

Media and corruption as a power-knowledge apparatus: an archeogenealogical analysis of political impeachment in Tocantins

Mídia e corrupção como dispositivo de poder-saber: uma análise arqueogenealógica da cassação política no Tocantins



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ABSTRACT: This article analyzes political discourse at its intersection with media discourse, a space in which legal and moralizing discourses intertwine and materialize in the “act of denunciation” corruption in Tocantins, a state marked by the recurrent impeachment of governors. To conduct this examination, the archaeogenealogical method of Discourse Analysis is used, drawing on some of its operational concepts such as statement, discursive formation, apparatus (*dispositivo*), and episteme. The corpus consists of a news piece from G1 Tocantins titled “Dismissals, resignations, and impeachment requests: no governor has completed a term in Tocantins for nearly 20 years,” published on September 4, 2025. The results indicate that corruption is not only a crime, but a power-knowledge apparatus mobilized selectively by the state’s hegemonic forces. Finally, the role of the media is assessed, functioning as an apparatus that amplifies these powers.

Keywords: archaeogenealogy; corruption; impeachment; political discourse; Tocantins.

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RESUMO: Este artigo analisa o discurso político na interseção com o discurso midiático, espaço no qual os discursos jurídico e moralizante se entrelaçam e se materializam no “ato de denúncia” à corrupção no Tocantins, estado marcado pela recorrente cassação de governadores. Para tal exame, utiliza-se o método arqueogenealógico da Análise do Discurso, por meio de alguns de seus conceitos operacionais tais como enunciado, formação discursiva, dispositivo e episteme. Como corpus, tem-se a notícia do G1 Tocantins, intitulada “Afastamentos, renúncias e pedidos de impeachment: nenhum governador termina mandato no Tocantins há quase 20 anos”, publicada em 4 de setembro de 2025. Os resultados indicam que a corrupção não é somente um crime, mas um dispositivo de saber-poder mobilizado seletivamente pelas forças hegemônicas do estado. Por fim, sopesa-se o papel midiático, funcionando como dispositivo de amplificação desses poderes.

Palavras-chave: arqueogenealogia; corrupção; cassação; discurso político; Tocantins.

Initial considerations

The relevance of the State and its integrity constitute historically constructed and consolidated truths grounded in assumptions that, in contemporary contexts, preclude their full contestation. The notion that the State represents the most complete form of political community was already articulated in the writings of Aristotle (ARISTÓTELES, 2011). Machiavelli (MAQUIAVEL, 2004) emphasized the State's central role in ensuring social order, stability, and security. Hobbes (1997), in *Leviathan*, argued that the State, referred to as the "Leviathan," constituted the only viable means of removing humanity from the "state of nature." Within this epistemic framework, Soares (2025a, p. 63) observes that "the importance of the State, in the popular imagination, for the functioning of societies is undeniable, even if some theoretically contest this assertion." An examination of this contemporary perspective reveals that the perceived truth of the State's relevance, even when situated within the "popular imagination," exerts effects not only at the symbolic level but also on concrete reality; on subjects, fauna, flora, and the broader environment in which life unfolds. From this standpoint, any human action (such as political corruption or State inaction) that disrupts the State's completeness (ARISTÓTELES, 2011) or its order, stability, or security (MAQUIAVEL, 2004) may hinder progress toward removing humanity from the state of nature (HOBBS, 1997).

Thus, the impossibility of contesting the State gains strength when corruption and the inaction of State institutions themselves undermine population well-being and compromise the allocation of resources intended for appropriate social improvements. According to Transparency International (TRANSPARÊNCIA INTERNACIONAL, 2025), based on the 2024 Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI), which highlights the relationship between corruption and climate change, Brazil ranks 107th in terms of national integrity. Within the country, Espírito Santo occupies 1st place as the least corrupt state, whereas Acre ranks 27th as the most corrupt. Analysis of the table and map provided by the same source

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indicates that the North region is projected as the most corrupt in the federation (TRANSPARÊNCIA INTERNACIONAL BRASIL, 2022). In this context, Tocantins, although not the most corrupt according to the indices, is discursively positioned within the *epistemic frame of corruption in the North* through media representations. Considering these discursive projections, which aim to approximate reality through indices and statistics, Tocantins ranks 22nd in integrity (TRANSPARÊNCIA INTERNACIONAL BRASIL, 2022), appearing (from lowest to highest integrity) as the sixth most corrupt state. Within this scenario, the political landscape of this youngest state in the Brazilian federation is marked by a unique and recurrent phenomenon: instability in the Executive Branch, characterized by the interruption of elected governors' mandates and the resulting need for supplementary elections (FERNANDES; LAURIS, 2025).

More than isolated democratic anomalies, these events appear to constitute a historical regularity in the functioning of the local political system. A superficial observation might attribute this dynamic to the “moralization of public life” and to the fight against “corruption,” understood as an imperative of justice. However, a more precise analysis of this recurring alternation of political actors suggests additional meanings in which removal from office does not result from a neutral judicial process, but rather manifests “knowledge-power” that, through political conflicts, employs new instruments of control and sanction — such as the “discourse of morality” and the “act of denouncing corruption” — operating as mechanisms for restoring “state order.” From this perspective, in which the act of denouncing corruption emerges as an instrument of knowledge-power, the present article employs Archaeogenealogical Discourse Analysis to examine media pronouncements and their historical conditions as an enunciative extension that, through discursive processes, has rendered “corruption” a legitimate and powerful category for political sanction. Furthermore, based on the enunciative surface of the discursive event, the selected news report — “Dismissals, resignations, and impeachment requests: no governor has completed a term in

Tocantins for nearly 20 years,” published by G1 Tocantins on September 4, 2025 — seeks to demonstrate how the denunciation of corruption does not constitute a purely moralizing act.

Thus, this analytical approach is organized into three distinct yet interconnected parts that together support the proposed argument and enable verification of the thesis. In *Theoretical-Methodological Considerations*, the notions of discursive formation, utterance, device, and episteme are presented, along with an explanation of how these concepts are articulated within the analytical procedure. In the section *Analysis: Archeogenealogy of Corruption in Tocantins*, the aforementioned operators are employed in describing and interpreting the power–knowledge relations present in the text under examination. Finally, in *Final Considerations*, the potential contributions and probable developments arising from the analytical process are discussed. Following this brief overview, the text proceeds to the section in which the theoretical-methodological tools are introduced.

Theoretical-methodological considerations

Archeogenealogy is essential for understanding how knowledge, practices, and institutions have been historically constituted through power–knowledge relations (SOARES, 2025a). Using the concepts presented in the previous section, the objective is to map the rules that organize discourses and to reveal the power relations that sustain them. According to Fernandes Júnior and Franceschini (2019, p. 12), discursive functioning “is not delimited by a linguistic or grammatical key, but elects the enunciative function and the concept of utterance as a methodological concept for reading different discursivities.” This approach avoids formalism, which restricts itself to superficial textual analysis; idealism, which disregards the material conditions of discourse production; and reductionism, which, although referencing power and knowledge, does not engage deeply with the analysis of language. It is important to note that, within this archeogenealogical perspective, discourses are events

(SOARES, 2025b) constantly being updated. For Foucault (2014; 2017), discourse, understood as the engine that produces tradition and influence and as a social practice independent of natural laws, establishes order within a given society.

Thus, by treating discourse as a set of rules that defines what is said and what is not said (FOUCAULT, 2014), the utterance is understood as the perceptible materiality of discourse. Consequently, according to Foucault (2017, p. 104), this notion cannot be defined as “a unit of the same kind as the sentence, proposition, or speech act,” but must instead be regarded as a historical and material extension of continuities and discontinuities that unfolds over time, generating relations of meaning in its actualizations (SOARES, 2018). For this reason, Soares (2025a, p. 49) affirms that “the utterance, as an analytical category, differs significantly from its homonym in the linguistic field,” which generally refers to a sentence or speech act visible in a given text. In the context of this analytical approach, the G1 Tocantins news article, taken in its entirety, constitutes an enunciative function (FERNANDES JÚNIOR; FRANCESCHINI, 2019) that must be segmented and examined.

Beyond the utterance, discursive formation represents the domain in which statements converge and the episteme materializes (DELEUZE, 2005). According to Soares (2019), discursive formations operate as a delimited system of possibilities, that is, structured zones of what can and should be said. In the author’s words, discursive formations “can be seen as ‘regions of the sayable’” (SOARES, 2019, p. 47). Within the same perspective, Foucault (2017) asserts that a discursive formation can be identified when regularity and a consistent pattern emerge among a set of statements; even when seemingly distinct, such statements follow the same rules that define their objects, concepts, themes, and modes of enunciation. Thus, discursive formations are understood as systems of dispersion within which an order may be established. Analyzing the discursive formations of a political–media discourse therefore entails tracing the connections between its history (its regularity) and its enunciative present (the image produced of contemporary politics in Tocantins).

By understanding the functioning of utterances and discursive formations, it becomes possible to advance toward an understanding of how devices operate. While discursive formation refers to the set of anonymous and historical rules that define the conditions under which utterances emerge, the device constitutes a broader and more complex concept. According to Veyne (2009, p. 73), devices are “the laws, acts, words, or practices that constitute a historical formation, whether it be science, the hospital, sexual love, or the army.” A device is thus a heterogeneous ensemble that encompasses discourses, institutions, architectural arrangements, laws, and scientific utterances. Moreover, the device is not limited to discourse; rather, it brings together diverse elements, both discursive and non-discursive. As Soares (2025b, p. 124) affirms, “the device is one of the regulators of the macrodynamic structure of the utterance.” In this sense, the device occupies a hierarchical position as something more complex than discursive formations, functioning as a network of heterogeneous elements that make the existence of discourse and knowledge possible. In other words, discursive formations constitute the rules governing utterances, whereas the device represents the network that integrates them.

Finally, the notion of episteme, essential for understanding the historical circumstances that enable the emergence of specific forms of knowledge, is approached here as a truth sustained by sets of rules and laws, institutions, and subjects that constitute “corruption” as the trigger that “authorizes” the loss of power, the device that “summons the dismissal.” The episteme helps clarify the constraints imposed on discourse at a given moment; however, it should not be understood as “a unitary, coherent, and closed system” (REVEL, 2025, p. 41) or as a historical force that imposes rigid determination.

Following this brief overview of the theoretical and methodological tools for archeogenealogical analysis, it becomes clear that statements constitute the most basic units, “an atom of discourse” (FOUCAULT, 2017, p. 96). These units are organized by discursive formations (REVEL, 2005). Devices, including laws and institutions, make possible

the maintenance of subjects' positions within society. Finally, the episteme represents the broader relational structure that encompasses the practices of a given era (VEYNE, 2009), revealing how power and knowledge are organized and constrained within a specific historical field (SOARES, 2025a). With this foundation established, the text proceeds to the analysis section.

Analysis: archaeogenealogy of corruption in tocantins

For greater didactic clarity, the archaeogenealogical analysis begins with a brief description of the conditions of production and emergence of the discursive materiality of the news report, "Dismissals, resignations, and impeachment requests: no governor has completed a term in Tocantins for nearly 20 years." The examination then turns to the internal enunciative structures that constitute the materiality of the G1 Tocantins text. After identifying the statements related to corruption, the notions of discursive formation and apparatus will be employed to identify the relations of force and power that summon the recurrence of meanings and formulations concerning corrupt acts within the statement under analysis. Finally, together with the notion of episteme, the goal is to understand how devices and mechanisms of power-knowledge operate through discourses of morality and the establishment of political order, resignifying the meanings of corruption and perpetuating this truth through the set of knowledge and powers that constitute it. It should be noted that italics will be used to present excerpts from the corpus in order to distinguish them clearly from direct quotations. Following these considerations, the analysis proceeds to an examination of the conditions of production in which the news report emerges.

The removal of Wanderlei Barbosa (*Republicanos*) from the position of governor of Tocantins in September 2025, by decision of the Superior Court of Justice (*Superior Tribunal de Justiça – STJ*), constitutes the most recent and emblematic event in a chronic and profound crisis of governability in the state, becoming the central focus of news reporting on local

political instability. The precautionary measure was issued within the scope of Operation Fames-19. The Federal Police investigation uncovered an alleged multimillion-real corruption scheme involving fraud in contracts for the supply of basic food baskets and other emergency provisions (FERNANDES; LAURIS, 2025). Given these circumstances, the report on Wanderlei Barbosa's removal adds to a sequence of impeachments, arrests, and resignations affecting previous governors. The news item therefore not only informs about a new scandal, but also employs the judicial removal as living and current evidence of the absence of ethics in governing and the collapse of the state's political system. Having outlined the conditions of production and emergence of the news report, the analysis now turns to the examination of its discursive materiality.

Dismissals, resignations, and impeachment requests: no governor has completed a term in Tocantins for nearly 20 years

The last governor to finish a term was Marcelo Miranda, between 2003 and 2006. Wanderlei Barbosa was removed from office this Wednesday (3).

[...] On Wednesday (3), it was Wanderlei Barbosa's (Republicanos) turn to leave office, following a decision by the Superior Court of Justice (*Superior Tribunal de Justiça* – STJ). He is under investigation for suspected involvement in a scheme to illegally purchase food baskets using public funds during the Covid-19 pandemic. [...] TV Anhanguera and g1 compiled a historical overview of the political situation and the 'turnover' in control of the State Executive Branch in recent years. See who the governors were and how the dismissals, impeachments, and resignations unfolded.

Marcelo Miranda - 1st impeachment [...] However, the governor was removed from office in 2009, when the Superior Electoral Court (*Tribunal Superior Eleitoral* – TSE) identified irregularities precisely in the 2006 political campaign. In addition to leaving office, Marcelo Miranda was also rendered ineligible for eight years. [...] *Carlos Gaguim* [...] He won an indirect election and remained in office until the end of 2010 but was unable to win reelection and was succeeded by Siqueira Campos. [...] *Siqueira Campos* and his vice governor, João Oliveira (DEM), resigned [...]. The objective was to enable a maneuver that would guarantee the candidacy of the governor's son, Eduardo Siqueira Campos. [...] *Sandoval*

Cardoso [...] In 2016, he spent 16 days in the Palmas Provisional Detention Center, accused of procurement *fraud involving earthmoving and asphalt paving contracts*. [...]. *Marcelo Miranda - 2nd impeachment* [...] After Sandoval's departure, Marcelo Miranda managed to return to power [...]. But in 2018, the Civil Police seized a plane *carrying R\$500,000 in cash and campaign materials supporting the Miranda-Lélis ticket* in Piracanjuba (GO). The case led to his second impeachment in 2018. He is the only Brazilian governor to be impeached twice while holding the same office, to date. [...]. *Wanderlei Barbosa* [...] Wanderlei assumed the governorship as soon as Carlesse was removed from office in 2021. [...] He is under investigation *for suspected involvement in a scheme that used public funds from parliamentary amendments to purchase food baskets* during the Covid-19 pandemic. Part of the money was allegedly used to build a luxury lodge in Taquaruçu. [...] *Laurez Moreira assumes office* [...] With the 180-day removal, Laurez Moreira became the thirteenth governor of Tocantins, assuming the position on an interim basis (FERNANDES; LAURIS, 2025, our emphasis).

By examining the syntactic-semantic structures that constitute the statement within the G1 Tocantins journalistic corpus, it becomes evident that the text is organized to construct a biogeographical logic (FOUCAULT, 2008) in which corruption is presented as an “endemic” and naturalized problem marked by seasonal regularity (reappearing with each gubernatorial term), while the justice system is depicted as continuously acting to punish and restore order — as seen in expressions such as *removed, investigated, impeachment, identified irregularities, accused*, etc. This logic is produced through a set of micro-statements (DELEUZE, 2005) that collectively constitute the news report. Within this framework, the article's central statement is conveyed in its title: *No governor has completed a term in Tocantins for nearly 20 years*. This enunciative structure not only references a historical pattern but also implicitly associates it with a causal chain involving political instability and, tacitly, illegality and corruption. The sequential listing of events functions as a mechanism for producing effects of evidence, shifting the title from the semantic domain of verifiability or common-sense observation to a domain of demonstrated proof, articulated through the legal discursive formation.

Given the shift from a common-sense lexicon to more specialized terminology, it becomes possible to observe not only the operation of discursive formation but also the mobilization of governmental mechanisms, since each governor's case is presented as a micro-statement with a syntactic-semantic structure of cause and effect. In the case of Wanderlei Barbosa, the statements *was removed from office and investigated for suspected involvement in a scheme to illegally purchase basic food baskets with public funds* justify the removal (punishment) on the basis of an investigation into illegality. The enunciative construction *is investigated for suspected involvement* indicates an ongoing process, thereby validating the action of the STJ as a legal mechanism. In relation to Marcelo Miranda, the statement *1st disqualification [...] the Superior Electoral Court (Tribunal Superior Eleitoral – TSE) identified irregularities precisely in the political campaign* presents the disqualification as the TSE's institutional response to those *irregularities*, a legal term that encompasses illegality and misconduct. Thus, both the explicit mention of TSE and the fact that the politician became *ineligible* reinforce the meaning of “application of the law.” In the statement regarding *Siqueira Campos and his vice-governor, João Oliveira (DEM), resigned [...]. The objective was to enable a maneuver*, the resignation, although not a direct punishment, is semantically linked to a *maneuver*, suggesting an illicit strategy intended to circumvent legal procedures.

Furthermore, in the statement *Sandoval Cardoso spent 16 days detained [...] accused of bid-rigging*, imprisonment is presented as the maximum punishment, directly associated with *fraud* and situated in the semantic field of corruption and illegality. From this point onward, although the legal instruments TSE and STJ remain implicit, they are evoked through lexical items such as *accused* and *detained*, which presuppose the exercise of a legal authority responsible for triggering these actions. Finally, in the statement *Marcelo Miranda - 2nd revocation [...] the Civil Police seized a plane with R\$ 500,000 in cash and campaign leaflets [...]. The case led to the new revocation, the seizure of the plane and the money*, G1 Tocantins discursively constructs “the material evidence,” that is, the linguistic materiality mobilized to justify the new revocation.

Thus, the discursive formation that constitutes the statement (FOUCAULT, 2017) conveys a tone of objectivity and impartiality. G1 Tocantins, as a media device, presents a *historical* account that reinforces the meanings of event reporting while producing, from the position of an investigating subject, effects of verifiability. The media statement, configured as a sequential list of facts, reproduces the effect of systematizing corruption in Tocantins, attempting to reinforce the notion that institutions (STJ, TSE, and Federal Police) are active and functioning to correct the problem. The statement, therefore, fabricates a health-related logic and sustains the episteme (FOUCAULT, 2017) that the law is being effectively applied and that “justice prevails.” In this sense, corruption is metaphorically framed as a “pathology to be cured by the application of the law,” and punishment constitutes “the remedy.”

After examining the enunciative structures, it is possible to perceive the dynamics of meaning that interconnect words and things, that is, that make it possible to evoke reality through enunciative regularities. From this point, archeogenealogical analysis (SOARES, 2025a) moves beyond the textual surface to trace and map the historical conditions of possibility of discourse. The G1 Tocantins corpus, in light of the provided framework, is not merely a factual report but the materialization of a knowledge-power device operating in the media field, constructing subjectivities. For this reason, the notion of utterance enables the understanding that enunciative materiality is not a simple collection of phrases or propositions. In contrast to its “namesake in the linguistic field” (SOARES, 2025a, p. 49), the G1 Tocantins news report functions as a set of statements that align under the same discursive formation, namely, that of corruption as a moral and individual problem that must be corrected by law.

Furthermore, based on the corpus under analysis, it is possible to observe that the statements about *removals*, *dismissals*, *arrests*, and *fraud* point to things in the world and follow rules of formation that make them possible and coherent. These are statements of the sayable (SOARES, 2019) within the domain of media discourse on politics in Tocantins

(SOARES, 2025a). This discursive formation is what allows the repetition of the theme of corruption, but always from the perspective of punishment and the restoration of order. The G1 Tocantins statement does not question the power structure itself, but only the misconduct of individuals within it.

To understand the existing knowledge-power dynamics, it is necessary to revisit the notion of *apparatus*, since, according to Soares (2025a, p. 87), this is “like an institutional regulatory apparatus, constituting all the practices of power relations in force in the social body”. From this epistemological perspective, the G1 Tocantins media apparatus is not limited to replicating statements; it represents a heterogeneous network that integrates discourses (the report, the news, etc.), institutions (the media outlets), and practices (the routine of investigation and publication). It is through this circuit of institutions, discourses, and practices that one understands the “spectrum of anchoring of the statement in relation to discursive formation” (SOARES, 2025a, p. 87).

This logic operates under an episteme of corruption, which is configured as a “truth” of a time and place (FOUCAULT, 2017). The modern episteme, unlike classical epistemes that viewed corruption as a problem of the prince’s character, now frames it as a deviation from the democratic norm. Corruption, in this sense, is no longer a problem of the ruler’s personal morality, but a systemic flaw that must be corrected by law. The analysis of the episteme engendered in the statement under examination, therefore, leads to a deeper understanding in which corruption is not only a theme, but a device of knowledge-power. It is mobilized by governmental mechanisms that seek power not for simple punishment, but for the overthrow and seizure of political power.

Given this, the G1 Tocantins news outlet, by focusing on removals and dismissals, legitimizes the replacement of one power by another. It does not question the origin of the power that assumes the position after the departure of the previous one, but only validates its arrival as a “rescue of the law.” Thus, the media report, in detailing the removal of

Wanderlei Barbosa and the subsequent arrival of Lauez Moreira, simply describes the transition as a natural consequence of the law, without delving into the dynamics of knowledge-power (SOARES, 2025a) that allow a substitute to assume office. The media apparatus, therefore, actively participates in the maintenance and circulation of this power. The “fight against corruption” in G1 Tocantins becomes a mechanism that erases the real power relations at play and legitimizes the replacement of one ruler by another, always in the name of law and order. Power is not simply exercised, but produced and circulated through discourses about “corruption” and “illegality.”

Thus, in a movement of historical deepening, it is understood that the founding of Tocantins in 1988 represented a political milestone of the New Republic, with its creation consolidated by the new Constitution that delimited the administrative structure and electoral rules for the new state (SOARES; BOUCHER, 2024; SOARES, 2025a). However, the genesis of the state did not signify a break with the old power structures, but rather their reconfiguration. The embryonic political scenario was quickly dominated by groups with deep roots in the former northern Goiás region, who rapidly consolidated their influence. The first election for governor, in 1988, was won by José Wilson Siqueira Campos, a political figure with experience since 1964 (SOARES; BOUCHER, 2024). His victory, with 62.49% of the votes, marked the beginning of a hegemony that would define the political system and the consolidation of the state’s first elites.

According to the brief historical overview provided by G1 Tocantins, it is clear that, instead of a broad democratization of power, what was observed was the discursive projection of a concentration of political control in the hands of a few families. A deeper analysis of Tocantins’ macro-power structure reveals that political power relations are not exercised by specific parties or ideologies, but by endogamous groups that control economic activity (agribusiness and mining) and, by extension, the region’s politics. Given this dynastic logic, represented in the statement by the names and their kinship and friendship relationships, the most

prominent political figures in Tocantins are the Siqueira and Miranda families. José Wilson Siqueira Campos, the patriarch of the Siqueira family, served four terms as governor, and this silent power relationship, working to ensure the continuity of the family's power, guaranteed the election of his son, Eduardo Siqueira, to the first mayoralty of Palmas due to his popularity and, subsequently, to positions as federal deputy, senator, and mayor elected again in 2024 — replacing Cinthia Ribeiro (SOARES; BOUCHER, 2024; SOARES, 2025a), then widow of Senator João Ribeiro.

Given this context, the struggle for power shifts from the electoral field to the legal-discursive one, but the same actors, the same “families,” remain at the center of the conflict. Based on this examination of the G1 Tocantins statement and the historical excavation of power relations, exposing the relationships of meaning between the event described in the present and the memories of Tocantins politics, it is possible to perceive that the struggle does not end when a leader is legally prevented from occupying the highest office. It is perpetuated through other family members or political figures linked to the hegemonic genealogy who maintain political and electoral influence, ensuring that the power base is not dismantled. This dynamic that delineates the power and knowledge of the transfer of state management allows for another interpretation regarding corruption and impeachment: both function as political instruments for managing internal crises within the oligarchy, rather than as tools for its dissolution.

Given these discourses that normalize the rule of law, the recurrence of interruptions of mandates is directly linked to the rise of corruption as the main category of political sanction in Tocantins. This scenario allows for an understanding of the “knowledge” about corruption in Tocantins. As already mentioned, this is not only a crime, but a “discursive formation” that has consolidated itself as legitimate knowledge for judicial intervention and political sanction. The jurisprudential logic in which the same corrupt practice can be revealed and punished in one case (Miranda's impeachment), whereas similar accusations against other

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leaders do not result in comparable sanctions, suggests that impeachment is not an inevitable consequence of denunciation, but rather a result of media exposure and the political struggle that sustains it in the state of Tocantins, since media and politics “reverberate in a feedback process” (SOARES, 2025a, p. 29). Political instability, in which governors no longer complete their terms, is a direct byproduct of this instrumentalization of corruption.

From this point, it is understood that the dynamics of political impeachment cannot be interpreted without analyzing the central role of the media (SOARES, 2022). In the context of Tocantins (and globally), the press, as a power device (FOUCAULT, 2017), is not a neutral channel of information but “acts, in all its aspects, as an extension of political action to represent it to the population” (SOARES, 2025a, p. 29). In this sense, although the political and legal powers in the state claim that the press is a fundamental “channel of denunciation” in the fight against corruption, this function is not devoid of intentionality. The media, with its capacity to select and frame news, operates as an apparatus that shapes political discourses and, ultimately, in this duality between denunciation and complicity, legitimizes the actions of power, since “media and politics, integral actors of the contemporary social circuit, perform integrative functions in relation to the activities developed both in the countryside and in the city” (SOARES, 2025a, p. 29). Finally, a practical example of this duality is the coverage by *Jornal Opção*, which, through the headline “Highest *per capita* income in the North and Northeast regions is in Tocantins” (JARDIM, 2024), employs an exhortatory discourse to associate economic success with Governor Wanderlei Barbosa. Simultaneously, other media outlets report investigations against the same governor, initiated by the Federal Police, for an alleged scheme to embezzle public funds.

Final considerations

Throughout this study, it was observed that Tocantins politics presents a power structure deeply rooted in family relationships, in which

corruption is a systemic practice and its discourse has become a tool for the removal of elected officials. In this sense, removal from office, from this perspective, is not the opposite of corruption, but one of its expressions in the field of power. What is at stake is not only the pursuit of individual morality, but control over state structures, which are repeatedly contested but rarely transformed. Examining these structures allows us to understand that political instability in Tocantins does not represent a symptom of a dysfunctional system, but a manifestation of the internal logic of its oligarchic power structure, amplified through the subjugation of media power.

Given this, the political disqualification in Tocantins, observed through an archeogenealogical lens, is neither a historical accident nor the result of a process of democratic maturation. The logic of family relationships suggests that power does not represent a position individually contested, but an asset that is defended and transmitted (SOARES, 2025a). In this sense, the legal impediment of a leader, such as the disqualification of Marcelo Miranda for eight years, does not lead to the rise of new leaders or to the rupture of the system. Instead, the oligarchy adapts, and power is transferred to a close relative or ally. Disqualification thus marks itself as a device for oligarchic renewal (FOUCAULT, 2017), a mechanism for settling internal disputes and realigning political forces without dismantling the existing power structure.

Furthermore, instability, far from being an anomaly, is a defining characteristic of politics in Tocantins. The alternation of governments through impeachments and supplementary elections reveals one of its operational mechanisms. What could be observed in this trajectory was that the first oligarchies consolidated themselves in an environment of political borderland, and that power then became, metaphorically and literally, a *business passed from father to son, brother, wife, and husband*. Corruption, in its various forms (such as the use of slush funds, illicit fundraising, and overpricing), became the method of financing and perpetuating this power. Within this archeogenealogical perspective, the

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fundamental dynamic becomes evident: when conflict among political family members intensifies, the discourse of corruption, amplified by the media (SOARES, 2022), provides the legitimate basis for the action of the electoral justice system.

From this archeogenealogical perspective, corruption ceases to be merely an ethical or criminal deviation and rises to the status of a knowledge-power device operating within the Tocantins oligarchy. The succession of removals and dismissals, instrumentalized by media discourse and legal sanctions, constitutes the materialization and effect of this device. In this context, the result is dismissal, which removes the individual but not the power of family members, friends, or political partners. In this vein, the “*non-completion of mandates*” presents itself as the visible consequence of a subterranean struggle for control of the Araguaia Palace.

Thus, this analysis offers a significant contribution to the field of Linguistics and, above all, Discourse Analysis, by demonstrating how the archeogenealogical approach can be applied to a specific political context, going beyond traditional analyses. Therefore, corroborating Soares’s thought (2025a, p. 42), “it is believed that media work, regardless of its political spectrum, requires not only ethics, but also responsibility in shaping public opinion.” In short, as long as the same family power structures persist, it is likely that the episteme of corruption will continue to be produced and used as a mechanism for political instability and power struggles, ensuring that *governors no longer finish their terms*.

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