A Proposal for a Dissertation:

ON THE ROLE OF φ-FEATURES: EMPTY CATEGORIES, BINDING AND THE PRONOMINAL SYSTEM IN BRAZILIAN PORTUGUESE

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0. Introduction

Contrary to what happened to other areas of syntactic research in the last 10 years, both Binding theory and the theory of Null Arguments have steadily followed the programs of research established in the beginning of the '80s. In particular, recent theoretical developments did not radically change what was then seen as the substantive issues to be dealt with by such theories: hence, there is a certain degree of consensus not only on a number of basic empirical generalizations, but also on the sort of theoretical apparatus which should express such generalizations (see below). Under such circumstances, in-depth investigation of a particular language may be very useful for the descriptive purposes of the investigation, on the one hand, and, on the other, for an adequate understanding of previous generalizations and, correspondingly, for a more appropriate formulation of the theory. This is the reason why I want to propose as a plan for my dissertation the investigation of binding, null arguments and the pronominal system of Brazilian Portuguese: not only the present state of the theories concerned is appropriate to guide an in-depth descriptive investigation, but also, as I will try to show below, Brazilian Portuguese (BP hereafter) possesses some specific properties which can be telling about the nature of such theories.

The present proposal is organized as follows. Sections 1 to 3 are dedicated to providing empirical motivation for the proposal. Section 1 discusses some Binding data in BP which shows an intriguing pattern relating the form and location of an anaphoric element to its interpretive properties − whether it can be interpreted as a bound variable or coreferentially. Section 2 goes over Null Arguments, and my main purpose there is to show that null objects are divided in at least two syntactic types in BP − animate null objects behave as a variable bound by a null operator, but inanimate ones do not. Section 3 discusses some properties of the pronominal system in BP suggesting that the correlations discussed in the previous sections are related to each other. In particular, I'll show data indicating that null arguments, non-animacy and bound-variable interpretation are somehow intimately related in the grammar of BP. Section 3 ends with a sketch the general approach I would like to consider initially. The basic idea is that anaphoric elements, with or without lexical content, may receive their feature content from context and lexical insertion occurs when possible/necessary (a rephrasing of Bouchard 1984 and Burzio 1991's ideas). Finally section 4 suggests a specific set-up for the Dissertation and a plan/schedule for its development.

1. Binding Theory

The core of Binding Theory expressed in (1) below is relatively consensual, and the crucial issues that arise are concerned with the proper formulation of the notions involved:

(1)　　a.　*Binding Principles*:
　　　　　　(A)　An anaphor is bound in its domain
　　　　　　(B)　A pronominal is free in its domain

b. *Binding*:

   X binds Y iff X and Y are coindexed, and X c-commands Y.

   If Y is not bound (by X), then it is free (wrt. X).

Among the issues being addressed by recent literature are:

(i) What is the proper intepretation of indexation and coindexation (cf. Reinhart 1986, Grodzinsky & Reinhart 1993)? Here the basic problems are whether *coreference* or *variable binding* is the crucial case of syntactic binding, and whether the (semantic) properties of the antecedent play any role in the determination of the anaphoric relation.

(ii) How many domains of syntactic binding are there, and what defines them (cf. Koster & Reuland 1991a,b and Reinhart & Reuland 1993)?

(iii) What is the proper characterization of the notions of *anaphor* and *pronominal* (cf. Bouchard 1984, Pica 1985, Everaert 1991, Thráinsson 1991 and Burzio 1991)? Here the basic problems concern the nature of the classification of anaphoric elements: is it related to their intrinsic morphosyntactic properties, to the properties of the syntactic context, or both?

Let me exemplify now how the system of anaphoric elements in BP show interesting properties seen from the perspective of (i-iii). First, consider anaphora in simple transitive sentences. (My dialect of) BP allows reflexivity to be expressed either by the reflexive clitic *se* or by a 'heavy anaphor' *ele(a) mesmo(a)*, but not by the unmodified pronoun, as expected[1]:

(2) a. O João$_i$ *se*$_i$ viu na TV
        João *se* saw on the TV
    b. O João$_i$ viu *ele mesmo*$_i$ na TV
        João saw *him self* on the TV
    c. O João$_i$ viu *ele*$_{*i/j}$ na TV
        João saw *him* on the TV

In (3) we see that the only interpretation of the reflexive clitic is as a bound variable, but the heavy anaphor may also have the coreferential interpretation (see Reinhart 1983, 1986 for the test of 'sloppy identity'; '#' below means "interpretation unavailable"):

(3) a. O João$_i$ *se*$_i$ viu na TV, e o Paulo também.
        João *se* saw on the TV, and Paulo too
        João (λx (x saw x on the TV)) & Paulo (λx (x saw x on the TV))
        #João (λx (x saw João on the TV)) & Paulo (λx (x saw João on the TV))
    b. O João$_i$ viu *ele mesmo*$_i$ na TV, e o Paulo também
        João saw *him self* on the TV, and Paulo too
        João (λx (x saw x on the TV)) & Paulo (λx (x saw x on the TV))
        João (λx (x saw João on the TV)) & Paulo (λx (x saw João on the TV))

Now consider what happens when we embed the anaphoric elements in an object NP:

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[1] Spoken BP lost the Accusative clitics of 3rd person *-o(s)/-a(s)*. They were replaced by *ele(s)/ela(s)*, which are the forms used for Nominative and Oblique Case (see tables 1a,b p... above) The 'heavy anaphor' is made out of these forms plus the 'modifier' *mesmo* "same, self".

(4)   a.   A Olívia$_i$ votou n'[o *seu*$_{*i/j}$ pai] nas últimas eleições^2 (j = 2nd person treatment)
           Olívia voted for [*her* father] in the last elections
      b.   A Olívia$_i$ votou n'[o pai d*ela*$_{i/j}$] nas últimas eleições
           Olívia voted for [the father of *her*] in the last elections
      c.   A Olívia$_i$ votou n'[o pai d*ela mesma*$_i$] nas últimas eleições
           Olívia voted for [the father of *her self*] in the last elections

Apparently, the anaphor *se-* cannot be bound by a referential NP in such a context. Both the pronoun and the heavy anaphor can, but they have different interpretive possibilities: while the heavy anaphor can have both the bound variable and the coreferential interpretation, the pronoun can only have the coreferential one:

(5)   a.   A Olívia$_i$ votou no pai d*ela*$_{i/j}$ nas últimas eleições, e a Maria também.
           #Olívia (λx (x voted for x's father...) & Maria (λx (x voted for x's father...)
           Olívia (λx (x voted for Olivia's father...) & Maria (λx (x voted for Olivia's father...)
      c.   A Olívia$_i$ votou no pai d*ela mesma*$_i$ nas últimas eleições, e a Maria também.
           Olívia (λx (x voted for x's father...) & Maria (λx (x voted for x's father...)
           Olívia (λx (x voted for Olivia's father...) & Maria (λx (x voted for Olivia's father...)

Consider, then, what happens if the subject is focussed:

(6)   a.   Somente a Olívia$_i$ votou no *seu*$_i$ pai nas últimas eleições; a Maria não.
           Only Olívia voted for *her* father; Maria did not.
           Only Olívia (λx (x voted for x's father...) & Not Maria (λx (x voted for x's father...)
           #Only Olívia (λx (x voted for Olivia's father...) & Not Maria (λx (x voted for Olivia's father...)
      b.   Somente a Olívia$_i$ votou no pai d*ela*$_{i/j}$ nas últimas eleições; a Maria não.
           #Only Olívia (λx (x voted for x's father...) & Not Maria (λx (x voted for x's father...)
           Only Olívia (λx (x voted for Olivia's father...) & Not Maria (λx (x voted for Olivia's father...)
      c.   Somente a Olívia$_i$ votou no pai d*ela mesma*$_i$ nas últimas eleições; a Maria não.
           Only Olívia (λx (x voted for x's father...) & Not Maria (λx (x voted for x's father...)
           Only Olívia (λx (x voted for Olivia's father...) & Not Maria (λx (x voted for Olivia's father...)

The patterns of interpretation of the pronoun and the anaphor are preserved, but now the anaphor *se-* is possible again and, as in simple transitive structures such as in (3), it must be interpreted as a bound variable. Further complexity is added to the system when, instead of a referential or focussed expression, we have a quantified expression in the subject position: both in the case of a simple transitive structures and when the anaphoric element is embedded in the object, the best option is *se-*:

(7)   a.   Qualquer homem$_i$ pode *se*$_i$ reconhecer numa foto
           Any man can *se* recognize on a photo
      b.   Qualquer homem$_i$ pode reconhecer *ele*$_{*i/j}$ numa foto
           Any man can recognize *him* on a photo

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^{2} It seems appropriate to consider *seu/sua* as a possessive form of the (reflexive) pronoun *se*: not only both are closely related in form, but they can also be used as pronouns of 2nd person treatment (see table 1b p... above).

c. ??Qualquer homem_i pode reconhecer *ele mesmo*_i numa foto
Any man can recognize *him self* on a photo

(8) a. Qualquer homem_i pode reconhecer *seu*_i filho numa foto
Any man can recognize *his* son of on a photo
b. ??Qualquer homem_i pode reconhecer o filho d*ele*_i numa foto
Any man can recognize the son of *him* on a photo
c. ??Qualquer homem_i pode reconhecer o filho d*ele mesmo*_i numa foto
Any man can recognize the son of *him self* on a photo

As we see, the pattern of availability of coreferential or bound-variable interpretation is quite intricate: not only both types of anaphoric relations − coreference and variable biding − are relevant, but they are crucially related to the different types of anaphoric elements and antecedents, and may or may not be available depending on the syntactic context. In (9) I provide an overview of the data discussed above, ('BV' means "bound-variable interpretation", and 'COR' "coreferential interpretation"; coreferential interpretation with a quantified subject is, of course, impossible):

(9)

			se-		*ele*		*ele mesmo*	
			BV	COR	BV	COR	BV	COR
a.	Object Position		+	-	-	-	+	+
b.	Referential Subj		-	-	-	+	+	+
c.	Inside Object	Focussed Subj	+	-	-	+	+	+
d.		Quantified Subj	+		-		-	

(9) provides the following basic generalizations about the correlation anaphoric element/interpretation:

(10) a. *se-* is interpreted as a bound-variable;
b. *ele* is interpreted as coreferential;
c. *ele mesmo* can be either a bound-variable or coreferential.

In section 3 I'll come back to generalizations in (10a,b), showing the import they have when related to further properties of the pronominal system. Since I will not have occasion to come back to the 'heavy anaphor' *ele mesmo* in the rest of this proposal, let me end this section showing some further intriguing properties of this element which should find an analysis in an investigation of the anaphoric system of BP.

The heavy anaphor *ele mesmo* is not only interesting in that it participates on the alternations described above, but because it also seems to have properties of a *long-* and *medium-distance anaphors* (cf. Reuland & Koster 1991b). For example, it patterns with the Icelandic anaphor *sig* in a number of aspects (see Thráinsson 1991:51-9): (i) it can occur in infinitival clauses and be bound by the matrix subject, cf. (11) below; (ii) it can only be bound by the subject in such context, that is, it is 'subject-oriented', cf. (12); (iii) this 'subject-orientation' is preserved even when the anaphoric relation crosses the boundaries of a finite clause, cf. (13):

(11) a. O Pedro_i pediu ao João_j para [PRO_j *se*_{*i/j} barbear]
Pedro_i asked João_j [PRO_j *se*_{*i/j} to-shave]
b. O Pedro_i pediu ao João_j para [PRO_j barbear *ele mesmo*_{i/j}]
Pedro_i asked João_j [PRO_j to-shave *him self*_{i/j}]

(12)   a.   O Pedro$_i$ prometeu ao João$_j$ [PRO$_i$ *se*$_{i/*j}$ barbear pr'a festa]

           Pedro$_i$ promised João$_j$ [PRO$_i$ *se*$_{i/*j}$ to-shave for the party]

       b.   O Pedro$_i$ prometeu ao João$_j$ [PRO$_i$ barbear *ele mesmo*$_{i/*j}$ pr'a festa]

           Pedro$_i$ promised João$_j$ [PRO$_i$ to-shave *him self*$_{i/*j}$ for the party]

(13)   a.   O Pedro$_i$ disse ao João$_j$ que eu tinha traído *ele*$_{i/j}$

           Pedro$_i$ said to João$_j$ that I have betrayed *him*$_{i/j}$

       b.   O Pedro$_i$ disse ao João$_j$ que eu tinha traído *ele mesmo*$_{i/*j}$

           Pedro$_i$ said to João$_j$ that I have betrayed *him self*$_{i/*j}$

The fact that *ele mesmo* patterns with *sig* in the cases above might come as a surprise: one of the generalizations about medium-distance anaphors is that they are usually morphologically simplex (cf. Pica 1985, Reuland & Koster 1991b), which is not the case of *ele mesmo*. Other properties of the BP heavy anaphor, however, reveal that the pattern with *sig* may be illusory. For example, *ele mesmo* differs from *sig* in that it is a form neutralized for Nominative/Accusative (cf. fn.1 here). Hence, it is expected to occur in subject position. And it does, but its properties in this position differ from those shown in object position. In subject position it can have a topic as an antecedent − even if the topic is in the previous discourse −, cf. (14), but this is not possible in object position, cf. (15):

(14)   a.   O Paulo$_i$, *ele mesmo*$_i$ gostava da Maria

           Paulo$_i$, *he self*$_i$ liked Maria

       b.   O Paulo$_i$ disse que todos gostavam da Maria. *Ele mesmo*$_i$ gostava da Maria.

           Paulo$_i$ said that everybody liked Maria. *He self*$_i$ liked Maria.

(15)   a.   *O Paulo$_i$, até o João gostava d*ele mesmo*$_i$

           Paulo$_i$, even João liked *him self*$_i$

       b.   O Paulo$_i$ disse que todos gostavam d*ele mesmo*$_i$.

           *Até o João (que nunca gosta de ninguém) gostava d*ele mesmo*$_i$.

           Paulo$_i$ said that everybody liked *him self*$_i$. *Even João (who never likes anybody) like *him self*$_i$.

The medium- and long-distance binding properties of *ele mesmo* suggest that a closer look at its behavior may reveal further properties of non-local binding domains. Besides, we expect that the properties of *ele mesmo* fall out of its place in the BP system of anaphoric element, so that it is not unreasonable to think that a look at the whole system may tell us something about this element. We may, then, come back to the main line of the argument of the present proposal, which is to look after the basic properties of anaphoric elements in BP. In the next section, I take a look at null arguments and, in particular, at some of the properties of null objects in BP.

2. Null Arguments

The paradigm for investigation of null arguments was basically set by Rizzi 1986, who introduced the conceptual distinction between *formal licensing* and *content identification* of empty categories: "The minimal contribution that is to be expected from a theory of a null element is that it should specify (a) the conditions that formally license the null element (the conditions that allow it to occur in a given environment) and (b) the way in which the content of the null element (minimally, its φ-features) is determined, or 'recovered', from the phoneticlly realized context" (p.518). The standard theory of null arguments, under this view, may be summarized as in (16):

(16)	*Null Argument*	*Formal Licensing*	*Identification*
	NP-trace	ECP	A-Chain Formation
	A'-trace (variables)	ECP	A'-Chain Formation
	PRO	Ungoverned	Control
	pro	As in (15)	As in (15)

Specifically wrt. null pronominals, Rizzi proposed the following system (which is basically a generalization of his 1982 approach to the Null Subject Parameter):

(17)   *Theory of Pro*:
       a. *pro* is formally licensed if Case-marked by $X°_y$ (that is, Case-governed by a head of type y, where the class of licensing heads is parametrized);
       b. if X is the licensing head of *pro*, then *pro* is identified by the ϕ-features specification of X.

Although no new synthesis has been achieved so far in this area, the picture summarized in (16) was a point of departure for a number of different lines of research that have been developed in the last decade. Let me just refer to some of them here:

(i) the investigation of the ECP and its possible connections with locality and/or binding (Aoun 1985, Rizzi 1990, Cinque 1990, Manzini 1992);

(ii) the program of eliminating from syntactic theory specific statements about empty categories (Chomsky 1981/1982, Brody 1984, Bouchard 1984, Speas 1994);

(iii) the attempts to rescue the theory of PRO from its construction-specific character, either by generalizing control theory to all null pronominals (Huang 1984, 1989), or by reducing it to binding (Manzini 1983, Bennis & Hoekstra 198?, Borer 1989).

    Related to (17) above, the investigation has mostly concentrated on the nature of content identification:

(iv) the relation between the inflectional properties of verbal paradigms and the identification of null subjects (Rizzi 1982/1986, Platzack 1987, Jaeggli & Safir 1987b);

(v) wrt. the identification of null objects, a number of mechanisms have been proposed, besides pronominal clitics and object agreement, of course: null operator chains (Huang 1984, Raposo 1986), ARB interpretation as assignment of ϕ-features to a direct Θ-role (Rizzi 1986); ARB interpretation as binding by an unselective operator (Authier 1989/1992).

(vi) The formal licensing aspects of *pro* theory did not receive so much attention till the recent developments wrt. the connections between verb inflection and verb movement. Since then Authier (1992) has proposed that the relevant parameter of variation is not the choice of licensing heads, but optionality of Case assignment, which is related to existence of verb movement in the language. Following a similar track, recent work has suggested that formal licensing is related to verb-movement and the possibility of establishing a Spec-Head configuration with the relevant functional elements (Rohrbacher 1993, Bianchi & Figueiredo 1993, Benedito 1994, Speas 1994 and Platzack 1994).

    Being a language in which null arguments show some specific properties non-reported or non-accounted for in the literature, BP is clearly relevant for the settlement of several of the issues referred above. Here I discuss this point wrt. the case of null objects (null subjects will be discussed in the next section).

    BP is reported to be a language in which null objects with a definite, referential interpretation are possible in general as long as a referent is available as a topic either of the discourse or of the pragmatic context (Galves 1984, Farrell 1990). In particular, such null objects would *not* be subject to locality conditions (contrary to what was claimed to be the case of null objects in European Portuguese, cf. Raposo 1986). But the description of the data is

not consensual. I myself showed quite extensively in a 1990 paper that, at least in my dialect of BP, null objects are sensitive to islands. More recently, Bianchi & Figueiredo 1993 (B&F) made an observation that I consider to be a breakthrough in the establishment of the relevant data[3]: they noticed that null objects show different behavior depending on whether they denote an *animate* or an *inanimate* referent[4].

Inanimate null objects may occur inside islands, cf. (18), but this is not possible with animate null objects, cf. (19):

(18)   (*Talking of [the Jaguar we've just seen]$_i$:*)
      a.   O José conhece [$_{NP}$ a mulher [$_{CP}$ que comprou *ec*$_i$]]
         José knows the woman who bought (it)
      b.   O José [$_{VP}$ ficou nervoso] [$_{CP}$ porque a Maria comprou *ec*$_i$]
         José got nervous because Maria bought (it)

(19)   (*Talking of João$_i$:*)
      a.   *O José conhece [$_{NP}$ a mulher [$_{CP}$ que beijou *ec*$_i$]]
         José knows the woman who kissed (him)
      b.   *O José [$_{VP}$ ficou nervoso] [$_{CP}$ porque a Maria beijou *ec*$_i$]
         José got nervous because Maria bought (him)

The judgments in (18)-(19) seem to be basically correct for my dialect, too. Furthermore, going back to my 1990 paper, I noticed that *all* my examples. there contain *animate* null objects, which explains the result I obtained then. Now, as Raposo reasoned, sensitivity to islands indicate that movement is at play: B&F plausibly concluded that animate null objects in BP are variables of a null operator bound by a discourse topic (just like in EP). As expected, they show Principle C effects, cf.

(20)   a.   *O José$_i$ conhece [$_{NP}$ a mulher [$_{CP}$ que beijou *ec*$_i$]]
         José knows the woman who kissed (him)
      b.   *O José$_i$ [$_{VP}$ ficou nervoso] [$_{CP}$ porque a Maria beijou *ec*$_i$]
         José got nervous because Maria bought (him)

On the other hand, the fact that inanimate null objects are not sensitive to islands suggests that there is no A'-movement involved. So, the plausible conclusion under the standard theory of null arguments would be that they are *pronominal*, and that is what B&F claim they are. The prediction, then, is that they should be able to be A-bound by an antecedent outside their domain, as (animate and inanimate) pronominal null subjects do in BP:

(21)   a.   O José$_i$ disse que *ec*$_i$ chegaria tarde
         José said that (he) would arrive late
      b.   O prédio$_i$ tinha sido construído de modo a que *ec*$_i$ pudesse resistir a terremotos
         The building was built in such a way that (it) could resist earthquakes

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[3] Figueiredo is a native speaker of the dialect described by Galves and Farrell, which is the one spoken in São Paulo, Southeast of Brazil.

[4] This is the distinction B&F claim to be relevant (cf. also Farrell:328). Kato 1993:230 suggests that the relevant distinction might be *human/non-human*. I will not try to decide between these alternatives here, and keep referring to the relevant distinction as animate/non-animate for convenience.

B&F provide the sentences in (22) below as evidence that inanimate null objects can be A-bound. But here our judgements do not go together: the sentences in (22) are much less than perfect in my dialect (my judgements were checked with those of three other speakers; I added sentence (22c) to B&F's paradigm):

(22) a. (?*)Esse tipo de garrafa$_i$ impede as crianças$_j$ de *pro$_j$* abrirem *ec$_i$* sozinhas
           This type of bottle prevents children of opening (them) alone
       b. (??)Esse prato$_i$ exige que o cozinheiro$_j$ acabe de *pro$_j$* preparar *ec$_i$* na mesa
           This dish requires that the cook finishes preparing (it) at the table
       c. (*)Esse tipo de filme$_i$ faz o João$_j$ ficar vendo *ec$_i$* a noite inteira
           This sort of movie makes João keep watching (it) the whole night

Furthermore, the examples in (22) are not quite like the ones in (18) or (21): while (18) and (21) are statements about particular situations and participants, those in (22) are generic statements about kinds. As soon as the structures in (22) are converted in particular statements about definite participants, they get simply completely unacceptable in my dialect:

(23) a. *Foi essa porta$_i$ que impediu os ladrões$_j$ de *pro$_j$* abrirem *ec$_i$* mesmo com um machado
           It was this door that prevented the thieves of opening (it) even with an axe
       b. *Foi esse prato$_i$ que exigiu que o cozinheiro$_j$ acabasse de *pro$_j$* preparar *ec$_i$* na mesa
           It was this dish that required that the cook finished preparing (it) at the table
       c. *Foi o filme do Batman$_i$ que fez o João$_j$ ficar vendo *ec$_i$* a noite inteira
           It was Batman's movie that made João keep watching (it) the whole night
       d. *O prédio$_i$ foi construído de modo a que se possa abandonar *ec$_i$* facilmente em caso de incêndio
           The building was built in such a way that one could leave (it) easily in case of fire

I have no particular explanation for the contrast between (22a,b) and (23a,b) (if there is such contrast at all!), but I think (23) makes it clear that null objects in (my dialect of) BP are *not* pronominals[5].

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[5] Galves 1984 and Farrell 1990 report judgments which are consistent with the acceptability of (22). Discussing the dialect described by Galves and Farrell, Kato 1993, on the other hand, contrast the acceptability of (ia) with the unacceptability of (ib) below, saying that "the null object can be correferent to an NP inside a PP in the main clause, as was pointed out by Farrell himself in a previous [manuscript]" (p.228):

(i)   a. *Paula$_i$ disse a Maria$_j$ que Pedro beijou *ec$_{i/j}$*
            Paula said to Maria that Pedro kissed *ec*
       b. Pedro disse sobre Maria$_i$ que Luís viu *ec$_i$* na festa
            Pedro said about Maria that Luís saw *ec* at the party

From (ib) and (ii) below, Kato concludes that BP null objects cannot be c-commanded by their antecedent, suggesting that they are "null names" (following Stowell 1988):

(ii)   a. Eu arquivei o livro$_i$ sem ler *ec$_i$*
            I filed the book without reading *ec*
       b. O Paulo$_i$ comeu a banana$_i$ sem descascar *ec$_i$*
            Paulo ate the banana without peeling *ec*

Not only the observations about inanimate null objects, but also those about animate ones deserve a re-evaluation, though. Huang and Raposo first noticed that the antecedent of a null object in Chinese and EP does not need to be overt in the sentence: it can be provided by the pragmatic or discourse context. This was also taken to hold for BP null objects in general, and, as far as inanimate objects are concerned, this is true for my dialect too: in (24) we see two different types of contexts where the antecedent of the null object is provided by the preceding discourse:

(24)   a.   A: Quer dizer que a Maria gosta d*aquele vestido vermelho esquisito*$_i$?
              You mean Maria likes *that weird red dress*?
           B: Que nada! Ela só usa *ec*$_i$ porque foi o João quem deu *ec*$_i$ pra ela.
              Not at all! She only wears (it) because it was João who gave (it) to her

       b.   *O bolo da Maria*$_i$ sempre foi o melhor das festas de Natal. Todo mundo sempre adorava *ec*$_i$. Até a sogra da Maria acabou elogiando/experimentando *ec*$_i$.
           "*Maria's cake* was always the best of Christmas' parties. Everybody always loved (it). Even her mother-in-law came to praise/taste (it)"

The descriptions available suggest that the same is true of *animate* null objects (except that, for B&F, they would not be possible inside islands). Farrell, however, noticed that a pronoun is preferred in such cases (p.328). As a matter of fact, as far as my dialect is concerned, a pronoun is not only preferred but obligatory if a topic is not overtly available in the sentence:

(25)   a.   A: Quer dizer que a Maria é amiga antiga do *João*$_i$?
              You mean Maria is an old friend of João's
           B: Que nada! Ela conheceu *(*ele*$_i$) o ano passado.
              Not at all! She met (him) last year

       b.   *O João*$_i$ sempre foi um cara eficiente. Todo mundo admirava *(*ele*$_i$) no escritório. O chefe acabou até convidando *(*ele*$_i$) pr'o cargo de gerente.
           "João was always an efficient guy. Everybody admired (him) at the office. The boss decided even to invite (him) for the position of manager"

       c.   *O João*$_i$, todo mundo admirava (*ele*$_i$) no escritório. O chefe acabou até convidando *(*ele*$_i$) pr'o cargo de gerente.

In (26) below I summarize the descriptive picture of (my dialect of) BP reviewed above:

In my dialect, the sentences in (ii) are also fine, but (ib) is as bad as (ia) (and they are really bad!). So, further research on the identity of null objects in BP seems to be required, but I will not be able to go further into it here.

   Outros casos notados pelo Marcos (janeiro de 1997):

(iii)   a.   O projeto impressionou a quem viu ec
       b.   *O projeto impressionou aos investidores que viram {*ec/ele}
       c.   O projeto impressionou os investidores porque os arquitetos exibiram ec em slide

(26)

	Animate Null Objects	Inanimate Objects
a. Definite Interpretation	Yes	Yes
b. Sensitivity to Islands	Yes	No
c. Principle C Effects	Yes	Yes
d. Overt Topic Required	Yes	No

Although animate null objects might be easily described as null operator variables, there is no trivial explanation for inanimate null objects in the standard theory of null arguments described above. First, although a inanimate null object has a definite interpretation provided by the context, it does not behave as a pronominal in that it cannot easily have an antecedent in an A-position (unlike Accusative clitics in Standard Portuguese). Second, it does not fit any of the proposed mechanisms of content identification reviewed above: it is not identified by an (overt) object clitic nor by object agreement, it does not have ARB interpretation, and it is not a variable of a null operator.

A third problem which is related, but not directly raised by null inanimate objects is how to explain the absence of syntactic arbitrary null objects in BP, cf. (27) (see Rizzi 1986:503-7):

(27) a. *Control*:
   i) ??Isso leva __ a concluir que ...
        This leads to conclude that ...
   ii) *O tempo bom induz __ a descansar
        The weather nice induces to rest
   b. *Binding*:
   i) *A boa música reconcilia __ consigo mesmo
        The good music reconciles with oneself
   ii) *Um bom psicanalista pode restituir __ a si mesmo
        A good psychoanalyst can give back to oneself
   c. *Adjunct Small Clauses*:
   i) *Um doutor sério atende __ nu(s)
        A doctor serious visits nude(-pl)
   ii) *Em geral, João fotografa __ sentado(s)
        In general, João photographs seated(-pl)
   d. *Argument Small Clauses*:
   i) ??Essa música deixa __ alegre
        This music renders happy
   ii) ??Certos remédios deixam __ mais inteligente
        Certain drugs render more intelligent

BP does have lexically-assigned arbitrary interpretation for null objects, though, cf. (28):

(28) a. Isso leva __ à seguinte conclusão ...
        This leads (us/people) to the following conclusion ...
   b. Várias placas alertavam __ contra o perigo das avalanches
        Several boards cautioned (us/people) against the danger of avalanches
   c. O João está sempre querendo agradar __
        João always wants to please (us/people)

Under Rizzi assumptions, (28) indicates that BP does have ARB assignment available (in the lexicon at least), hence we should deduce from the absence of syntactic arbitrary objects in (27) that verbs are not licensing heads in BP. If this were true, licensing of null inanimate objects would be a mistery if they were *pro*. But BP verbs apparently also license null expletive and quasi-argument subjects of small clauses, cf. (29):

(29) a. O João considera [*pro* provável [que o Paulo chegue atrasado]]
         João considers (it) likely that Paulo arrives late
      b. Teu comportamento tornou [*pro* improvável [que Maria aceitasse teus argumentos]]
         Your behavior rendered (it) unlikely that Maria accepted your arguments
      c. O João achou [*pro* cedo demais pra se levantar da cama]
         João found (it) too early to leave the bed
      c. Creio [*pro* chover no Saara pelo menos uma vez ao ano]
         I believe (it) to-rain in the Sahara at least once a year

For Rizzi:526-30, (29) indicates that verbs *are* licensing heads in BP. Hence, as far as formal licensing is concerned, it is not the existence of inanimate null objects which is a problem, but the inexistence of arbitrary null objects. This suggests that some adjustment of Rizzi's theory of ARB assignment is required in order to accommodate the BP data (see also Cinque 1988).

   Although all the issues above are central to understanding the behavior of null arguments in BP, I'll leave them in rest here. The main point we have to keep in mind for the next section is that there is no trivial explanation for the split of the BP system in two types of null objects, and, in particular, for the fact that the relevant factor is the animate/inanimate distinction. It might be thought that the solution would be the inherent features associated with the licensing head/Θ-role. But, as we'll see in the next section, the relevance of this distinction spreads over the whole pronominal system and, in particular, also over the interpretive behavior of anaphoric elements, indicating that both the properties of null objects discussed in the present section and those of anaphoric elements discussed in section 1 are somehow connected through the animacy/inanimacy distinction.

3. The Pronominal System in BP

Two major events in the history of Portuguese in Brazil are likely to have affected the organization of the system of pronominal elements ‒ all Brazilian dialects seem to have lost 3rd person Accusative clitics and a distinct agreement marking for 2nd person in the verbal inflection ‒, although by no means these are the only modifications[6]. A comparison of the standard and the spoken pronominal and verbal paradigms may give a grasp of the sort of reorganization these modifications triggered: the pronominal system of Standard Portuguese is represented in table 1a and the system of my dialect is in Table 1b; the inflectional paradigms for the Present Tense of Std Portuguese and BP are in tables 2a and 2b, respectively:

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[6] These changes seem to be common to all dialects. Further processes are still on their way in different dialects. For example, in some dialects (but not in mine) the 3rd person reflexive form *se* is gradually being eliminated. See (...). Standard Portuguese is, of course, the language described in normative grammars and taught in school in Brazil ‒ basically the variant found in the mainstream literature of Portuguese language.

Table 1a: Pronouns in Std Portuguese

	Nominative	Accusative	Dative	Oblique	Possessive	Reflexive
1ps	eu	me	me	mim	meu/minha	me/mim mesmo
2ps	tu	te	te	ti	teu/tua	te/ti mesmo
3ps	ele/ela	o/a	lhe	ele/ela	seu/sua	se/si (mesmo)
1pp	nós	nos	nos	nós	noss-o/a	nos/nós mesmos
2pp	vós	vos	vos	vós	voss-o/a	vos/vós mesmos
3pp	eles/elas	os/as	lhes	eles/elas	seu/sua	se/si (mesmos)

Table 1b: Pronouns in Brazilian Portuguese (Southern Dialect)

	Nominative	Accusative	Dative	Oblique	Possessive	Reflexive
1ps	eu	me	me	mim	meu/minha	me/mim mesmo
2ps	tu	te	te	ti	teu/tua	te/ti mesmo
3ps	ele/ela	ele/ela	-	ele/ela	?	?
2pst	o/a senhor(a)	lhe	lhe	o/a senhor(a)	seu/sua	se/si (mesmos)
1pp	nós	nos	nos	nós	noss-o/a	nos/nós mesmos
2pp	vocês	vocês	-	vocês	-	se/vocês mesmos
3pp	eles/elas	eles/elas	-	eles/elas	-	se/si (mesmos)

Table 2a: Present Tense in Std Portuguese

1ps	(eu)	cant-Ø-o
2ps	(tu)	cant-a-s
3ps	(ele)	cant-a
1pp	(nós)	cant-a-mos
2pp	(vós)	cant-a-is
3pp	(eles)	cant-a-m

Table 2b: Present Tense in BP

(eu)	cant-Ø-o
(tu)	cant-a
(ele)	cant-a
(nós)	cant-a-mos
(vocês)	cant-a-m
(eles)	cant-a-m

Of course we would like to know not only how the new system is organized, but what are the consequences of the new organization. In particular, we may wonder whether the whole set of phenomena I described in the preceding sections has something to do with such an organization. The working hypothesis of the present proposal is that they do, and I will show some further facts which suggest so.

In the preceding section we've seen that in the absence of a topic only null inanimate objects are possible. But there is an apparent further restriction: as Farrell noticed, it is never the case that null objects are interpreted as 1st or 2nd person, cf.

(30) a. A: Quer dizer que a Maria é *tua*$_i$ amiga antiga?
          You mean Maria is an old friend of *yours*?
          B: Que nada! Ela diz que *(*me*$_i$) conhece, mas nunca encontrei ela!
          Not at all! She says that (she) (*me*) knows, but (I) never met her!

      b. *Tu*$_i$ sempre foi o mais eficiente. Todo mundo *(*te*$_i$) admirava no escritório. Não foi surpresa o
          chefe ter *(*te*$_i$) escolhido pr'o cargo.
          You always have been the most efficient. Everybody (*you*) admired at the office. It was no surprise the
          boss to-have (*you*) chosen for the position.

Farrell suggests that "some sort of a person/animacy hierarchy appears to govern the different object pronouns. The appropriateness of null forms decreases in the direction inanimate→1st/2nd person"[7] (p.329). But no such hierarchy is necessary: of course the restriction on 1st and 2nd person null objects is just a particular case of the restriction on animate null objects, for 1st and 2nd person are inherently animate. The simple existence of this further restriction reinforces B&F's interpretation of the null object data in BP, and at the same time shows that animacy has further consequences for the distribution of pronominal forms.

   Additional evidence that the whole pronominal system is involved comes from the fact that the animacy restriction also holds for subject position, cf.

(31) a. A: Quer dizer que a Maria é amiga antiga do *João*$_i$?
          B: Que nada! *(*Ele*$_i$) conheceu ela no ano passado.
          Not at all! (*He*) met her last year

      b. Todo mundo admirava o humor do *João*$_i$. ?*(*Ele*$_i$) sempre chegava com um sorriso estampado na cara...
          Everybody admired *João*'s humour. (*He*) always approached with a smile in his face...

(32) a. A: Quer dizer que a Maria gostou d*aquele vestido vermelho esquisito*$_i$?
          You mean Maria liked *that weird red dress*?
          B: Claro! *ec*$_i$ foi o único que serviu nela!
          Of course! (It) was the only one to fit her!

      b. Todo mundo sempre adorava *o bolo da Maria*$_i$. *ec*$_i$ tinha sempre aquele gostinho de coisa caseira...
          Everybody always loved *Maria's cake*. (It) always tasted homemade...

Obviously, some qualifications are necessary here, since the subject position may in principle be recovered by the feature specification of INFL, unlike the object position. As we saw in (31), an animate null subject is much less than good if there is no 'salient' antecedent in the 'environment' − in (31) the only potential antecedent is embedded in the preceding discourse, hence not in a 'topical' position. On the other hand, as soon as there is an 'salient' antecedent in the environment, null animate subjects become perfectly acceptable (which is not ture of null inanimate objects: compare (33c) with (25b)). There are two main cases. First, the antecedent occupies a 'topical', hence 'salient' position in the preceding discourse:

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[7] In his formulation of the identification condition on the BP null object, Farrell stipulates that it "is intrinsically specified as [+3 person]" ((32), p.344).

(33) a. *O João*ᵢ sempre foi um cara simpático. (*Ele*ᵢ) sempre chegava com um sorriso estampado na cara...
      João was always a nice guy. (*He*) always approached with a smile in his face...

   b. *O João*ᵢ, todo mundo sempre admirou o humor d*ele*ᵢ. (*Ele*ᵢ) sempre chegava com um sorriso estampado na cara...
      João, everybody always admired *his* humour. (*He*) always approached with a smile in his face...

The second main case of an acceptable null animate subject is when the sentence containing it is embbeded, in which case the matrix sentence will always contain at least one potential antecedent, the subject, cf. (34) below. Actually, in this last case null objects seem to have some control properties, as noticed by Huang 1984, 1989, cf. (35), which I will not be able to explore here:

(34) a. *O João*ᵢ disse que *ec*ᵢ ia sair
      João said that *ec* was-going to-go-out

   b. *O João*ᵢ viu a *Maria*ⱼ quando *ec*ᵢ/ⱼ saía de casa
      João saw *Maria* when *ec* was-leaving home

(35) a. i) *O João*ᵢ prometeu à *Maria*ⱼ [PROᵢ/*ⱼ chegar cedo]
         João promised *Maria* [PRO to-arrive early]

      ii) *O João*ᵢ prometeu à *Maria*ⱼ [que *ec*ᵢ/*ⱼ ia chegar cedo]
         João promised *Maria* [that *ec* was-going to-arrive early]

   b. i) *O João*ᵢ aconselhou à *Maria* [PRO*ᵢ/ⱼ chegar cedo]
         João advised *Maria* [PRO to-arrive early]

      ii) *O João*ᵢ aconselhou à *Maria* [que *ec*ₓ*ᵢ/ⱼ chegasse cedo]
         João advised *Maria* [that *ec* should arrive early]

Anyway, the main point is: null animate subjects are not as restricted in distribution as null animate objects, although they are still more limited than null inanimate subjects, cf. (31)-(32).

Apparently, animacy also plays a major role in the organization of the anaphoric system. Fisrt, notice that *intentionality* seems to be relevant for the distinction between *se* and *ele mesmo*, cf.

(36) a. A: O que aconteceu com o João?
         What happened to João?

      B₁: Ele*ᵢ* *se*ᵢ machucou
         He se hurt "He hurt himself"

      B₂: ??Ele*ᵢ* machucou *ele mesmo*ᵢ
         He hurt him self

   b. A: O que o João fez pr'a fugir da guerra?
         What did João do to come back of the war?

      B₁: ??Ele*ᵢ* *se*ᵢ feriu
         He *se* shot

      B₂: Ele*ᵢ* feriu *ele mesmo*ᵢ
         He shot him self

Given the contrast in (30), we expect *ele mesmo* not to be felicitous in inherent reflexive events involving inanimate subjects, since these are uncapable of intentionality:

(37)　A:　O que aconteceu com *o vaso*$_i$?
　　　　　What happened to the jar?
　　B$_1$:　*ec*$_i$ *se*$_i$ quebrou
　　　　　(It) se broke "It broke"
　　B$_2$:　**ec*$_i$ quebrou *ele mesmo*$_i$
　　　　　(It) broke it self

Furthermore, animacy also seems to play a role, as we might expect by now, in distinguishing the anaphoric properties of *se*- and *ele*: for example, the bound interpretation of *se* is much more salient in (32a) than in (32b), but the pattern reverses in (33) (the bound interpretation of *se*- in (32) is less than good, and it is only fully acceptable when interpreted as 2nd person treatment, cf. (4a) above):

(38)　a.　*Esse computador* pode identificar [*seus* problemas]
　　　　　This computer can identify [{your/its} problems]
　　b.　*Esse psicalinalista* pode identificar [*seus* problemas]
　　　　　This psychoanalyst can identify [{your/his} problems]

(39)　a.　*Esse computador* pode identificar [os problemas d*ele*]
　　　　　This computer can identify [{its/his} problems]
　　b.　*Esse psicanalista* pode identificar [os problemas d*ele*]
　　　　　This psychoanalyst can identify [his (own) problems]

We may summarize this pattern saying that the distribution of pronouns (including the 'heavy anaphor' *ele mesmo*) in general seems to be conditioned by the fact that they are somehow related to animacy, and null arguments and *se*- by the fact that they are not. Out of this picture a further generalization arises. Remember that in section 1 we concluded that *se*- is basically interpreted as a bound variable, and the pronoun *ele* as coreferential. Putting together these facts with the generalization we arrived at in this section, we conclude that the bound variable interpretation correlates somehow with non-animacy, and the coreferential interpretation with animacy. That something like this is the case can be seen by the behavior of the 1st and 2nd object pronouns/reflexives. Contrary to what happens with 3rd person, which uses complementary forms in order to express 'pronominal' anaphora or reflexivity – a null object, *ele* or *se*-, respectively –, 1st and 2nd persons use the same form, as we see in (40):

(40)　a.　O Paulo$_i$ *me*$_j$/*te*$_k$ viu na TV
　　　　　Paulo *me/te* saw on the TV "Paulo saw me/you on the TV"
　　b.　*Eu*$_i$ *me*$_i$ vi na TV
　　　　　I *me* saw on the TV "I saw myself on the TV"
　　c.　*Tu*$_i$ *te*$_i$ viu na TV
　　　　　You *te* saw on the TV "You saw yourself on the TV"

Crucially, the 'reflexive' forms *me/te* cannot be interpreted as bound-variables, cf.[8]

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[8] Interestingly enough, 1st and 2nd person object clitics in French *can* be interpreted as bound-variables, cf. Bouchard 1984:62.

(41) a. *Eu$_i$ me$_i$* vi na TV, e o Paulo também.
        I *me* saw on the TV, and Paulo too
        #I (λx (x saw x)) & Paulo (λx (x saw x))
        I (λx (x saw me)) & Paulo (λx (x saw me))
   b. *Tu$_i$ te$_i$* viu na TV, e o Paulo também.
        You *te* saw on the TV, and Paulo too
        #You (λx (x saw x)) & Paulo (λx (x saw x))
        You (λx (x saw you)) & Paulo (λx (x saw you))

Since the same seems to be basically true of the 3rd person pronoun *ele* (cf. section 1), the whole range of facts in BP suggests pretty strongly that the bound variable interpretation correlates somehow with non-animacy, and the coreferential interpretation with animacy in this language. Furthermore, since null elements were shown previously to be somehow related to non-animacy, we expect, by transitivity, that they correlate with bound variable interpretation, too. Of course this is trivially true for A'-traces and PRO. But it is also true of null subjects in my dialect. First, remember that null animate subjects are possible whenever the sentence is embedded, cf. (34) above[9]. Now, compare the most salient interpretation of a null subject with that of an overt one:

(42) a. *O João$_i$* pensava que *ec$_i$* ia vencer a corrida, e *o Paulo* também
        João thought that *ec* would win the race, and *Paulo* too
        SALIENT: João (λx (x thought that x would win the race) & Paulo (λx (x thought that x would win the race)
        LESS: João (λx (x thought that João would win the race) & Paulo (λx (x thought that João would win the race)
   b. *O João$_i$* pensava que *ele$_i$* ia vencer a corrida, e *o Paulo* também
        João thought that *ec* would win the race, and *Paulo* too
        SALIENT: João (λx (x thought that João would win the race) & Paulo (λx (x thought that João would win the race)
        LESS: João (λx (x thought that x would win the race) & Paulo (λx (x thought that x would win the race)

That is, the correlation predicted is confirmed: (42a) shows that null subjects are preferrably interpreted as bound-variables, and (42b) the overt pronoun, as we already know, is preferrably interpreted as coreferential. Let me now summarize the set of correlations reviewed above:

(43) a. Occurrence of null arguments is related to non-animacy;
   b. The pronominal forms (*ele, eu, tu*) are related to animacy and to coreferential interpretation;
   c. The reflexive form *se-* is related to non-animacy and to bound-variable interpretation;
   d. (From b.) the coreferential interpretation is related to animacy;
   e. (From c.) the bound-variable interpretation is related to non-animacy;
   f. (From a. and e.) the bound-variable interpretation is related to null arguments.

These correlations clearly suggest not only that the system of anaphoric forms is somehow sensitive to their feature composition, but also that the system of null arguments is intrinsically connected with the system of anaphoric forms. Furthermore, we see that, among the relevant features, the animate/non-animate distinction plays a crucial role in determining the distribution and interpretation of anaphoric forms. Clearly what we want is a theory which captures the generalizations in (43) and other properties of the BP system, and which is, yet, compatible with the

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[9] This test must be done with animate null subjects for two reasons: (a) null inanimate objects cannot be A-bound, cf. (22)-(23); (b) 'sloppy identity' with inanimate subjects seems quite unnatural, cf. (...)

previous results on binding, null arguments and the theory of feature-organization of pronominal systems.

Let me finally sketch the line of reasoning I'd like to start with in studying the phenomena I've been describing. The approach I am considering would try to unify three leading ideas:

(i) Bouchard 1984's hypothesis that "[the] internal properties of [argumental] gaps are a subset of the properties of lexical items, and that this subset contains the minimal properties required for an NP to be an argument" (p.13), which he argues to be a R-index and ϕ-features;

(ii) Burzio 1991's idea that the referential/anaphoric properties of NPs are a function of their morphological specification; more specifically, he proposes that the basic typology of NPs is something like (44) below (Burzio is more vague about the feature content of each type, cf. his (26), p.95):

(44)   *Type:*   *Feature Content:*
    a.   Anaphors: $\varnothing$
    b.   Pronouns: ϕ-features
    c.   R-Expressions: ϕ- and lexical features

(iii) Bouchard's idea, taken over by Burzio, that Binding somehow establishes an *agreement* relation between the antecedent and the anaphoric element, understood as transference or checking of ϕ-features.

The idea is, of course, to develop a theory of the pronominal system which captures not only the correlations of feature specification between null arguments and anaphoric forms, but also to derive from this specification the possible interpretations these elements can have. I have no specific proposal yet in this respect, but one possible way would be that null arguments and anaphors are basically identical — that is, contentless — and that is what makes them to be interpreted as bound variables. The difference between null arguments and anaphors would come from lexicalization conditions (as in Bouchard's approach): for instance, Reinhart & Reuland 1993's condition B of Binding theory in (45) below (their (12') on p.671) may have the effect of requiring the presence of *se-* in Portuguese as a signal of reflexivity (cf. also Bouchard 1984's (121), p.58):

(45)   *Condition B:* A reflexive predicate is reflexive-marked.

(Co-)referential interpretation, on the other hand, would require independent (at least, minimal) ϕ-feature specification, which would trigger lexicalization: for instance, the fact that animate anaphoric arguments must be lexicalized (except in case they can be interpreted as bound-variables!) indicate that the minimal specification [+animate] is enough to trigger lexicalization.

Of course these are rough ideas, but I hope a can develop and give more substance to them in the near future.

4. Proposal for the Dissertation Set-Up & Plan for its Development

4.1. Set-Up of the Dissertation

Chapter 1: Theoretical Framework
Description: discussion and identification of the empirical and theoretical issues on the theories of the structure of ϕ-features organization, null arguments and binding; definition of the initial overall framework adopted;

Chapter 2: The Pronominal System of BP: On the Structure of ϕ-Features Organization
Description: Detailed empirical investigation of the pronominal system in BP and comparison with other systems (...)

Chapter 3: Null Arguments in BP

Description: Detailed empirical investigation of null arguments in BP and comparison with other systems (...)

Chapter 4: Binding & the Organization of the Anaphoric System in BP

Description: Detailed empirical investigation of anaphoric elements in BP and comparison with other systems (...)

Chapter 5: A Theory of the φ-Features Organization & Some of its Consequences

Description: Summary of theoretical results and final definition of the theory; a crosslinguistic overview or a case study in some other language (?).

4.2. Plan

1) Until the end of January 1995: writing of the 1st draft of Chapter 4;
2) From February to April 1995: writing of the 1st draft of Chapter 3;
3) Summer (between May and August) of 1995: writing of the 1st draft of Chapter 2
4) September to December 1995: rewriting of Chapters 2, 3 and 4 up to a version close to final;
5) From January to April 1996: writing the 1st draft of Chapters 1 and 5
6) May and June: revision and finalization of the whole thesis
7) September 1996: Defense

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