What "Male" is this?: "Abnormalization" of Subjectivities in Bregafunk Music Videos

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Abstract

The entertainment industry is featured by discursive productions of ideological nature. Accordingly, different music genres work as identity vectors; thus, it is possible perceiving the representation of male individuals as the dominant gender in some of them. Bregafunk music stands out among these genres, since its music videos highlight straight and virile men, by showing women, LGBTQIAPN+ individuals and fat bodies in a stigmatized way. Based on the Foucauldian theory, the current study addresses the subjectivity "abnormalization" process carried out by another socially dominant subjectivity as way to defend and maintain its position. In order to do so, the current research presents the following investigative question: how do bregafunk music video productions represent alterities to male subjectivity? In total, 777 bregafunk music videos posted on YouTube between September 2012 and September 2020 were herein investigated, based on the foucauldian discourse analysis, in order to answer this question. Results have evidenced the dominant discourse of "male bregafunk music artists", which is anchored in a strategy focused on perpetuating stereotypes and chauvinism. Thus, it was possible concluding that this subjectivity is a variation of the alpha male, who resorts to his cultural repertoire and social context to consolidate himself as the dominant identity by subjugating other identities through a double move comprising self-affirmation and denial of others. In addition, it was possible inferring that targeting women, LGBTQIAPN+ and fat individuals may be a defense strategy to address the growing political space gained by these identities in recent decades.

Introduction

Entertainment industry products account for delivering fun, as well as for discursive productions of ideological nature (Giles, 2017; Morrison, 2017; Perrott, 2017; Swan, 2018). This industry uses visual productions (Dawson & Loist, 2018), such as films and TV series, or musicals (Moreira, 2017) as discourse to promote identities that can be associated with its consumers (Straubhaar & Davis, 2018).

Historically, the music industry plays key role in this process, since different musical genres are closely linked to political practices. For example, rap – which is a musical genre featured as "art of identity" - emerged on American soil and the political behavior of its artists ended up featuring the genre (Lauger & Densley, 2018), whereas hip-hop – which is a rhythm born from a generation of marginalized individuals - emerged as form of self-expression (Harlow & Benbrook, 2019). On the other hand, Brazilian funk music is strongly linked to Rio de Janeiro City's favelas, which are represented in the rhythm and lyrics of this genre that also features the way artists perform at local dance parties (Moreira, 2017). Brazil has recently witnessed the national success of another genre presenting this feature, namely: bregafunk music. This genre emerged in the outskirts of Recife City, whose social scenario is depicted in its rhythm, lyrics and in images conveyed by it (Bento, 2021a; Gericó, Souza & Pereira, 2020). However, in addition to their engaged attitude, these genres have another point in common: the dominant representation of the male viewpoint (Bonnette-Bailey & Brown, 2019).

This representation is evident in bregafunk music lyrics and, above all, in music videos produced to promote its artists and their music. These audiovisual productions are often visually attractive, as well as highlight both the performance and viewpoints of bregafunk music artists (Doré & Pugsley, 2019), a fact that turn them into vehicles to convey ideological discourses (Chen, Wang, & Qiao, 2021; Rademacher & Kelly, 2019; Van Klinken, 2018; Zanette et al., 2013). Overall, bregafunk music videos place straight, and virile men surrounded by women at the center of their narratives, almost always at parties. In addition, women, fat and LGBTQIAPN+ individuals are represented in this scenario in a stigmatized way.

This stigmatization process can be understood as strategy associated with male identity domination to the detriment of other identities, in order to normalize the bregafunk genre based on this viewpoint. In a broader social sense, it is a common process in compliance with what Foucault (2010) defined as "abnormalization" of the other. It happens whenever a dominant subjectivity for whatever reason feels its position in the world threatened by other subjectivities, mainly when they are out of tune with its representation and with what it identifies with. Thus, in order to maintain its space, this dominant subjectivity makes the option for attacking, as means of defense, by building a discourse according to which those subjectivities are described as deviant in order to induce society to segregate them (Foucault, 2010).

Based on this line of argument, one can see bregafunk music video productions promoting discourses alluding to the "abnormalization" of subjectivities that represent values different from the dominant male representation. Thus, the current study is based on the following question: how do bregafunk music video productions represent the alterities to male subjectivity? This question,

therefore, seeks to reveal the way in which the abnormalization of subjectivities is operated in bregafunk music videos. Accordingly, it aligns with the Foucauldian analytic perspective on discourse, which seeks to unveil naturalized knowledge that covers up structural power relations.

This research is inserted in the Consume Culture Theory (CCT) field, which comprises consumer research and specifically investigates how a given ideology is massively mediated and promoted in the market (Arnould & Thompson, 2005, 2007; Gaião, Souza & Leão, 2012). This approach corresponds to one of the research topics addressed by CCT. However, the number of studies available in the literature aligned with this approach is remarkably smaller than the number of studies focused on investigating consumer practices. However, this line of investigation is an opportunity to analyze other viewpoints associated this field, as well as to develop critical studies. Thus, the present research is aligned with a critical perspective of growing interest in the aforementioned field, namely: adopting the foucauldian thinking, both in theoretical and methodological terms (Denegri-Knott & Tadajewski, 2017).

Using music video productions to promote ideologies

Music videos are featured by a language formed by sound and image resources (Duda, 2019; Jones, 1988). They are overall used for music promotion purposes by adding textures and tones as complementary parts of the sound – these productions give equal importance to both images and sounds (Gow, 1994; Hansen, 2017). Thus, one can affirm that music videos are formed from these elements in order to convey certain ideas associated with the musical production promoted by them to consumers (Van Klinken, 2018; Vernallis et al., 2021).

Music videos act as great promoters of music artists who use these productions to be under the spotlight (Doré & Pugsley, 2019; Holt, 2011; Johansson, 1992). This practice has turned music videos into communicative tools capable of promoting these artists in order to massively influence their consumers (Kanozia & Ganghariya, 2021; Kelly & Currie, 2021; Suh, Davies, & Burnasheva, 2021). Thus, it is possible stating that these audiovisual productions perform an advertising function, since they promote certain products and convince the public to actively participate in this market – just as any advertising tool does (Godefroit-Winkel & Peñaloza, 2020; Ulver, 2019).

The advertising function is seen by CCT from the lens used to investigate how these massively mediated communication tools promote products and encourage their consumption (Bajde, 2014; Gürhan-Canli, Sarial-Abi, & Hayran, 2018). Because they are persuasive, these communication tools articulate ideologies consumers can identify themselves with (Rokka, 2021; Schmitt, Brakus, & Biraglia, 2021), as they see themselves represented by them (Kolyperas, Maglaras & Sparks, 2019). Thus, it is possible making specific ideological articulations by promoting cultural discourses capable of triggering resonance towards consumers' interests (Chen et al., 2020; Rademacher & Kelly, 2019; Zanette et al., 2013).

These messages are received by consumers through an interpretive scheme associated with the socio-cultural context they are inserted in (Arnould & Thomson, 2007; Gaião et al., 2012). Thus, these productions tend to reproduce certain ideas – which are oftentimes stereotyped, since they are rooted in certain social contexts – in order to establish communication with a certain audience, based on topics that, assumingly, resonate with them.

Bregafunk music and sexual stereotyping

The bregafunk genre was established in the 1980s (Abramus, s.d.) in the outskirts of Recife City, based on the mix of two popular rhythms in Brazil, namely: brega, which is a melodious and romantic genre; and funk, which is featured by fast beats and ostentatious lyrics (Albino, 2020; Santos & Ramires, 2017). At local scale, bregafunk music has established itself as niche rhythm until 2018, when it gained national prominence (Ortega, 2018; Palomares, 2021; Santos, Lopes & Soares, 2018). This genre achieved increasing popularity at national level in the following years due to several productions of national expression (Albuquerque, 2018a; Prado, 2019; Prisco, 2019).

Although this genre originated from two established rhythms in the country, bregafunk music video productions have their own language, which consists in fast and successive cuts that follow the beat of the music, in addition to a dynamic edition featured by special effects. They also have typical choreographies, with emphasis on "passinho" – which comprises a hip-and-hand choreography that implies a sexual intercourse-like move (Rocha, 2020; Silva Junior, Félix & Araújo, 2021). Older productions often present more amateur videos, whereas music videos recorded after 2018 were produced by established producers focused on this genre (e.g., Thiago Gravações, Kondzilla) (Bento, 2019). YouTube is one of the main distribution channels focused on these music videos. Such a distribution takes place both through personal account channels and through the official channels of production companies, a fact that enables the massive promotion of these videos (Bento, 2019, 2021b).

In addition to their aesthetics (e.g., dance, rhythm), music videos belonging to the herein investigated genre present some typical themes, such as ostentatious parties and relationships – mainly of sexual nature (Miranda, Lima, Souza, & Santos, 2015). However, the sexualization observed in this genre is sometimes associated with controversial issues, such as suggesting sexual intercourse with the so-called "novinhas" (i.e., young girls, often underage) or bragging about sexual harassment (Albuquerque, 2018b; Miranda et al., 2015).

By approaching these themes, the investigated genre shows the centralization of "womanizer" men to the detriment of those who are not part of this idealized group. This stereotyping process, both towards women and men, is evident in its music videos, since it appears to simultaneously reveal the objectification of everything seen as "feminine" and the perpetuation of the power exercised by "macho" men as superior individuals in that social space by vocalizing a certain aspect of the social and economic context in place in the outskirts (Gericó et al., 2020).

The "abnormalization" process in Michel Foucault's theory

According to the foucauldian theory, subjectivity derives from an ethical construction process that is continuously carried out (Foucault, 2004) based on how different truths are mobilized in the midst of choices of wills and morals, through the assumption of certain knowledge and power relationships (Foucault, 2020). This dynamics involves different forms of government of the self and of others; thus, it corresponds to the processes of subjectivation - when subjects are constituted by themselves - and objectification - when subjectivities are produced by discourses alien to the subject (Foucault, 2004, 2020).

Thus, it is evident that neutral subjects do not exist; subjectivity formation processes deal with the pursuit of balance in having wills assumed, and moralities adopted, through legitimized truths, as well as with the way these truths are used in relationships with other subjects (Foucault, 2004). Thus, certain subjectivities work to delegitimize others in order to become and remain socially dominant (Varman, Saha, Skålén, 2011). It happens when dominant subjectivities perceive some threat to their position, in situations where the foundations of truth supporting other subjectivities significantly diverge from their own foundations (Foucault, 2004, 2010). This practice reveals the defense of the self by dominant subjectivities, since their articulations aim at preserving the established truths supporting their privileged position (Foucault, 2010).

This struggle gave rise to a subjectivity normalization process by those who would gain the power of social dominance. Consequently, subjectivities perceived as threats to certain status quo may undergo the "abnormalization" process (Milkidis, 2018). Thus, a split emerges between supposedly "normal" and "abnormal" subjectivities. The "normal" ones are established by dominant subjectivities in society, who impose their truths as pattern to be followed, a fact that ends up establishing power asymmetries, as well as social inclusion and exclusion processes (Foucault, 2004). The "abnormal" ones, in their turn, are featured as deviants, whose behaviors are even described as pathological (Foucault, 2010). Thus, since these subjectivities are identified as strange, or even dangerous, they are often marginalized by society (Gicquel, 2017).

Foucault (2004) criticizes this process by stating that the establishment of similarity patterns among subjectivities distorts the very "subjectivation" processes, since difference is precisely the way through which subjects become singular. By imposing the concept of right and wrong behaviors (i.e., normal, and abnormal), the subjectivity normalization process is featured as a type of violence; ultimately, this authoritarian behavior can lead to distorted viewpoints about the exercise of power, as observed in the case of fascism, for example (Foucault, 1983).

Methodological procedures

The Foucauldian Discourse Analysis (FDA) was used as research method to investigate how discursive productions show regularities when they are stated in a given context, space, and time. These discursive productions form a set of data called archive, which derives from the definition of a given event that corresponds to a time interval used to feature the investigated phenomenon. Analysis applied to this archive enables identifying statements that evidence discursive formations by revealing certain functions, at the same time that discursive formations are stipulated based on certain formation rules (Foucault, 2014). These analysis stages, which form the FDA, are defined in Table 1. It is worth to mention that, according to Foucault (2014), discourse is everything that belongs to the enunciable order. Accordingly, statements must be understood as a function of existence situated in any series of signs, be they written, oral, representational, imagery etc.

The current study adopted the orientation proposed by de Souza-Leão (Souza-Leão & Costa, 2018; Souza-Leão & Moura, 2018) as research system. This orientation sets a logic of relationship bundles of analysis categories. Thus, the herein conducted analysis took the inference of statements found in the archive as starting point by using a typically qualitative coding aligned with the foucauldian definition of what features a statement. This procedure also enabled inferring associations between statements. Subsequently, the function criteria observed in statements was

evaluated in order to reveal syntagmatic chains that enable inferring enunciative functions. It is essential emphasizing that a single statement can have several functions under these conditions, just as the same enunciative function can be linked to several statements – often related to each other. Enunciative function criteria enable inferring formation rule criteria, because they are analogous. Thus, one can infer new systematic chains capable of establishing formation rules. Finally, the formation of these rules and the convergence of bundles enable identifying discursive formations – which is the final goal of the analysis.

Table 1

Analytical FDA categories

Statements			
Basic discourse units observed in signs (e.g., written texts, images) of the dataset forming the research archive; they represent discursive practices observed in it.			
Enunciative Functions			
They correspond to the way statements perform certain discursive functions that are identified based on four statement criteria.			
Referential	**Associated Field**	**Subject**	**Materiality**
It indicates how statements deal with certain topics, subjects, among others.	It corresponds to the knowledge spheres underlying the production of statements.	It identifies the places of speech (e.g., social, cultural, political) based on where statements are produced.	It refers to the way statements are produced.
Formation Rules			
They show how the functions performed by statements underlie the establishment of discursive formations. They are established based on four criteria, similar to what happens with enunciative functions.			
Object	**Concept**	**Modality**	**Strategy**
It circumscribes the limits and specificities observed in referentials.	It corresponds to ideas conceived through the associated fields supporting the statements.	It shows how statements are produced by subjects.	It refers to identifiable purposes in the materiality of statements.
Discursive Formation			
It refers to discourses formed in a certain space and time, based on regularities observed in statements of the investigated archives.			

Source: adapted from Foucault (2014).

Some considerations about the type of data analyzed (i.e., music videos) deserve to be highlighted. First, considering the nature of the data, all audiovisual elements were considered as signs, then, analyzed, following the adopted understanding of discourse (as mentioned above). On the other hand, since the music videos are produced by the artists and the phonographic industry in which they are inserted, we assume them as discursive productions of these agents, with implications for the analysis of how the different identities represented there are characterized.

The research archive resulted from searches conducted on YouTube based on using keywords associated with the investigated topic (e.g., "bregafunk", "bregafunk music video",

"Recife City's bregafunk music"). A new account was created on the platform to ensure that the herein conducted searches were not affected by preexisting history. After a primary base was established, channels recurrently presenting these music videos were also explored in order to exhaust the music videos that could likely form the archive. The collection process was interrupted when videos recommended by YouTube only referred to the previously collected ones or to videos belonging to other musical genres – it was done by taking into consideration the collection of all music videos from channels explored during the research.

In total, 1,300 music videos were obtained at the end of the collection process; they were subjected to two improvement rounds: the first round aimed at certifying that the archive did not have repeated music videos; whereas the second round aimed at refining this archive by removing music videos that did not belong to the bregafunk music genre (e.g., brega, forró or rap music videos that had been previously collected). At the end of the improvement rounds, the archive comprised 777 bregafunk music videos, from 581 different artists, posted on YouTube between September 2012 and September 2020. The herein observed number of artists was based on feats that are often observed in this genre. Based on this practice, artists cooperate in music video productions, which are credited to everyone involved in the production process. Up to six different artists were observed in some instances, a fact that has considerably increased the number of participants. Finally, the beginning of the archive was associated with the identification of the first bregafunk music video posted on the platform, a fact that featured the discursive event.

Finally, it is worth noting that the investigation adopted qualitative research quality criteria (Paiva Júnior, Leão & Mello, 2011): the procedure for constructing the research archive (described above) holds aspects similar to the care needed to build a representative research corpus; the attribution of empirical categories performed a movement of reflexivity based on the relationship between the material analyzed and the theoretical basis adopted; the analysis adopted the researcher triangulation procedure; and, finally, we seek to present the results (below) through a rich and detailed description.

Results

At the end of the analysis, it was possible identifying a discursive formation, which was herein named "**Bregafunk music macho**". The term refers to attitudes shown in music videos, which concern the existence of an idealized man who dominates other individuals in the social context of outskirts and places himself as superior individual. The term "macho", in its turn, refers to the virility of this idealized man, who rejects perennial relationships and wants to have as many women as possible.

The discursive formation was established from two rules that show the ways this macho is established and perpetuated within the social context he is inserted in. Thus, the analysis results will be herein presented based on each rule, by pointing out the functions supporting them, the statements configuring these functions, as well as the criteria giving shape to these discourses.

Patterns observed in the archive are used to support the description of the empirical categories. In addition, images extracted from the music videos are used to present the bundles of each rule, in order to illustrate the analysis. It is important to highlight that such images should be understood only as illustrative clippings of the analyzed data, since it would not be possible to insert

excerpts from the videos in the article. In this sense, we seek to enrich the description of the music videos' excerpts to which the images refer through their contextualization.

The analysis bundles resulting in discursive formations are shown in Fig. 1. Black lines indicate relationships between statements. The relationships between statements and enunciative functions have lines in the colors used to indicate the latter, in order to facilitate visualization, since it was not possible to avoid overlaps between them. The same principle was adopted thereafter.
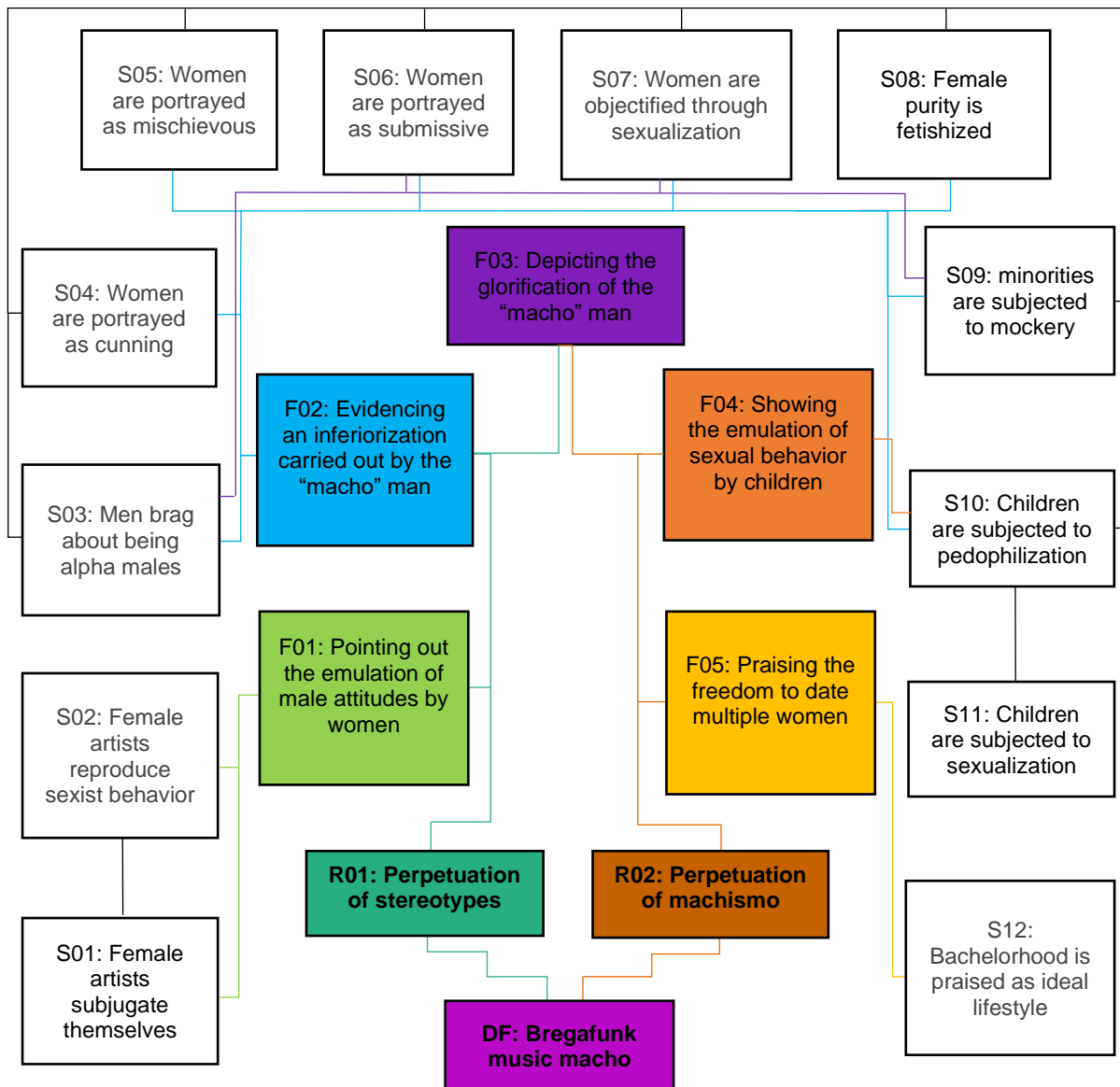

Figure 1. Map of analyzed bundles

Source: elaborated by the authors.

Perpetuation of stereotypes

The first formation rule is called **Perpetuation of stereotypes** (R01), since it evokes the "inferiorization" of minorities carried out by the "macho" man, who subjugates and objectifies women and ridicules minorities. Thus, the form of abnormalization practiced seeks support in the structural prejudices established in society, in order to "normalize" this discourse through naturalized knowledge. In addition to these men, female bregafunk singers also present these behaviors in the attempt to evoke a male-like aesthetic in order to differentiate themselves from the women objectified in music videos. This emulation behavior evidences, instead of a resistance to a dominant power, a strategy of escape from a historically dominated position, contributing to the perpetuation of the abnormality of these identities.

These stereotypes bring along the superiority (object) of men, who act to establish the *inferiority* (object) of individuals who do not fit this "male" pattern. Thus, this discourse can be seen when minority individuals are portrayed in a comical way aimed at ridiculing them, or when they are associated with prejudiced features (e.g., stating that women are not trustworthy or associating them with the idea of submission). These associations end up keeping these individuals as inferior beings, based on *stereotyping* (concept) or *social ascension* (concept) attitudes shown by these males in order to stand out among other individuals. These narratives are presented in a *dominated* (modality) way by female artists who carry out this stereotyping, or in a *dominant* (modality) way by men who try to *perpetuate the status quo* (strategy) by maintaining these prejudices within the social context they are inserted in.

The rule is based on two enunciative functions that form the facets of this behavior. The first function focuses on the **emulation of male attitudes by women** (F01) and describes the behavior of female bregafunk singers who reproduce male-like actions or sexist attitudes in order to resemble the "macho" man. By emulating these men, whether in their behavior or aesthetics, these female singers differentiate themselves from other – often objectified – women. This function encompasses discourses of *beta women* (subject), which are based on the *structural prejudice* (associated field) observed in this social context. Thus, these women depict both the *female objectification* (referential), when they show objectified women in their music video, and *male glorification* (referential), when they reflect the aesthetics and male-like behaviors by *emulating* (materiality) them.

Two statements support this function and show how this emulation takes place. The **subjugation of female artists** (S01) evokes behaviors and clothing used by female singers to evoke the idea of "masculine", as well as to resemble men, in order to differentiate themselves from women represented in bregafunk music videos. They take this position when they appear in the videos wearing more discrete and male-like clothing, or when they show mannerisms that bring them closer to male singers and differentiate them from other women. Accordingly, **female artists who reproduce sexist behaviors** (S02) embody the reproduction of sexist behavior patterns by agreeing with the subjugation of other women or by competing with others to protect a man or to win his heart. This discourse can be seen when non-objectified women, who evoke male behaviors, appear in the same environment as sexualized and objectified women. In these contexts, these artists show connivance with this objectification by failing to present a discourse against this practice. It can also be seen in contexts where these female artists compete with other female artists, or with other women, to defend their relationship with a man. Both the **subjugation of**

women (S01) and the **reproduction of sexist behaviors** (S02) are attitudes that show this **emulation** (F01): by dressing in a male-like way and by emulating male behaviors in bregafunk music videos, these female artists promote the **perpetuation of stereotypes** (R01) that show male aspects as superior to the female ones, contributing to abnormalize women.

Figure 2. Perpetuating stereotypes based on the emulation of male behaviors by women
Source: research archive.

The images shown in Fig. 2 help to understand how this occurs in the archive's music videos. In the first of them we see a female and a male artists singing together while women dance in the background. The women's clothing immediately draws attention: while the dancers wear short, tight-fitting clothes, the singer wears a loose sweatshirt, like the pattern of the clothing worn by the male singer. In the video, we can see that the female singer assumes masculine mannerisms when performing dance steps similar to those of her male singing partner, including the "male" version of the passinho, which simulate a sexual act from the man's point of view. The dancers, in turn, perform the "female" version of the passinho, often in the background of the images – as if they are part of the scenery itself –, with only their thighs and butts in close-up in front of the cameras, when, as a rule, one cannot even see their faces, as evidenced in the second image of the sequence. This

difference is even more evident in the third image of the figure, in which the female singer appears holding a drink in the middle of two women's butts that sway towards the camera, in a type of scene frequently identified in the archive, but almost always staged by men instead. This narrative shows how women may choose to adhere to the abnormalization of women to escape this condition.

The second function of this rule aims at **evidencing the "inferiorization" promoted by men** (F02) by emphasizing prejudiced behaviors presented by "macho" men who ridicule minorities from the "comic" perspective. These men subject the LGBTQIAPN+ community and fat individuals to mockery to make them look ridiculous. In addition to ridiculing women, these "macho" men also objectify and subjugate them by portraying them in a malicious, cunning, or fetishized way. These discourses bring along the *male glorification* (referential) by men who carry out this "inferiorization", as well as the *inferiorization of others* (referential) and the *objectification of women* (referential) who are subjected to subjugation when they appear as passive agents of interactions depicted in bregafunk music videos. The alpha male appears as the subject of these narratives based on the *everyday knowledge of "favelas"* (associated field), or on *patriarchy* (associated field), which places men as superior individuals and diminishes those who are part of some minority. These practices are based on the *stigmatization* (materiality) of individuals who differ from the alpha male, who, in its turn, reaffirms his viewpoints by describing women as malicious creatures, gay men as effeminate, fat individuals as comical or "non-macho" men as inferior.

This function in this rule comprises seven statements, in total. By **bragging about being alpha males** (S03) these artists perform self-promotion, since they reaffirm themselves as better than other men. This behavior can be seen in contexts where these men reaffirm their position above other men, based on superiority and power discourses or on the phallocentric aesthetics, which centralizes male virility as power featuring aspect. By performing dances and moves that evidence this phallocentric discourse, these men differentiate themselves from other men by expressing virility associated with the idea of power and superiority. By showing themselves in this manly way, these men can raise their social status by perpetuating the stereotype of manhood as aspect intrinsic to power in the outskirts.

To illustrate this behavior, we make use of the images shown in Fig. 3. In such music video, the singer is constantly looking and pointing at the camera, as if teasing the viewer, and opening his arms with intimidating gestures while singing, which makes him look bigger than he is. He also touches her necklace several times, drawing attention to the jewelry she wears, in a demonstration of superiority through the possession of a high-value material good. On the other hand, there is a woman dancing the passinho in the scene, as usual wiggling her butt towards the camera, in an objectified behavior that indicates that she too "belongs" to the singer. This set of signs evidence how he brags for being an alpha male in his territory, not only abnormalizing women, but, ultimately, the male who does not achieve his conquest – i.e., who is not "alpha".

In another line of characterization, **women are portrayed as cunning** (S04) and **malicious** (S05). On the one hand, bregafunk music videos reflect the view of women as cunning creatures who seduce men in order to play with their feelings. Thus, women are depicted as sexual individuals who attract the attention of men for seduction and snobbery purposes. On the other hand, these music videos depict them as immoral persons who only have relationships with men for monetary purposes, or who tease men to make them cheat on their partners.

Figure 3. Perpetuating stereotypes to brag

Source: research archive.

The music video whose images make up Fig. 4 illustrates these stereotypes. The first images show a woman insinuating herself to two men as she walks by them, to then do a little wiggle – typical of the passinho – and walk away, characterizing a behavior of seduction followed by snubbing. In the last image, which takes place in the sequence in the music video, she appears interacting and caressing a luxury car, indicating that she only shows interest in men with money and material possessions. In this narrative construction, the woman is abnormalized as a being without moral principles, who allows herself to be objectified by in exchange of material benefits.

On the other hand, **women are portrayed as submissive** (S06) and **objectified through sexualization** (S07). Bregafunk music videos depict women as passive individuals towards the objectified and sexualized treatment they are subjected to when they are touched by men in their private parts, which are zoomed in these videos' framing; thus, these music videos sexualize them, as well as present them as passive agents of sexualized interactions or as individuals subjugated by "macho" men, who are seen as superior beings. These narratives can be seen in music videos where women only appear in the background, dancing dressed in alluring outfits or being maliciously touched by men in sexual connotation scenes.

Figure 4. Perpetuating stereotypes by representing woman as immoral beings

Source: research archive.

It is possible that the descriptions presented based on Figs. 2 and 3 are enough to point out the objectification of women through sexualization in the bregafunk music videos. However, the music video images shown in Fig. 5 help to understand that this condition is portrayed as something allowed by a submissive woman. In these images, the man's interaction takes place almost exclusively with a woman's butt in a thong bikini, indicating that his interest is not relating to a person, but to a sexualized body. The woman, in turn, is portrayed in a permissive way to this behavior, allowing herself to be touched and groped by the man, without any reaction (i.e., as an object), in a public space. The abnormality evidenced here, therefore, removes from the woman the very condition of being.

Figure 5. Perpetuating stereotypes by representing woman as submissive objects

Source: research archive.

Finally, **female purity is fetishized** (S08). Bregafunk music videos portray women who show signs of purity and are sexualized at the same time. This view is presented as causing desire in men, who aim to corrupt these women and turn them into sexual objects. The construction of this narrative is evident in the male fascination with "novinha" – a term used to refer to virginal girls – widely portrayed in the music videos and, more specifically, in situations in which women are dressed in children's clothes and/or imitate children's mannerisms. To represent this behavior we evoke the image of Fig. 6. The fetishization of female purity already appears in the title of the music video from which the image was taken: "Daddy, I want to breastfeed" – in a analogy to blowjob. In the image, a woman uses a small girl's accessories (i.e., pacifier and doll) while being maliciously fondled by two men. In this narrative, we see how the abnormalization of the woman-object is a plot so rooted that it seeks to "convert" women who have not yet been sexualized.

Figure 6. Perpetuating stereotypes based female purity

Source: research archive.

Closing this bundle of relationships, **children are subjected to pedophilization** (S10). As if alluding to the pedophilization of girls was not enough (see the previous discussion, based on the image depicted in Fig. 6 – in this case, girls are always represented by adult women), bregafunk's music videos allude to the pedophilization of boys as something characteristic of masculinity. These videos show interactions of sexual nature between boys and adult women, who touch one another, or even instances where these women show erotic interest in children. Women participating in these productions are diminished, since they only appear in them in order to contribute to the narrative of these music videos and to be used as tool to encourage these children to behave as "machos" since childhood.

To illustrate this point, Fig. 7 presents images of a music video from the archive. The video begins with footage of children playing football; in contrast, the child who sings in the music video appears surrounded by women, who caress him and interact with him in a sexual way. The boy also mimics the mannerisms and gait of men, as well as uses the same slang as them. We draw attention to the image that shows this child greeting the older men, while other children look on, establishing a distinction between the prematurely "adultilized" boy and those who remain children, but seem to admire him and aspire to be like him. Finally, we highlight an image in which this boy sings and dances the "male" version of the passinho surrounded by women performing the "female" version of the passinho, with all the sexualized representation of it, as previous discussed. In this narrative we see a new facet in the abnormalization of the woman-object, which is to turn the boy into a man through sex, assuming a determining role in the position (i.e., masculine) of dominance that subjugates her.

Figure 7. Perpetuating stereotypes through pedophilization

Source: research archive.

Perpetuation of machismo

The second formation rule focuses on the action of bragging by "macho" men who are described as ideal men by those who participate in it. These discourses are associated with the *ethos* (object), since actions associated with the *superiority* (object) of men or with the *inferiority* (object) imposed on minorities take place within the social context of Recife City's outskirts to *perpetuate the status quo* (strategy) of this discourse. These actions can be performed in a *partying* (modality) manner by men, when they idealize this "macho" as a "womanizer" and uncommitted man; in a *dominating* (modality) manner, since this ideal man must be superior to those around him; or in an *infringing* (modality) manner, when this man encourages sexual interactions between adult women and male children to perpetuate the *status quo*. These discourses present the *sexist* (concept) attitude by these men and evidence the *social ascension* (concept) pursued by these individuals in order to place themselves above others.

In total, four enunciative functions support this rule and help explaining its formation. The first function investigates the **inferiorization promoted by men** (F02) by presenting male discourses that perpetuate the contempt for minorities as way to consolidate the superiority of the "macho" man. This narrative carries concepts associated with patriarchy (associated field) seen within the *favela*, as well as with the *objectification of women* (referential) and the *ridicule of others* (referential). Therefore, these discourses evoke the *stigmatization* (materiality) of these minorities by the *alpha male* (subject) in music videos.

This enunciative function comprises two statements. The discourse showing **children subjected to pedophilization** (S10) by portraying the objectification of women, who participate in music videos wherein they interact with male children in narratives of sexual nature was previously presented (see discussion around Fig. 7). By placing themselves as characters in narratives carried out by men in these video productions, women are objectified and used to perpetuate the chauvinism represented in their submission to men, since their childhood.

The second statement of this function shows that **minorities are ridiculed** (S09), revealing the depreciation of minority groups that are depicted in a comical way as laughable individuals who cannot be taken seriously. These attitudes can be seen when artists belittle women by portraying them as touchy-feely individuals within relationships, whereas LGBTQIAPN+ individuals as depicted with exaggerated attitudes and featuring, and fat individuals are portrayed as dressed in a comic manner and acting as fools in music videos. This internalization is oftentimes based on caricatures or costumes made by artists who incorporate these minorities within these music videos.

The music video portrayed through the images in Fig. 8 illustrates how this ridicule is performed in relation to the female image, which follows the same *modus operandi* that occurs in relation to LGBTQIAPN+ people. In it, men dressed in wigs, and feminine clothes and accessories act in a caricature way, behaving in an affected and exaggeratedly "effeminate" way, engaging in corporal fight for the attention of men. The use of the female image performed by men as an alleged comic relief in the productions reveals a strategy of abnormalization of women – and, in other music videos, of the LGBTQIAPN+ community – through a deterioration of their identities.

Figure 8. Perpetuating the machismo through ridicule of minorities

Source: research archive.

The second function of this rule focuses on the **praise towards the male figure** (F03), since it emphasizes stereotyped behaviors associated with this "macho" man who acts as womanizer since childhood, who presents ostentatious behavior and who believes to be superior to everyone who is not part of his group. These male behaviors end up being praised as ideal attitudes, and they are adopted by male artists as behaviors to be followed and emulated. This function is seen in the *male glorification* (referential) performed by the alpha male (subject) to show superiority over others through the "superiorization" (materiality) of "macho" behaviors. This glorification is based on practices established within the context of "*favelas*" (associated field), in behaviors seen as natural within Recife's outskirts, or on the idea of *patriarchy* (associated field) associated with these artists, who see the "macho" man as the ideal figure to be emulated and as the main figure within society.

In total, this function comprises seven statements that show the ways these "macho" men are placed in a superiority position over other individuals. All these statements have already been presented previously. However, it is worth contextualizing how they show the perpetuation of machismo. By **bragging about being alpha males** (S03), these men highlight the idea that this is the ideal "status" to be pursued in order to get more women or to take a high "power" position. Music videos **portraying women as cunning** (S04) emphasize the idea that this "macho" man is the target of several women's love conquest, as well as depict him as a "womanizer" who is always involved with several partners at the same time. By **portraying women as malicious** (S05), these discourses establish that the "macho" man is the target of women's love conquest even when he is committed to someone; thus, they are persuaded by these women to cheat on their partners. When these men

portray women as submissive (S06), they describe the "macho" man as the one controlling the relationship and depict women as individuals who follow the orders of this "macho". This superior position of men can also be seen when they act to **objectify women through sexualization** (S07), in a discourse that places the "macho" man surrounded by several objectified women who only appear in the background of music videos, with emphasis on their private parts. This way to establish the "macho" man appears in discourses associated with **fetishized female purity** (S08), which imply that the "macho" and "virile" man will corrupt the "young" and infantilized girl, who is susceptible to be dominated and sexualized by this man, as well as in discourses wherein this "macho" man **ridicules minorities** (S09) in order to perpetuate his superiority by "inferiorizing" the ones seen as different.

The third function of this rule shows the **simulation of sexual behavior by children** (F04) by portraying instances, in the music videos, wherein children perform dances of sexual nature (e.g., the classic bregafunk "passinho") or remain in the scene while adults perform these sexualized dances. In addition, this function focuses on narratives observed in the music videos, wherein boys, notably underage, interact with adult women in a sexualized way and are encouraged by adult men to do so as way to perpetuate male virility. Therefore, this function encompasses *children's eroticization* (reference) by the *alpha male* (subject) who makes these music videos and presents an *emulation* (materiality) of adult behaviors by children, based on practices associated with *patriarchy* (associated field). Thus, these children find themselves in a context where men are depicted as virile and superior, whereas women are objectified and sexualized.

This function is based on two statements that show the ways these children have contact with these sexualized behaviors within bregafunk music video productions. With respect to **children subjected to pedophilization** (S10), one can perceive interactions of sexual nature between underage boys and adult women who touch each other, or even instances where these women show erotic interest in children. Therefore, these boys are established as "machos" and encouraged to be "womanizers" since childhood to emulate adult men also seen in the music videos. On the other hand, **sexualized children** (S11) perform classic bregafunk moves of sexual nature or remain in the scene while these dance moves are performed by adults. The analysis previously presented around Fig. 7 have already discussed the former statement and serves also to illustrate the latter. In the context of this formation rule, both the pedophilization and sexualization of boys perpetuates chauvinism since children seen reproducing the behavior of adult men portrayed in these music video productions perpetuate the bregafunk macho as the model to be followed by the next generation of artists, what is performed through abnormalization of woman by turning them into sexualized objects.

Finally, the last function associated with this rule **praises the freedom do date multiple women** (F05) since it depicts the uncompromising lifestyle as the one ideal for this "macho". This function presents bregafunk artists (subject) as individuals who *praise* (materiality) this *lifestyle* (reference) by stating that **bachelorhood is the ideal lifestyle** (S12). Their behaviors are based on the practice of *patriarchy* (associated field) observed in their music video productions, wherein they establish the chauvinism-based idea that men should have as many female partners as possible.

Figure 9. Perpetuating the machismo through the freedom of dating multiple women (1)

Source: research archive.

In order to illustrate this discourse, Fig. 9 brings an emblematic image: one of the music videos in the archive opens with the title of the song, "Single until I die", printed on a female butt, associating the condition of being single with objectified sex. For the bregafunk male artists, the idea of being single is associated with a lifestyle that allows relationships with several women simultaneously, which is why it is constant for them to appear in music videos surrounded by women in conditions of sexualization, as illustrated in the mosaic of images in Fig. 10.

Figure 10. Perpetuating the machismo through the freedom of dating multiple women (2)

Source: research archive.

Even when men are portrayed accompanied with a partner, this lifestyle is present, as they invariably appear cheating on her; when discovered, such betrayal ends up causing a fight between the women, who compete to define who would stay with the man (the images in Fig.11 illustrate this process). Thus, the woman is doubly abnormalized: as a sexual object and as a voluntary possession of a disputed man.

Figure 11. Perpetuating the machismo through the freedom of dating multiple women (3)

Source: research archive.

Conclusions

Results in the current study have shown that bregafunk music video productions represent the male subjectivity based on a sexist discourse that segregates other subjectivities. The bregafunk "macho" is evidenced as a variation of the alpha male who uses his cultural repertoire and social context to consolidate himself as dominant identity by subjugating others. This discourse glorifies this alpha male within a process driven by a double move comprising self-affirmation and denial of others.

On the one hand, the denial of others takes place through the reproduction of stereotypes rooted in society, which are represented by members of the LGBTQIAPN+ community, fat bodies and, mainly, by the degraded image of women. It is a strategy used to diminish these identities, which are portrayed in a comic manner, although women are also portrayed as malignant individuals. This is such an ingrained process that even female artists reproduce sexist behaviors and place other women in inferior positions.

On the other hand, self-affirmation is anchored in a sexist discourse that, in a particular way, praises bachelorhood as the ideal lifestyle and depicts women as object of submission, mainly of sexual submission, whereas fat individuals and members of the LGBTQIAPN+ community, whose sexuality is not aligned with the male heteronormative ideal, are represented in an atrocious way. This discourse also presents children in "pedophilization" contexts, a fact that emphasizes a strategy focused on perpetuating it.

Thus, the alpha male, herein depicted in his bregafunk version, promotes the "abnormalization" of other identities that are "bestialized" in order to perpetuate his privileged (power) condition in a society that remains strongly featured by patriarchy. Based on the understanding that this process is a strategy used to maintain the *status quo*, although the targeting of women, LGBTQIAPN+ individuals and fat bodies refers to historically stigmatized identities, it can also reveal the concern of these alpha males regarding the growing political space these identities have gained in recent decades.

The contribution of the current research to CCT lies on its approach to an empirical object inserted in the topic associated with massively mediated market ideologies (Arnould & Thompson, 2005, 2007; Gaião et al., 2012). Thus, it is worth highlighting some aspects. First, the investigation of music video productions widens the scope of this approach, which is primarily featured by research on advertising. On the other hand, the way the research was carried out connects to another topic – i.e., consumer identities –, which is a consolidated subject in this field. Specifically, the study is in line with an approach that seeks to highlight how marketing and consumer research have represented stigmatized identities, such as female (Campbell, Freeman, & Gannon, 2021; Murto, 2021) and LGBTQIAPN+ (Coffin, Eichert & Nolke, 2019), in addition to racial prejudice (Kuruoğlu, 2022) and ageism (Peñaloza, 2022; Sanghvi & Frank, 2022).

In addition, the research is in compliance with an empirical object that has been gaining ground in investigations in the aforementioned field, which is increasingly interested in investigating entertainment industry products. Thus, it is essential highlighting the importance of investigating locally rooted genres, since it provides knowledge that goes beyond mainstream products. Finally, it is worth emphasizing the herein adopted critical theoretical approach, which has evidenced morally questionable behaviors encouraged by the investigated industry. Thus, in addition to its theoretical contribution, the current research makes a social contribution, since it reveals segregation practices focused on perpetuating the dominance of male subjectivity.

We acknowledge that YouTube operation mode has also limited the current study, since we cannot guarantee that all bregafunk music videos posted in it were collected. It happens because videos can be deleted, be private or fail to emerge in search engines. However, we emphasize that the data collection process was exhaustive and aimed at covering all the available material, a fact that makes it representative of the investigated empirical object. On the other hand, we recognize that the empirical material only allowed us to analyze the discursive point of view of the music videos' producers, not accessing the points of view of the other identities represented in such productions. We understand that this aspect points out, simultaneously, a limitation and a limit of the investigation, since such scope meets the research problem.

Future research should focus on investigating the representation of *favelas* in bregafunk music videos. Although this aspect was observed during the herein conducted data analysis, it

escaped the research scope and the investigated topic. On the other hand, it would also be insightful to investigate how people who correspond to the stigmatized identities treated in this research perceive their representation by bregafunk music videos and how resist such representations. In addition, we understand that other studies focused on investigating how music video productions belonging to other genres represent different subjectivities can help improving knowledge about this phenomenon.

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