BP platform only
Duas Vidas (Two Lives)	Oct-23	Elton Mesquita	1	The documentary approaches abortion through fetal life, maternal testimony, medical imagery, and stories of women who continued pregnancies under difficult circumstances. Its explicitly anti-abortion framework presents motherhood as fulfillment, treats the fetus as the central victim, and gives limited space to arguments for legal access.	Abortion, Identities, Women	Both — complete film on YouTube
Deja Vú: O Primeiro Ano do Governo (Déjà Vu: The Government's First Year)	Dec-23	Lucas Araúo Eder Puchalski	1	Reviewing the first year of Lula's return to the presidency, the film asks whether a government branded around love and democracy reproduced polarization, alliances with authoritarian regimes, and the antagonisms of earlier Workers' Party administrations.	Brazilian Politics	BP platform only
A História do Comunismo (The History of Communism)	Mar-24	Lucas Ferrugem	6	Filmed across ten countries, this six-part series combines international scholars and archives to narrate communist ideas, revolutions, and regimes. Its historical sweep emphasizes repression, mass death, propaganda, and hostility to religion, constructing communism as a recurring collectivist threat to individual freedom and Western order.	History	Both — Episodes 1–3 on YouTube

Title (Portuguese / English)	Release	Director(s)	Eps.	Synopsis	Topics	Distribution
O Resgate (The Rescue)	Aug-24	Elton Mesquita, Henrique Viana	1	The documentary preserves testimony from victims and volunteers after the 2024 floods in Rio Grande do Sul, emphasizing mutual aid and the heroism of ordinary citizens..	Natural Disasters, Humanitarian Rescue	Both — complete film on YouTube
Armada e Ultrajada (Beloved and Outraged)	Aug-24		3	This series presents the history of the Brazilian Army as a complex national institution alternately loved as guardian and condemned as an agent of repression. Its chronological account foregrounds military sacrifice, unity, and state-building, while its restorative framing tends to absorb dictatorship and institutional violence into a larger narrative of national service.	Military, Brazilian History	Both — Episodes 1 and 3 on YouTube
Unitopia (Unitopia)	Sep-24	Silvio Medeiros	2	Using access to public universities and testimony from students, faculty, and staff, the documentary investigates what it describes as ideological capture, intolerance, and declining academic purpose. It extends the arguments of Pátria Educadora to higher education, portraying campuses as spaces where left-wing hegemony suppresses dissent and shapes the country's future.	Education	Both — Episode 1 on YouTube
From The River to The Sea (From the River to the Sea)	Oct-24	Filipe Valerim, Lucas Ferrugem	1	Filmed after the October 7 attacks, the documentary combines testimony from Israeli and Brazilian-Israeli survivors, military and intelligence voices, and footage from the region. It frames the Israel–Hamas war as a civilizational struggle between Western freedom and radical Islam, centering Israeli victimhood while giving comparatively limited attention to Palestinian suffering in Gaza.	Geopolitics, International Affairs	Both — complete film on YouTube
A História dos Partidos Americanos (The History of American Political Parties)	Nov-24	Henrique Zingano	1	The series traces the formation and ideological realignment of the Democratic and Republican parties in the US. Designed for BP's transnational turn, it interprets U.S. partisan history through a conservative lens that disputes simplified associations between present-day party labels and their historical constituencies.	United States, Political History	YouTube only — three episodes
Rio de Janeiro Paraíso em Chamas (Rio de Janeiro: Paradise in Flames)	Apr-25	Asaph Hiroto	1	Filmed in favelas and other high-risk locations, the documentary depicts Rio de Janeiro as a city trapped between criminal factions, militias, and an overwhelmed state. Testimony from residents, former criminals, and security actors creates an urgent war-zone narrative that continues BP's law-and-order agenda.	Public Security	BP platform only
MST Terra Prometida (MST: Promised Land)	May-25	Elton Mesquita	1	The documentary visits settlements, examines records, and interviews people connected to Brazil's Landless Workers' Movement to ask how the organization operates and whose interests it serves. Its framing foregrounds invasion, political coordination, and insecurity, framing the MST as a threat to private property.	Social Movements, Agribusiness	BP platform only
O Papa que Venceu o Comunismo (The Pope Who Defeated Communism)	Aug-25	André Brandão	1	This biographical series follows Karol Wojtyła from Nazi- and Soviet-dominated Poland to his papacy, emphasizing persecution, faith, the Solidarity movement, and his contribution to communism's collapse. Its heroic structure presents Christianity as a force of freedom and moral courage confronting totalitarianism.	Religion, History	BP platform only
História do Fascismo (The History of Fascism)	Sep-25	Renan Amadeo, Lucas Ferrugem	3	Across three episodes, the series reconstructs Mussolini's rise, Hitler's ascent, and the wartime destruction of fascist regimes through international scholars and archival research. While rejecting the casual use of "fascist" as a political insult, it emphasizes fascism's revolutionary, statist, and collectivist features, creating interpretive proximity between fascism and socialism within BP's alternative-history framework.	History	Both — Episode 1 on YouTube

Title (Portuguese / English)	Release	Director(s)	Eps.	Synopsis	Topics	Distribution
God Complex (God Complex)	Dec-25	Henrique Viana	1	Produced for U.S. audiences, the film alleges that government agencies, technology firms, universities, NGOs, and media organizations formed a censorship-industrial complex to police online speech. Through whistleblowers and expert interviews, it reframes disinformation governance as coordinated persecution of anti-establishment and conservative voices.	United States, Technology, Censorship	Both — complete film on YouTube

APPENDIX B -

YOUTUBE PROXY EXPERIMENT DATA

Table 3. YouTube channels used to train the proxy profiles

Media outlet / channel	Subscribers (millions)	YouTube handle or path	Orientation
Jovem Pan News	8.81	@jovempannews	Right
Os Pingos Nos Is	5.39	@ospingosnosis	Right
Mundo Polarizado	1.46	@mundopolarizado	Right
Pânico Jovem Pan	4.15	c/panicojovempan	Right
Pânico Retrô	2.90	@PanicoRetroOficial	Right
O Antagonista	1.41	@OAntagonista	Right
Revista Oeste	3.31	@RevistaOeste	Right
Gazeta do Povo	1.92	@gazetadopovo	Right
Jornal da Cidade Online	0.82	@JornalDaCidadeO	Right
Brasil Paralelo	4.80	@brasilparalelo	Right
brasil 247	1.42	@brasil247	Left
Carta Capital	0.66	@CartaCapital	Left
TV GCN	0.45	@TVGGN	Left
Rede TVT	1.13	@redetvt	Left
Brasil de Fato	0.83	@brasildefato	Left
Intercept Brasil	0.39	@TheInterceptBrasil	Left
Meteoro Brasil	1.78	@MeteoroBrasil	Left
Normose	0.47	@Normose_	Left
ICL Notícias	1.30	@InstitutoConhecimentoLiberta	Left
Esquerda Diário	0.01	@EsquerdaDiário	Left
Revista Forum	0.918	@forumrevista	Center
Estadao	1.26	@estadao	Center
Folha de SP	1.05	@folha	Center
UOL Noticias	5.2	@uol	Center
Globo News	0.103	@globonews	Center
Jornal O Globo	1.33	@jornaloglobo	Center
Valor Economico	0.155	@valoreconomico	Center
Band Jornalismo	6.35	@bandjornalismo	Center
Veja	1.16	user/vejapontocom	Center

Note. Subscriber figures are reported in millions and reproduce the values recorded in the source file for October 14, 2025. The table contains 29 training channels: 10 right, 10 left, and 9 center.

Table 4. YouTube channels observed in the recommendation network

YouTube channel ID	Channel title	Orientation	Primary content category
UCKDjjeeBmdaiicey2nImISw	Brasil Paralelo	Right	News
UCe7pERoN0opA4dB-VbwjUiA	Reinaldo Azevedo	Center	News
UCRuy5PigeeBuecKnwqhM4yg	TV 247	Left	News
UC7cIZNwQhE1o8kopShrQHvw	Eduardo Moreira	Left	Interviews
UCDGz2exMIsPQ4k9VrsuhKTA	CartaCapital	Left	News
UCzn7GOp7MautfajTZBZLiYA	A Terra É Redonda	Left	News
UC3sMBA3BdnsKSVI0WB9yVWQ	TV Fórum	Center	News
UCaIqJHHo9TJiLINzOFJRl2Q	Instituto Conhecimento Liberta	Left	News
UCPYIYR0J8ppEJVtR1weLnBw	TV GGN	Left	News
UCq-V8B_t_gUWlAJ5YaJSRzQ	revista piauí	Left	News
UCOjUlJ4EpPxuhtT0zEVw25A	Opera Mundi	Left	News
UC1_UK9KENF9VMFSaM68Bzhw	Estúdio 5° Elemento	Right	News
UCBQAI1ZhurW3nbtJR-gBBZg	Revista Oeste	Right	News
UCaPLZL2NhegQjy37DzYFOCw	HistoriLand	Unclassified	History
UCq0sSSg_HEd4Y2g_pBMdL7w	O Giro de Notícias	Right	News
UCDe3op52rKSzB4X8DDL4mhA	Canal Sérgio Tavares	Right	News
UCVYJjhKi9JFnLV3dtACscgg	Cuidadores Informais PH-ANCI	Unclassified	Health
UCxiwU16NR_q9kng2BXKSQbQ	Mauro Fagundes	Right	News
UCSTlOTcyUmzvhQi6F8lFi5w	Atila Iamarino	Left	Science
UCK3U5q7b8U8yffUlblyrpRQ	Correio Braziliense	Center	News
UCSv9d0kQegylHWpP83jWSQg	TV Brasil	Center	News
UC9gBKATWNtZCRaKGUVQtDWw	Epifania Experiência	Unclassified	Philosophy
UCwZwvDC6f0WhcVTG-3aBUTQ	Market Makers	Right	Economics; news
UCH2VZQBLFTOp6I_qgnBJCuQ	Canal Nostalgia	Center	History
UC376n347Ob5Lwzq2WGzF1AA	SBT News	Center	News
UCiUy6F5LNqi_DHvyf0xDsmQ	Drª Bruna Velasques	Unclassified	Psychology
UCcoxGCRGcq6FhHbEvr2y9Vg	Ian Neves - História Pública	Left	History
UCvO2BExvkAbGMsTGnEnI_Ng	Lula	Left	Politics
UCxMwNPPBqQ31UsjwT7jgg_g	A Voz Trabalhadora	Left	News
UCutrj9cR0cNi2PfiTMGAWrA	DCM TV	Left	News
UCCmh3nJayT-7jEM6hg2vP9Q	Laura Sabino	Left	News
UCVFbXI6Gu8U2f9Gjtxw4A-Q	UOL	Center	News
UCY0tVnGvYPmYm7RbwJ89UNg	UOL Prime	Center	News
UCk5BcU1rOy6hepflk7_q_Pw	Meteoro Brasil	Left	News
UCWeXgaH6wwyTRAkA3n6sRxg	Terra Brasil	Center	News
UCaGmdJSSiR7fkh2A-c6emsA	g1	Center	News
UCIj7UmUVFTFC9yXNiZoRmEg	Quem Somos Nós?	Unclassified	Interviews
UCWijW6tW0iI5ghsAbWDFtTg	Rádio BandNews FM	Center	News
UCUM4-KGZEXC2pk6zRDL9jMQ	MyNews	Center	News
UCWE75Qq5ExU0qlwQSkx18wQ	Clayson	Left	News
UCrEqVHi3Sj2WwDz0FrDZKSQ	As Cunhãs	Left	Podcast; news

YouTube channel ID	Channel title	Orientation	Primary content category
UC02coXfDPjEmU8uDT2G8Z2A	Jones Manoel	Left	News; politics
UC4ncvgh5hFr5O83MH7-jRJg	Flow Podcast	Center	Podcast
UCOJfaGzIcQIPBaiRyCjLtyQ	CBN Paraíba	Center	News
UCitie-To0pWGe5Qyk9SjWRA	Alexandre Garcia	Right	News
UCXRIQok8uzYtg1TPwSqikVg	Te atualizei	Right	News
UC9U4nIDyIzzelXrjNQXNvxA	Pânico Jovem Pan	Right	News
UCzjtGnD7qqeaHW3nvDVrjQA	Os Pingos nos Is	Right	News
UCWdGgeyOnCOGnvhNdbVl1dQ	Gazeta do Povo	Right	News
UCUUQBgnLa_umQ_TGKlG2Xqw	André Marsiglia	Right	News
UCodVOyQdE483n5T9iBdhX9g	Zona Zero Brasil	Right	Geopolitics
UCWQdOsZRFpTR5n37gld20Sw	Cruzando Séculos	Unclassified	History
UCo8mjisunnKhAtb2RB0insA	Universo Espírita Oficial	Unclassified	Religion
UC84asuWqcrFqEtWqSCtS85Q	Deltan Dallagnol	Right	Politics
UCuVPpxrm2VAgpH3Ktln4HXg	YouTube Movies	Center	Films
UCOyVOcpBOtEQ4CfiT3ir4dA	Daily Fans Jeffrey Sachs	Center	Geopolitics
UCASgTJ8pQjqI0dyeC3pIz2g	Luís Ernesto Lacombe	Right	News
UC7_vgvSBx0Md1wyCGLrgLRA	Alessandro Santana Oficial	Right	News
UC6lIAxm56lysZ_yYOVFxosQ	Paralelo News	Right	News
UCUmN4RWoL4HavTlMLrkaxHQ	Dr. Sandro Gonçalves	Right	News
UC2IEgRZcIuemAPJqXa2nHvQ	Pânico Retrô	Right	News
UCTnAz569lU_nwpSmY4daZvg	oiluiz TV	Right	News
UCkR6xPOHhpjq3wnFchVI4sg	EDUARDO BOLSONARO	Right	Politics
UC3uYvpJ3J6oNoNYRXfZXjEw	Cortes do Flow [OFICIAL]	Center	Podcast
UCYiM773ssvNMaBHvaWWeIoQ	Folha Política	Right	News
UCuiukp_wROL9PdZKm1hxSfA	KiM PAiM	Right	News
UCIIL8dssVHbQUe_ZW04Ki2g	Caleb Jones - Alpha Male 2.0	Right	Red pill
UCq7H0_ta7jz6KZoNzX0jizA	Gazeta do Povo - Extras	Right	News
UCdxyxpyyov-bulqZw3eQFcA	Jorge Armando Rocha	Unclassified	News; Mexico
UC9zqTTVeClpqMQ5CLuJdWtw	Drauzio Varella	Center	Health
UCdKJlY5eAoSumIlcOcYxIGg	Nunca vi 1 cientista	Unclassified	Science
UCAMO_xP86YB4FSHD1Mi_GpA	NOVA ACRÓPOLE BRASIL	Unclassified	Philosophy; coaching
UCT-XxSV4lQlkjhOMnr1p-rQ	Flash	Unclassified	Business
UCF-4abYiGtu9kfjq2ON5rgA	Matéria de Capa	Center	Documentaries; television program
UCjaWLFTNqLkq3ZY2BJ4NYRg	CanalGov	Center	News
UCn9Erjy00mpnWeLnRqhsA1g	Ciência Todo Dia	Unclassified	Science
UCRP5p2RfxJgnKyWgve5pJ-Q	Canal History Brasil	Center	Documentaries
UCDN9trGkW4NiznUCUhHcSmg	Investigação Criminal	Unclassified	Crime
UCFLjDsmlPGUaiZrMp7rpgHQ	Maria Bethânia	Left	Music; art
UCvdwhh_fDyWccR42-rReZLw	CNN Brasil	Center	News
UCmQTY7b5w61WlmBbJ5a8XrQ	Rede TVT	Left	News
UCOnuheHbS2DgZiAZFL0-Sbg	Brasil de Fato	Left	News
UCksexEveRkoez2kiEjaKZxQ	Enap	Center	Education

YouTube channel ID	Channel title	Orientation	Primary content category
UCthbIFAxbXTTQEC7EcQvP1Q	BBC News Brasil	Center	News
UCD71P_opKGnElgypZQnz_tA	TV CANELLAS	Unclassified	Environment
UCNVsZnDXOM4PodYIEgM2e4w	Roda Viva	Center	Interviews
UCoD2g6eo2c4IAAB015AcnMg	Motivadores de Sucesso	Unclassified	Psychology
UCEQ12yB8QLw9pVOY3lo34_g	Paulo Rezzutti	Unclassified	History
UCbAiIkPobUFy71zlmwVw3jw	Fatos Desconhecidos	Unclassified	Curiosities; history
UC0NtqwtL1oLxwm3lx_Uo5Og	Politize!	Right	News
UC7Hr7x3J-4oQGuKAOwRyUEA	Canal Rodrigo Alvarez	Unclassified	Religion
UCxcDCeShqZWIUQuEo2iJSVA	AchismosTV	Unclassified	Curiosities; popular culture
UC1kstmrvShIqkAS1b_bdtWQ	EconoSimples	Unclassified	Curiosities; history
UCzJPdSTGj7KPZLjaOatWS4A	Os Sócios Podcast	Unclassified	Economics; news
UCS4cwdpm92dw1w9TERgdQJg	Tinocando TV	Unclassified	History
UC4O2eKb8vI4VlMeNp90asfg	Prazer, Karnal - Canal Oficial de Leandro Karnal	Center	Philosophy
UCIHwyJi76D027pbkzct731g	Eslen Podcast	Unclassified	Interviews
UCKdVW7Np-9l3CM5daYcGEAw	Provoca	Center	Interviews
UCZGKD_HFC4H1WuPf0ZmWgOg	NeuroVox	Unclassified	Science
UCLXl1V6n82Dyg1VhVgSL0nw	Aviões e Músicas	Unclassified	Aviation
UCSICdgxW9BIvsHqmSLNU8hQ	Joel Jota	Unclassified	Sports; coaching
UC5VvsTwsyKWMZSQtt1MPCEw	PodPeople - Ana Beatriz Barbosa	Unclassified	Interviews
UCkJ8uPxz6UvoI6ihgQJZnww	DW Brasil	Center	News
UCoUUMK4VA4nPtJroOZvhtdQ	Viagens Fora do Comum	Unclassified	Travel
UCqNBcXkVNrotGBQZmE3Hyaw	infinitamente	Unclassified	Science
UCGDb_l-FcsAWqc4PqBh03Mg	Gustavo Kobayashi	Unclassified	Science

Note. N = 106 channels. “Unclassified” denotes channels for which the source dataset did not assign a left, center, or right ideological orientation.

Table 5. Directed edges in the YouTube recommendation network

Seed video ID	Proxy profile	Source video ID	Target video ID	Rank	Depth
XjapXhUuUzA	Left	XjapXhUuUzA	VxMLwivsnKM	1	1
XjapXhUuUzA	Left	XjapXhUuUzA	LE2N4vDUaJk	2	1
XjapXhUuUzA	Left	XjapXhUuUzA	wbpyADn3URo	3	1
XjapXhUuUzA	Left	XjapXhUuUzA	FewYVHq4wEg	4	1
XjapXhUuUzA	Left	XjapXhUuUzA	2F6-imiQawk	5	1
XjapXhUuUzA	Left	XjapXhUuUzA	EnBhJ7aDeAk	6	1
XjapXhUuUzA	Left	XjapXhUuUzA	i8zZMGB9gjk	7	1
XjapXhUuUzA	Left	XjapXhUuUzA	js3ofPjI6SQ	8	1
XjapXhUuUzA	Left	XjapXhUuUzA	cGt3TxEr8e4	9	1
XjapXhUuUzA	Left	XjapXhUuUzA	g18CNe6E6nk	10	1
XjapXhUuUzA	Left	VxMLwivsnKM	1Cr8TvVNmYU	1	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Left	VxMLwivsnKM	COCkumy86nY	2	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Left	VxMLwivsnKM	1Ajt5GO4paI	3	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Left	VxMLwivsnKM	FewYVHq4wEg	4	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Left	VxMLwivsnKM	2F6-imiQawk	5	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Left	VxMLwivsnKM	jmZIJoB8cBM	6	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Left	VxMLwivsnKM	fnAKpPIxxoQ	7	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Left	VxMLwivsnKM	gK9ujzvlgj4	8	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Left	VxMLwivsnKM	qIiBXRG4JAw	9	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Left	VxMLwivsnKM	BeEBieJB0OI	10	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Left	LE2N4vDUaJk	jmZIJoB8cBM	1	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Left	LE2N4vDUaJk	1Cr8TvVNmYU	2	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Left	LE2N4vDUaJk	BeEBieJB0OI	3	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Left	LE2N4vDUaJk	FewYVHq4wEg	4	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Left	LE2N4vDUaJk	7UMceB8kYB4	5	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Left	LE2N4vDUaJk	-F5KDEoQk9c	6	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Left	LE2N4vDUaJk	eZbN6ipoIQM	7	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Left	LE2N4vDUaJk	HcUCpSXoBwk	8	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Left	LE2N4vDUaJk	pLZeWx3kr5E	9	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Left	LE2N4vDUaJk	l5oOSAFMPKU	10	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Left	wbpyADn3URo	c6YtDF1mXcM	1	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Left	wbpyADn3URo	F4KC_z3h1Lk	2	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Left	wbpyADn3URo	2F6-imiQawk	3	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Left	wbpyADn3URo	FewYVHq4wEg	4	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Left	wbpyADn3URo	1Cr8TvVNmYU	5	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Left	wbpyADn3URo	Ke2bHrDz4e0	6	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Left	wbpyADn3URo	oXXYK8JZarQ	7	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Left	wbpyADn3URo	-F5KDEoQk9c	8	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Left	wbpyADn3URo	l5oOSAFMPKU	9	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Left	wbpyADn3URo	cGt3TxEr8e4	10	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Left	FewYVHq4wEg	oA1JmbsJh9E	1	2

Seed video ID	Proxy profile	Source video ID	Target video ID	Rank	Depth
XjapXhUuUzA	Left	FewYVHq4wEg	JBN1sK2lANE	2	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Left	FewYVHq4wEg	VM2OdLAybD8	3	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Left	FewYVHq4wEg	FewYVHq4wEg	4	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Left	FewYVHq4wEg	2F6-imiQawk	5	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Left	FewYVHq4wEg	RmVOTh35VXE	6	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Left	FewYVHq4wEg	1dJEkuQhcxY	7	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Left	FewYVHq4wEg	qIiBXRG4JAw	8	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Left	FewYVHq4wEg	oZhYWxacHls	9	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Left	FewYVHq4wEg	c6YtDF1mXcM	10	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Left	2F6-imiQawk	iuCRuqEXfEg	1	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Left	2F6-imiQawk	iDGP_OX69wM	2	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Left	2F6-imiQawk	X8DfE-2Ovik	3	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Left	2F6-imiQawk	FewYVHq4wEg	4	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Left	2F6-imiQawk	e3LnS_NW8Mg	5	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Left	2F6-imiQawk	qIiBXRG4JAw	6	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Left	2F6-imiQawk	5L2K6HKrEyA	7	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Left	2F6-imiQawk	1Tc8FpkKZSw	8	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Left	2F6-imiQawk	EnBhJ7aDeAk	9	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Left	2F6-imiQawk	c6YtDF1mXcM	10	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Left	EnBhJ7aDeAk	avElD4UZXmM	1	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Left	EnBhJ7aDeAk	e3LnS_NW8Mg	2	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Left	EnBhJ7aDeAk	Id6pm6jts5M	3	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Left	EnBhJ7aDeAk	FewYVHq4wEg	4	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Left	EnBhJ7aDeAk	oXXYK8JZarQ	5	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Left	EnBhJ7aDeAk	Z9sKNGB_QHM	6	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Left	EnBhJ7aDeAk	ByXtQ71str4	7	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Left	EnBhJ7aDeAk	JSeScYgnxmU	8	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Left	EnBhJ7aDeAk	oT6t5T0o4DE	9	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Left	EnBhJ7aDeAk	wzw7J-QlnjQ	10	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Left	i8zZMGB9gjk	c6YtDF1mXcM	1	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Left	i8zZMGB9gjk	bK6xtpU8KcA	2	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Left	i8zZMGB9gjk	Z9sKNGB_QHM	3	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Left	i8zZMGB9gjk	FewYVHq4wEg	4	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Left	i8zZMGB9gjk	oXXYK8JZarQ	5	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Left	i8zZMGB9gjk	EnBhJ7aDeAk	6	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Left	i8zZMGB9gjk	l5oOSAFMPKU	7	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Left	i8zZMGB9gjk	-F5KDEoQk9c	8	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Left	i8zZMGB9gjk	g18CNe6E6nk	9	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Left	i8zZMGB9gjk	BeEBieJB0OI	10	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Left	js3ofPjI6SQ	F4KC_z3h1Lk	1	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Left	js3ofPjI6SQ	eZbN6ipoIQM	2	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Left	js3ofPjI6SQ	MDx8b_d50ig	3	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Left	js3ofPjI6SQ	FewYVHq4wEg	4	2

Seed video ID	Proxy profile	Source video ID	Target video ID	Rank	Depth
XjapXhUuUzA	Left	js3ofPjI6SQ	BeEBieJB0OI	5	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Left	js3ofPjI6SQ	g18CNe6E6nk	6	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Left	js3ofPjI6SQ	cGt3TxEr8e4	7	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Left	js3ofPjI6SQ	oXXYK8JZarQ	8	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Left	js3ofPjI6SQ	ByXtQ71str4	9	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Left	js3ofPjI6SQ	l5oOSAFMPKU	10	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Left	cGt3TxEr8e4	MDx8b_d50ig	1	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Left	cGt3TxEr8e4	qIiBXRG4JAw	2	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Left	cGt3TxEr8e4	oXXYK8JZarQ	3	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Left	cGt3TxEr8e4	FewYVHq4wEg	4	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Left	cGt3TxEr8e4	Bhl_HcWsLqs	5	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Left	cGt3TxEr8e4	F7DTQwvKsDU	6	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Left	cGt3TxEr8e4	F4KC_z3h1Lk	7	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Left	cGt3TxEr8e4	oZhYWxacHls	8	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Left	cGt3TxEr8e4	BmH3m_gVAWU	9	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Left	cGt3TxEr8e4	cvOZ4GJ9p4w	10	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Left	g18CNe6E6nk	Ke2bHrDz4e0	1	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Left	g18CNe6E6nk	e3LnS_NW8Mg	2	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Left	g18CNe6E6nk	F4KC_z3h1Lk	3	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Left	g18CNe6E6nk	8aADlrHWcS0	4	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Left	g18CNe6E6nk	mmJTtafPuPQ	5	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Left	g18CNe6E6nk	f_KiFXd5tfc	6	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Left	g18CNe6E6nk	H44lLkOlQXk	7	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Left	g18CNe6E6nk	dEb-2xBKcew	8	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Left	g18CNe6E6nk	XmW6Gcum6-A	9	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Left	g18CNe6E6nk	okPnqB2sqV0	10	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Right	XjapXhUuUzA	KQ4DbKRackg	1	1
XjapXhUuUzA	Right	XjapXhUuUzA	mrUJ2OYdXJg	2	1
XjapXhUuUzA	Right	XjapXhUuUzA	2YMTG6bpBaI	3	1
XjapXhUuUzA	Right	XjapXhUuUzA	rG3sNdFc9WY	4	1
XjapXhUuUzA	Right	XjapXhUuUzA	pKJINFj2Tv4	5	1
XjapXhUuUzA	Right	XjapXhUuUzA	XRghCK8-aLs	6	1
XjapXhUuUzA	Right	XjapXhUuUzA	14iiQd2qA-w	7	1
XjapXhUuUzA	Right	XjapXhUuUzA	B_IIep7-Jcs	8	1
XjapXhUuUzA	Right	XjapXhUuUzA	hlh4_5EmQ6Q	9	1
XjapXhUuUzA	Right	XjapXhUuUzA	AgWmDBdY1Ls	10	1
XjapXhUuUzA	Right	KQ4DbKRackg	O5sEEWuDPmI	1	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Right	KQ4DbKRackg	riC7CekHOjU	2	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Right	KQ4DbKRackg	CxRdbs2x0To	3	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Right	KQ4DbKRackg	DV0d96MayCs	4	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Right	KQ4DbKRackg	i2PO84coWi0	5	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Right	KQ4DbKRackg	HzjwxG376Bg	6	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Right	KQ4DbKRackg	14iiQd2qA-w	7	2

Seed video ID	Proxy profile	Source video ID	Target video ID	Rank	Depth
XjapXhUuUzA	Right	KQ4DbKRackg	FXUuvp6ui8k	8	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Right	KQ4DbKRackg	YfLqmCzWRQg	9	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Right	KQ4DbKRackg	A4GVIZ0Z1bY	10	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Right	mrUJ2OYdXJg	Gk7WzVSUMEo	1	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Right	mrUJ2OYdXJg	wDJXpbkfcW8	2	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Right	mrUJ2OYdXJg	riC7CekHOjU	3	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Right	mrUJ2OYdXJg	DZDSJ82YHZo	4	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Right	mrUJ2OYdXJg	DV0d96MayCs	5	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Right	mrUJ2OYdXJg	38cGFd_AZgw	6	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Right	mrUJ2OYdXJg	vC6Xsb5jzbU	7	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Right	mrUJ2OYdXJg	FXUuvp6ui8k	8	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Right	mrUJ2OYdXJg	i2PO84coWi0	9	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Right	mrUJ2OYdXJg	E4aFsm7veVE	10	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Right	2YMTG6bpBaI	oiayRPLM4LM	1	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Right	2YMTG6bpBaI	i2PO84coWi0	2	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Right	2YMTG6bpBaI	FXUuvp6ui8k	3	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Right	2YMTG6bpBaI	FRzjxqqZgr4	4	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Right	2YMTG6bpBaI	AgWmDBdY1Ls	5	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Right	2YMTG6bpBaI	8ZGHbOTltlQ	6	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Right	2YMTG6bpBaI	0wgYTDvX7h4	7	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Right	2YMTG6bpBaI	38cGFd_AZgw	8	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Right	2YMTG6bpBaI	DXDbldFnDd4	9	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Right	2YMTG6bpBaI	YCAj4nmNiDs	10	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Right	rG3sNdFc9WY	Kxq5XcPw5SY	1	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Right	rG3sNdFc9WY	SebuC1iyhug	2	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Right	rG3sNdFc9WY	i2PO84coWi0	3	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Right	rG3sNdFc9WY	Ct2h85d0lcg	4	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Right	rG3sNdFc9WY	DXDbldFnDd4	5	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Right	rG3sNdFc9WY	wDJXpbkfcW8	6	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Right	rG3sNdFc9WY	YfLqmCzWRQg	7	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Right	rG3sNdFc9WY	HzjwxG376Bg	8	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Right	rG3sNdFc9WY	DZDSJ82YHZo	9	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Right	rG3sNdFc9WY	vC6Xsb5jzbU	10	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Right	pKJINFj2Tv4	ByazxUa7jY4	1	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Right	pKJINFj2Tv4	wDJXpbkfcW8	2	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Right	pKJINFj2Tv4	xPAePXSqg5Q	3	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Right	pKJINFj2Tv4	9UWZFKNPO4o	4	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Right	pKJINFj2Tv4	38cGFd_AZgw	5	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Right	pKJINFj2Tv4	_kPsdrunWVM	6	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Right	pKJINFj2Tv4	DZDSJ82YHZo	7	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Right	pKJINFj2Tv4	DV0d96MayCs	8	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Right	pKJINFj2Tv4	vC6Xsb5jzbU	9	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Right	pKJINFj2Tv4	FXUuvp6ui8k	10	2

Seed video ID	Proxy profile	Source video ID	Target video ID	Rank	Depth
XjapXhUuUzA	Right	XRghCK8-aLs	vC6Xsb5jzbU	1	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Right	XRghCK8-aLs	wDJXpbkfcW8	2	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Right	XRghCK8-aLs	SqcJ72YMx14	3	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Right	XRghCK8-aLs	_kPsdrunWVM	4	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Right	XRghCK8-aLs	xPAePXSqg5Q	5	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Right	XRghCK8-aLs	9UWZFKNPO4o	6	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Right	XRghCK8-aLs	DZDSJ82YHZo	7	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Right	XRghCK8-aLs	DV0d96MayCs	8	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Right	XRghCK8-aLs	ThsKMJmlb4s	9	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Right	XRghCK8-aLs	ZUDoloR33aQ	10	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Right	14iiQd2qA-w	i2PO84coWi0	1	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Right	14iiQd2qA-w	_kPsdrunWVM	2	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Right	14iiQd2qA-w	4byiumMw-VU	3	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Right	14iiQd2qA-w	Y6s-wzp7wGs	4	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Right	14iiQd2qA-w	AgWmDBdY1Ls	5	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Right	14iiQd2qA-w	A4GVIZ0Z1bY	6	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Right	14iiQd2qA-w	XpMDKru4coU	7	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Right	14iiQd2qA-w	qfRyFj4o7HA	8	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Right	14iiQd2qA-w	Ushj3EUOlQw	9	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Right	14iiQd2qA-w	45Ke6xpPlg0	10	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Right	B_IIep7-Jcs	14iiQd2qA-w	1	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Right	B_IIep7-Jcs	1N6kL6RoVoY	2	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Right	B_IIep7-Jcs	DZDSJ82YHZo	3	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Right	B_IIep7-Jcs	DXDbldFnDd4	4	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Right	B_IIep7-Jcs	O5sEEWuDPmI	5	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Right	B IIep7-Jcs	sDYtHF5MRLs	6	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Right	B_IIep7-Jcs	i2PO84coWi0	7	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Right	B_IIep7-Jcs	B8qK4MXeFSg	8	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Right	B_IIep7-Jcs	Kxq5XcPw5SY	9	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Right	B_IIep7-Jcs	YfLqmCzWRQg	10	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Right	hlh4_5EmQ6Q	YBrRZBSSZ00	1	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Right	hlh4_5EmQ6Q	B8qK4MXeFSg	2	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Right	hlh4_5EmQ6Q	Sv3r7uy52Bc	3	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Right	hlh4_5EmQ6Q	WV7hRafNWfU	4	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Right	hlh4_5EmQ6Q	AgWmDBdY1Ls	5	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Right	hlh4_5EmQ6Q	Ushj3EUOlQw	6	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Right	hlh4_5EmQ6Q	B_IIep7-Jcs	7	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Right	hlh4_5EmQ6Q	_kPsdrunWVM	8	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Right	hlh4_5EmQ6Q	Drqe0aiObNY	9	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Right	hlh4_5EmQ6Q	XpMDKru4coU	10	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Right	AgWmDBdY1Ls	9UWZFKNPO4o	1	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Right	AgWmDBdY1Ls	wDJXpbkfcW8	2	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Right	AgWmDBdY1Ls	cKFwOwlblgo	3	2

Seed video ID	Proxy profile	Source video ID	Target video ID	Rank	Depth
XjapXhUuUzA	Right	AgWmDBdY1Ls	zOyIvNH_-qQ	4	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Right	AgWmDBdY1Ls	i2PO84coWi0	5	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Right	AgWmDBdY1Ls	_kPsdrunWVM	6	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Right	AgWmDBdY1Ls	38cGFd_AZgw	7	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Right	AgWmDBdY1Ls	vC6Xsb5jzbU	8	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Right	AgWmDBdY1Ls	DV0d96MayCs	9	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Right	AgWmDBdY1Ls	TQ0UnB54KLQ	10	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Center	XjapXhUuUzA	Rse1bGfGajg	1	1
XjapXhUuUzA	Center	XjapXhUuUzA	VM2OdLAybD8	2	1
XjapXhUuUzA	Center	XjapXhUuUzA	qIiBXRG4JAw	3	1
XjapXhUuUzA	Center	XjapXhUuUzA	JiqF4CdfmBY	4	1
XjapXhUuUzA	Center	XjapXhUuUzA	Y9_UovLgduo	5	1
XjapXhUuUzA	Center	XjapXhUuUzA	wAbldc2foEs	6	1
XjapXhUuUzA	Center	XjapXhUuUzA	tDWeCwF-1dA	7	1
XjapXhUuUzA	Center	XjapXhUuUzA	nQP8dfOPtj8	8	1
XjapXhUuUzA	Center	XjapXhUuUzA	UpuAFfTW4VQ	9	1
XjapXhUuUzA	Center	XjapXhUuUzA	a-c5HlmbUCs	10	1
XjapXhUuUzA	Center	Rse1bGfGajg	rzLQixaOoKM	1	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Center	Rse1bGfGajg	2IwUgZ_cz1k	2	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Center	Rse1bGfGajg	SBi-yiTMoPo	3	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Center	Rse1bGfGajg	xjivCmPU1GM	4	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Center	Rse1bGfGajg	Uo96w9AN5iQ	5	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Center	Rse1bGfGajg	-vMQki7Oa9A	6	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Center	Rse1bGfGajg	GpuKg15p4sU	7	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Center	Rse1bGfGajg	xSYkc9J8UjU	8	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Center	Rse1bGfGajg	1tOHVLCqr0Q	9	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Center	Rse1bGfGajg	I2xTfeLw73c	10	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Center	VM2OdLAybD8	jPPRLKZDFoU	1	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Center	VM2OdLAybD8	z5Atsk2cbdc	2	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Center	VM2OdLAybD8	O1scwM8VOgU	3	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Center	VM2OdLAybD8	OEcED503puM	4	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Center	VM2OdLAybD8	Jp-KO_gwqa0	5	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Center	VM2OdLAybD8	l65GAe_z1-k	6	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Center	VM2OdLAybD8	6ZspAPJt6Ag	7	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Center	VM2OdLAybD8	clZXoe85lLk	8	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Center	VM2OdLAybD8	m5wY6fiJEmQ	9	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Center	VM2OdLAybD8	pLZeWx3kr5E	10	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Center	qIiBXRG4JAw	z5Atsk2cbdc	1	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Center	qIiBXRG4JAw	W2niu5URRho	2	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Center	qIiBXRG4JAw	nxUeoeFmna4	3	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Center	qIiBXRG4JAw	mBouLS5Ucw0	4	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Center	qIiBXRG4JAw	72xeg4nL-ls	5	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Center	qIiBXRG4JAw	Hd4n66Cn1y8	6	2

Seed video ID	Proxy profile	Source video ID	Target video ID	Rank	Depth
XjapXhUuUzA	Center	qIiBXRG4JAw	2F6-imiQawk	7	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Center	qIiBXRG4JAw	LkQ9oXiRzMc	8	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Center	qIiBXRG4JAw	s5oJuKG2ouU	9	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Center	qIiBXRG4JAw	A0mQ8wOUQN4	10	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Center	JiqF4CdfmBY	uAZCPfOJ8bo	1	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Center	JiqF4CdfmBY	3D_vS0XlC1w	2	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Center	JiqF4CdfmBY	FRzjxqqZgr4	3	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Center	JiqF4CdfmBY	8ZIHvuhKapo	4	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Center	JiqF4CdfmBY	-vMQki7Oa9A	5	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Center	JiqF4CdfmBY	Y9_UovLgduo	6	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Center	JiqF4CdfmBY	JDFp3AGAWSc	7	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Center	JiqF4CdfmBY	o1CHO24fSEk	8	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Center	JiqF4CdfmBY	3JYM3sQm7VM	9	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Center	JiqF4CdfmBY	Rb5IongspXI	10	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Center	Y9_UovLgduo	q7E4XrfGGnE	1	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Center	Y9_UovLgduo	JXndkUqStZ4	2	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Center	Y9_UovLgduo	3D_vS0XlC1w	3	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Center	Y9_UovLgduo	EqTFNgdWAJk	4	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Center	Y9_UovLgduo	B9IOFpnwsQA	5	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Center	Y9_UovLgduo	RWbXO0M8NmA	6	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Center	Y9_UovLgduo	SVtcg3jSrnY	7	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Center	Y9_UovLgduo	5PNytXRyIBU	8	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Center	Y9_UovLgduo	Gx91rmqDG-A	9	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Center	Y9_UovLgduo	6NlpsjuGzmk	10	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Center	wAbldc2foEs	q7E4XrfGGnE	1	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Center	wAbldc2foEs	JXndkUqStZ4	2	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Center	wAbldc2foEs	3D_vS0XlC1w	3	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Center	wAbldc2foEs	EqTFNgdWAJk	4	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Center	wAbldc2foEs	B9IOFpnwsQA	5	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Center	wAbldc2foEs	RWbXO0M8NmA	6	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Center	wAbldc2foEs	SVtcg3jSrnY	7	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Center	wAbldc2foEs	5PNytXRyIBU	8	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Center	wAbldc2foEs	Gx91rmqDG-A	9	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Center	wAbldc2foEs	6NlpsjuGzmk	10	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Center	tDWeCwF-1dA	TECEWo71Qjc	1	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Center	tDWeCwF-1dA	xjivCmPU1GM	2	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Center	tDWeCwF-1dA	1trvSM3QrM0	3	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Center	tDWeCwF-1dA	3AvAL4PX74o	4	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Center	tDWeCwF-1dA	SBi-yiTMoPo	5	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Center	tDWeCwF-1dA	fp_ZUjLAl8A	6	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Center	tDWeCwF-1dA	NVbFAROm8Eg	7	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Center	tDWeCwF-1dA	sNotryWJ-io	8	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Center	tDWeCwF-1dA	PRe53H3aeL8	9	2

Seed video ID	Proxy profile	Source video ID	Target video ID	Rank	Depth
XjapXhUuUzA	Center	tDWeCwF-1dA	qYhbnC8bdxM	10	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Center	nQP8dfOPtj8	gPSk0Xjz0og	1	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Center	nQP8dfOPtj8	JXndkUqStZ4	2	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Center	nQP8dfOPtj8	pYP7OGTdYY8	3	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Center	nQP8dfOPtj8	gRtaKysJsqo	4	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Center	nQP8dfOPtj8	Lp45Z_uVohE	5	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Center	nQP8dfOPtj8	Gx91rmqDG-A	6	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Center	nQP8dfOPtj8	LoOl2enPw94	7	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Center	nQP8dfOPtj8	3D_vS0XlC1w	8	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Center	nQP8dfOPtj8	DiGqjYkRQ6o	9	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Center	nQP8dfOPtj8	jYdE1f_bK38	10	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Center	UpuAFfTW4VQ	b9bOqqQHhuQ	1	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Center	UpuAFfTW4VQ	5kS2zHRz2Ag	2	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Center	UpuAFfTW4VQ	MxciQQRUMNk	3	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Center	UpuAFfTW4VQ	SJQkdzQ9Xnw	4	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Center	UpuAFfTW4VQ	Id6pm6jts5M	5	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Center	UpuAFfTW4VQ	2F9d6H8_Jtg	6	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Center	UpuAFfTW4VQ	hhTIhYK-dJI	7	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Center	UpuAFfTW4VQ	ij3voinE7Qw	8	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Center	UpuAFfTW4VQ	hb0Qpt4t-lE	9	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Center	UpuAFfTW4VQ	EEYGnwPolks	10	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Center	a-c5HlmbUCs	IBF3z7_53C0	1	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Center	a-c5HlmbUCs	xjivCmPU1GM	2	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Center	a-c5HlmbUCs	wWDZZH4JHlI	3	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Center	a-c5HlmbUCs	rN8G52tYkbE	4	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Center	a-c5HlmbUCs	JXndkUqStZ4	5	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Center	a-c5HlmbUCs	5PNytXRyIBU	6	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Center	a-c5HlmbUCs	EqTFNgdWAJk	7	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Center	a-c5HlmbUCs	3QCneNYUfWo	8	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Center	a-c5HlmbUCs	lu1hZLOQGw8	9	2
XjapXhUuUzA	Center	a-c5HlmbUCs	QHMKgXxaMKo	10	2

Note. N = 330 directed edges (110 per proxy profile). Depth 1 denotes a recommendation from the common seed video; depth 2 denotes a recommendation from a first-degree recommended video. Rank records the recommendation position from 1 to 10.

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