



OBSERVATÓRIO SOBRE AS ESTRATÉGIAS DA INDÚSTRIA DO TABACO

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Editorial

The industry voice is hoarse, but still seductive

The idea of writing the book *Thugs and Suffocates – The cigarette industry is alive and killing*, published in August of this year by Elefante in a fundamental partnership with Cetab/Fiocruz and ACT – Promoção da Saúde, was born of an action by the Public Prosecutor's Office in Paraná, in 2011, labor violations in tobacco farms in the southern region of Brazil, including the exploitation of child labor. From this initial contact with the theme, we produced some reports, a work that seemed to us little in front of such a complex universe, which involves, besides the exploitation of the farmers, an extensive network of power and *lobby*.

We had traveled to Paraná, but we had not experienced what would be our main object of investigation: the region Vale do Rio Pardo, in the interior of Rio Grande do Sul, where the main transnational corporations producing cigarettes on the planet, such as Philip Morris and Souza Cruz.

We ended up doing it in 2015, visiting Santa Cruz do Sul, the “informal capital” of tobacco, and Venâncio Aires. After days of field experience, added to an extensive list of readings and interviews that preceded the trip, we did a more detailed report, published by the Public Agency. And again, we were surprised: there was a lot to be investigated yet.



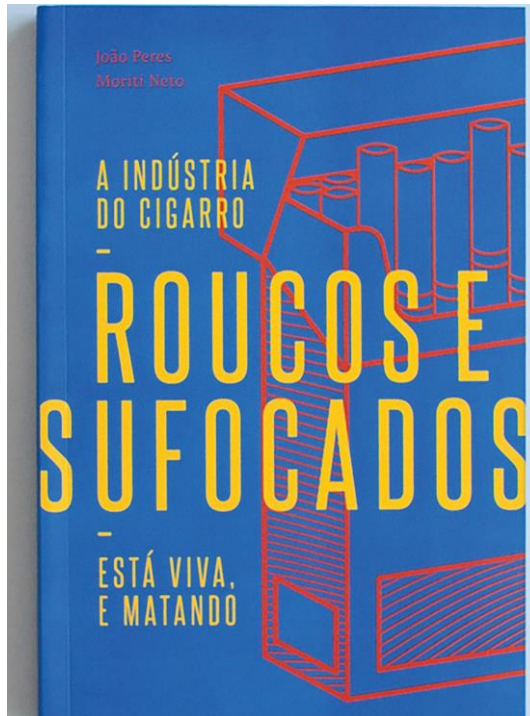
The route opened our minds to the size of the subject. Like most Brazilians, we did not have the real notion of the more than precarious working conditions of the farmers, who came to work in situations of modern servitude on their own land.

From there, we set the theme for three more years – with other trips, readings and interviews – to compose the scenario that explains the way of the lobby and the institutional apparatus erected by the tobacco industry.

Broad lines, we find that the voice of the industry, although hoarse after the restrictions on advertising, is active in a network of influence that begins in the southern region of the country, based on the moorings imposed on farmers, as well as the cooptation of entities that claim to represent the peasants. The movement starts from this strategic base and reaches the decision-making centers, including Brasília, where parliamentarians, ministers and figures from the judiciary complete it.

We say, without any fear, that there is a “Smoke Bench” in the Brazilian National Congress, organized to work in ministries, state and municipal government secretariats, and even internationally. There are numerous reports of riots, constraints and pressures caused by them in COP (Conference of the Parties) editions.

As for the Judiciary, the phenomenon of the “revolving door” is evident, in which people who occupied positions in the public sphere migrate to other high levels: those of the private sector. We noticed the presence of big figures who passed through the Brazilian Federal Supreme Court on councils related to the cigarette industry.



For these and other reasons shown in the book, the cigarette industry is alive, and killing, as the book’s subtitle says. And today, the industry kills without using its own voice through direct marketing, because it directs other voices to do the service that it used to do openly.

It can not be neglected that science and activism together produced knowledge and action capable of placing limits on

corporations. The issue that seems to us to be fundamental is that the articulations continue, because industry, as an authentic product of the corporate culture, continues to hijack needs and desires, constantly moving, always renewing strategies (electronic cigarette is an example). We hope that the book, in addition to revealing these strategies, can actually contribute to the fight against an evil that continues to affect millions of people.

João Peres e Moriti Neto
Book authors

Thesis on Tobacco control is awarded in The first place by Capes

The thesis of doctorate student of the Brazilian National School of Public Health (ENSP/Fiocruz) Leonardo Henriques Portes was awarded the first place of the Capes of Thesis Award of the area of Public Health 2018. Titled *The tobacco control policy in Brazil from 1986 to 2016: context, trajectory and challenges*, the research was directed by Cristiani Vieira Machado and coordinated by Silvana Rubano Turci.

“Tobacco control has established a successful policy in Brazil, since in recent decades it has favored a significant reduction in the prevalence of smokers”,

says Portes.

Portes values some factors that have contributed to the positive results achieved in the institutional and health spheres. The first factor refers to the recognition of the prestige of Brazilian politics in the international scenario, through its commitment to the adoption of intersectoral measures of tobacco control, and the commitment of Brazilian actors in the forums and international decision-making areas related to the theme.

As a second factor, Portes relies on the solid structuring of the Brazilian National Tobacco Control Policy (PNCT).

“The construction of a legal and normative framework, the national coordination of the policy involving various sectors, the implementation of the WHO Convention for Tobacco Control (CQCT/WHO) and the process of decentralisation of the policy were fundamental to confer the institutionality of tobacco control in Brazil.”

Thirdly, the award-winning student points to the important role of civil society, the role of academia and health sector organizations, especially medical associations and organizations that have advocated family agriculture as fundamental to the success of politics in the period under review.

Finally, the shift from social acceptance to smoking during all this time is highlighted.

“From a social practice that was disseminated in the country in the 1980s and 1990s, smoking became socially rejected through greater sharing of knowledge about its losses and the expansion of tobacco control measures formally established in laws and regulations varied.”

Despite the advances in tobacco control in Brazil, Portes emphasizes that the study also identified the persistence of important challenges, exacerbated by the territorial heterogeneity of the country and the multiplicity of actors involved, comprising governmental and non-governmental bodies and actors with different interests and positions.

“Smoking continues to be a serious public health problem in Brazil and dilemmas persist in many sectors, such as family farming, the economy and the environment.”

Among the policy challenges, the student highlights challenges related to crop diversification, illicit trade, industry interference in policy and the capacity of the National Commission for Implementation of the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (Conicq).

According to Portes, the sustainability of the PNCT is the main challenge to be faced.

“The maintenance of the theme in the health sector agenda in a priority way and the expansion of legislative, economic, educational, communication and continuous regulation measures are fundamental.”

It is important to remember that, from 1986 to 2016, there was an intensification of tobacco control actions in Brazil and the consolidation of the issue in the governmental agenda. In 1986, it had the beginning of the celebrations of the National day for combating smoke, established by the first national legislation aimed at tobacco control. Also in that year, the Brazilian National Program to Combat Tobacco (PNCF) was created, marking the institutionalization of tobacco control in the Ministry of Health. As of 2016, it is the

most recent year in which it was possible to conclude the analysis of the trajectory of tobacco control tobacco in Brazil.

“Important events, such as the launch of the Observatory On Strategies Of The Tobacco Industry’, occurred in that year.”

Since 2006, the various tobacco control actions have become part of the PNCT, with an intersectoral character and that presents CONICQ as a governance space for compliance with the obligations and guidelines established by the FCTC.

The award ceremony for the Capes de Thesis Award will be held in Brasília, on December 13, at the Brazilian Association of Servers of the Chamber of Deputies.

Source: *Informe Ensp* and *Capes*

Interview

Personal archive



Mônica Andreis
Executive Director
of ACT Health
Promotion

“The industry reinvents itself”

In an interview with the Observatory Bulletin, Mônica Andreis, executive director of ACT Health Promotion, highlights the Brazilian action in tobacco control and comments on the strategies of the industry to captivate new consumers and circumvent the laws in force in Brazil. For her, who also evaluated the COP8 discussions, the role of the ACT and the Observatory are fundamental to monitor the actions of the industry and to alert the population, managers and legislators about control actions.

How ACT has been working on tobacco control in Brazil?

Mônica Andreis: ACT is a non-governmental organization that has been in existence for 12 years in Brazil, with the mission to monitor implementation and compliance with the measures recommended by the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC).

During this period, we participated in important advances in the area of tobacco control in the country, and this includes discussions with members of the executive, legislative and judicial sectors to advance the implementation of the FCTC. One of the great achievements of the advocacy work was the approval of the São Paulo Anti-Smoking Law in 2009, which encouraged the approval of other state and municipal laws, culminating in the approval of the Brazilian National Anti-Smoking Law in 2011 and its implementation in 2014. I also highlight the follow-up and discussion with Anvisa regarding the prohibition of additives in cigarettes. They are two examples among the many with whom we have acted.

In this course, we recognize how the industry and its allies act to challenge, postpone or modify tobacco control proposals. The influence is clear. Not only in Brazil, but also in other countries.

Even with the ban on advertising, tobacco companies are adopting new strategies to reach young people and circumvent laws. How did you identify this maneuver?

Mônica Andreis: In fact, the industry reinvents itself. Advertising is restricted to points of sale and, in this space, they exploit the maintenance of huge displays and position the products near sweets and candy to attract young people and children (Anvisa is determined to prohibit exposure to these products, but it should only be effective in 2020).

We also observed the use of a form of advertising that we call sneak, through the use of digital influencers. Study of the University of South Carolina with researchers from ten countries, including Brazil, analyzed how the tobacco industry used of social media to propagate its brands and products. We identified this type of high level of sophistication advertising, through case analysis with the association of hashtags that relate to cigarette brands and parties/events and the use of digital influencers, with the young as the target audience.

Through the research, some digital Influencers admitted the disclosure of the product and the receipt of money for exposure, which is a way to circumvent the legislation of the country. This type of advertising, which is illegal, is being used to access the youth and disseminate the product. Tobaccofreekids filed an international complaint and, in Brazil, ACT also made a complaint, along with the Brazilian Institute of Consumer Protection (IDEC), the Center for Studies on Tobacco and Health (Cetab), the World Anti-Smoking Association and Antialcoholism (Amata), the Brazilian Society of Pulmonology and Tisiology and international organizations: Inter-American Heart Foundation, Tobacco Free Kids, International Union Against Tuberculosis and Respiratory diseases and *Vital Strategies Brazil*.

Taking advantage of this theme, tobacco advertising, promotion and sponsorship (article 13 of the CQCT) were one of the discussion points of the Eighth Conference of the Parties (COP8), held in early October in Geneva. What is your assessment of the international meeting?

Mônica Andreis: ACT has participated in all the conferences of the parties. Civil society plays a very important role in monitoring the implementation of the CQCT, and this is

recognised in the preamble to the Convention. We participate through the Framework Convention Alliance (FCA), which brings together civil society organizations from around the world.

Our evaluation is very positive. A comprehensive strategy was approved to boost the implementation of the FCTC in the countries, and this represents an important achievement. We have also been able to make significant progress towards Brazil. In relation to articles 17 and 18, the country led a proposal, approved by the others, to continue initiatives that could favor the diversification of tobacco culture, with international cooperation and studies on this subject, in addition to assessing the impact on environmental protection and the health of producers of tobacco cultivation. Promoting new initiatives for more effective action and greater support for diversification is important.

New tobacco products have also been addressed. Despite the existing prohibition in Brazil by Anvisa, there is enormous pressure from the industry for commercialization. At the global level of the discussion, the countries decided to ask the WHO for a report with independent scientific evidence on such products, to be presented at the next meeting of the Parties, as research is funded by the

industry itself and there is no evidence of the consequences of its use in health and impact on tobacco control policies. The decision is important because it gives support to Brazil to maintain the regulation of Anvisa and stimulate new independent studies in the area.

Ratified this year, the Protocol on Illicit Trade in Tobacco Products was also extensively debated at the first meeting of the Parties with MOP1. What advances stand out in this field?

Mônica Andreis: This issue is very important to us because there is a need to intensify actions to combat the illegal market. And it was very important for Brazil to have ratified the protocol in time to attend the meeting. We were pleasantly surprised to hear Paraguay's intention to act more heavily in tobacco control, even applying to host a COP (it is likely to host COP10 in 2022, since COP9 will be held in the Netherlands). This is significant signaling, since the historical problems of smuggling via Paraguay may be in the offing. There is interest in the country's engagement in the implementation of the FCTC, which may represent a change of attitude reflected in the production and smuggling of cigarettes to Brazil and other countries in the region. The illegal market for tobacco products is complex, and the protocol provides for a number of measures in support of tackling this problem.

fiocruz at COP 8

In October this year, Geneva hosted representatives from 181 countries for the 8th Conference of the Parties to the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (COP8), which discussed the main first international public health treaty in WHO's history. After COP8, the actions focused on the First Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol to Eliminate Illicit Trade in Tobacco Products, a new international treaty to combat the illicit market, adopted on September 25, 2018.

Fiocruz, through a partnership between the Center of Studies on Tobacco and Health of the ENSP (Cetab) and the Coordination of Health Surveillance and Reference Laboratories of Fiocruz (CVSLR), integrated the official Brazilian delegation to the Conference. The institution's role in assisting the implementation of the FCTC and the teaching and research activities in tobacco control enabled the researchers Valeska Figueiredo and Silvana Turci to attend the international event.

“Cetab is aligned with the priorities established by Brazil as a State Party to the FCTC-WHO. Since its creation, the Center has collaborated with the National Commission for the Implementation of the Framework Convention (Conicq) in the areas of teaching, research



Credito: Secretariat of the WHO FCTC / P. Viot

and cooperation”. Our participation was made possible by the support of the Health Surveillance Coordination and Fiocruz Reference Laboratories (CVSLR), which has welcomed our demands and collaborated with the execution of studies and research”,

said Silvana, coordinator of the Observatory.

The Official Brazilian Delegation was formed by members of Conicq, representatives of the Secretariat of Health Surveillance of the Brazilian Ministry of Health and Cetab/ENSP/Fiocruz. Brazil was a protagonist in the negotiations of Articles 17 and 18, which address, respectively, Support for economically viable alternative activities and Protection of the environment and human health.

“Brazil has today 150,000 producing families, and the implementation of the articles will contribute to the adoption of the Agenda 2030 of Sustainable Development in various ways, such as food security, health and welfare promotion, economic sustainability and decent work”,

explained the researcher.



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Another important point was Article 5.3, which addresses tobacco industry interference in public control policies, and technical issues related to Articles 4.2.d (gender issues), 5.3 (tobacco industry interference), 17 and 18 (alternative livelihoods and environmental protection) and 19 (responsibility).

The coordinator of Cetab, Valeska Figueiredo, participated as a member of the expert group responsible for the elaboration of the document on Article 13 of the FCTC, whose motto is the transboundary advertising, promotion and sponsorship of tobacco products, and integrated the report of the activity.

According to Valeksa, the group's recommendations and their report had been mentioned in a decision-making document proposed by the secretariat of the Framework Convention and received support from various parts of the Treaty, in particular with regard to the establishment of a working group to consist of representatives from various regions.

“The purpose is to elaborate a specific guide, that is, an addendum to the Guide to article 13 in force, with guidance to countries to face new forms of advertising, especially those using digital media such as mobile phones and internet. The European Community, which gathers 28 countries, has made some additions to the approved decision making document, among which we highlight the creation of a website, under the responsibility of the Secretariat, so that countries can exchange experiences on these new forms of advertising.”

detailed.

On November 5, Cetab/ENSP, in partnership with the coordination of health surveillance and reference laboratories of Fiocruz (CVSLR) and the Casa de Oswaldo Cruz, holds the witness seminar: Four Decades of history of tobacco control in Brazil, from 8:30 a.m. to 17h, in the auditorium.

Roucos e sufocados: a indústria do cigarro está viva, e matando
– buy the book: <https://www.editoraelefante.com.br/produto/roucos-e-sufocados/>

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INCA study reveals decrease in consumption of illicit cigarettes in Brazil.

<http://www2.inca.gov.br/wps/wcm/connect/agencianoticias/site/home/noticias/2018/estudo-do-inca-revela-diminuicao-no-consumo-de-cigarros-ilicitos-no-brasil>

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