

# DR. SHRYOCK'S HEALTHY GUIDELINES FOR YOUNG MEN: AN ANALYSIS OF PICTURE IN DISCOURSE

SADIAS DIRETRIZES PARA RAPAZES DO DR. HAROLDO SHRYOCK: UMA ANALÍTICA DA  
IMAGEM EM DISCURSO

SALUDABLES DIRECTRICES PARA MUCHACHOS DEL DR. SHRYOCK: UN ANÁLISIS DE LA  
IMAGEN EN DISCURSO

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**ABSTRACT:** The discourse on 'virility' constructed by Dr. Shryock's handbook *On becoming a man: A book for teenage boys*, published in 1968, is analyzed from the point of view of French and Brazilian Discourse Analyses. Current study investigates the relationship between publicity advertisements by the telecommunications company *Oi* and two Facebook posts whose patterns of repetitive factors in terms of body iconography (poses, gestures, gaze) reveal truth and power effects on what means being a man. We assumed the construction of manliness, foregrounded on medical evidence, involves a moral (and religious) stance on attentive model body behaviors and establishes comprehensive exclusion regimens that insist of real effects (ruled by tradition) according to which masculinity is synonymous to dominance.

**KEY WORDS:** Truth. Manliness. Body.

**RESUMO:** Sob a perspectiva da Análise do Discurso de orientação franco-brasileira, em especial a partir da teoria foucaultiana, objetiva-se compreender como se constitui o objeto do discurso "virilidade" em manual da década de sessenta *O mômço e seus problemas*, do Dr. Shryock (1969), estabelecendo relação com anúncios de campanha publicitária contemporânea da empresa de telefonia móvel *Oi* e dois *posts* de páginas de site de relacionamento *Facebook*, cujos padrões de elementos repetíveis em termos de iconografia do corpo (posturas, gestos, olhares) desvelam efeitos de verdade e de poder sobre o que é ser homem "de verdade". Conjectura-se que a construção da virilidade, vinculada ao domínio médico, perpassa a apreciação moral (e religiosa) sobre condutas modelares de corpos em vigília, estabelecendo regimes de exclusão de toda sorte que fazem reverberar (regidos por dispositivo da tradição) efeitos de verdade segundo os quais masculinidade é sinônimo de dominância.

**PALAVRAS-CHAVE:** Verdade. Virilidade. Corpo.

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RESUMEN: Bajo la perspectiva del Análisis del discurso de orientación franco-brasileño, en especial de la teoría foucaultiana, se objetiva comprender cómo se constituye el objeto del discurso “virilidad” en manual de la década de sesenta *O môço e seus problemas* (El muchacho y sus problemas), de Dr. Shryock (1969), estableciendo relación con anuncios de campaña publicitaria contemporánea de la empresa de telefonía móvil *Oi* y dos *posts* de páginas del sitio de relacionamiento *Facebook*, cuyos patrones de elementos repetibles en términos de iconografía del cuerpo (posturas, gestos, miradas) desvelan efectos de verdad y de poder sobre lo que es ser hombre “de verdad”. Se conjetura que la construcción de la virilidad, involucrada al dominio médico, atraviesa la apreciación moral (y religiosa) sobre conductas modelares de cuerpos en vigilancia, estableciendo todo tipo de regímenes de exclusión que hacen reverberar (bajo el dispositivo de la tradición) efectos de verdad según los cuales masculinidad es sinónimo de dominancia.

PALABRAS CLAVE: Verdad. Virilidad. Cuerpo.

*Como, por que e a que preço, temos nos empenhado em sustentar um discurso verdadeiro sobre o sujeito, sobre o sujeito que não somos, enquanto sujeito louco ou sujeito delinquente, sobre o sujeito que, de modo geral, nós somos enquanto falamos, trabalhamos, vivemos, e enfim sobre o sujeito que, no caso particular da sexualidade, nós somos direta e individualmente para nós mesmos? (FOUCAULT, 2006, p. 308).*

## 1 INTRODUCTION

The Brazilian edition of *On becoming a man: A book for teenage boys*, titled *O môço e seus problemas* [The teenager and his problems], is a handbook written by the physician and religious counselor Dr. Harold Shryock in 1969. It shows the facts of life to young people who will have to cope with the risks and responsibilities of adulthood. The book is divided into lectures, each provides the necessary information to young men. For instance, Chapter 7 deals with ‘The Game of Love’; Chapter 4 deals with ‘The Secret on Girls’; Chapter 17 deals with ‘Dealing with Money’. It also gives medical explanations on puberty and birth, as is Chapter 2 entitled ‘Where did you come from?’<sup>1</sup>

By the end of childhood, the young man who observes “Evidences of Manhood” (Chapter 3) on his own body, should, according to Shryock (1969), beware the dangerous byways from the masculine, albeit “natural”, ideal. This fact requires strategies of (self) vigilance – a kind of obviousness that has to be said and resaid, even if it is obvious. These healthy guidelines range from what should be read (“[...] boys should not expect high scores in Physics, Chemistry and Math if they indulge in fiction books”, SHRYOCK, 1969, p. 187) and expectations that one should have (“[...] although you dream of millions of dollars, it seems what you desire to buy or to do with your money is always beyond what you really have.” SHRYOCK, 1969, p. 187)<sup>2</sup>.

The present study is more than a ride through “a cemetery of dead truths” (Veyne, 2008) or a proposal for a literature review. Within the dispersion of two domains of intertwined knowledge (the physician and the religious person), we analyzed the constitution of ‘manhood’, which was widely spread in Brazil during the 1970s and returns as a contemporary memory effect, in the materiality of language dated from the 1960s. The text and the pictures of *On becoming a man*, and 2010 publicity advertisement campaign of the telecommunications company *Oi* and two Facebook posts were also investigated. Their patterns of repetitive factors in terms of body iconography (poses, gestures, gaze) reveal truth and power effects on what means being a man and trigger exclusion regimes of wayward behavior, or, rather, not being a man.

In the first place, we present a theoretical discussion on the body as a space for significance within the production of subjects from the point of view of French and Brazilian Discourse Analysis, based on Foucauldian theory (FOUCAULT, 2005; 2005; 2008; 2015). Secondly, the reading gesture is foregrounded on the image centered on the effects of regularity on the virile subject. We designed an interpretative movement that discusses image (BEGGER, 1999; MANGUEL, 2011), the body (ALDERSEY-WILLIAMS, 2016;

<sup>1</sup> “Putting aside all types of stories and fables on babies delivered by storks [...], current chapter will give you a simple and true explanation on the facts of life” (SHRYOCK, 1969, p. 17).

<sup>2</sup> All citations originally in Portuguese were translated by the author (Editor’s Note).

ECO, 2013, 2014; GÉLIS, 2011; TASSO, 2013) and virility (CAROL, 2013; CORBIN, 2013; NOLASCO, 2001; THOMASSET, 2013). In overview, the discourse on the “true man” resounds in current Brazilian media practices that, differently than Dr. Shryock’s grave guidelines, expand the order of current discourse through derision and jocosity.

## 2 BODY, KNOWLEDGE AND POWER

The Body is the site of significance and meanings. This is because we are bodied Subjects, clothed in flesh. A multitude of impressions, gestures and historical productions make up this ‘space’. They normalize, subjectify, frame, impose censorship and restrict pleasures, in the wake of beauty, well-being, purity or sin. The body must be amended and purified. Physiological needs should be reined, although they should be capacitated to become useful and productive.

The process of fabrication of Subjects becomes the field of casual observation when, for instance, through the sketch of a designer, under the camera of a filmmaker or by the brush of a painter, several cultural productions are composed and make the body a metaphor of what is correct (and wrong) in a position-subject, within contingent truth. Manguel (2001) remarks the process of picture reading is necessarily the product of man’s symbolic experience. According to the guidelines of experience, “[...] man sees a sunset and knows that this means the cyclic end of a god whose name the tribe does not pronounce.” (MANGUEL, 2011, p. 24).

In his in-depth perception of the image, Berger (1999) insists there is a chasm between *seeing* and *discourse*. The thesis of relativism is condensed in the following remark: “The manner we see things is influenced by what we know and by what we believe” (BERGER, 1999, p. 10). Manguel (2011, p. 22), quoting Blake, questions: “How do you know but every bird that cuts the air is an immense world of delight, clos’d by your senses five?” Berger (1999) argues when people from the Middle Ages believed in the physical existence of hell, fire had a different meaning from what we have today. The idea of hell followed the notion of fire as that which consumes everything and in relation to the pain of the burning body.

Discussions on the way people understand the surrounding reality is the ulterior theme of Philosophy which makes leads us to the Greek founder, Plato. In *Timaeus* V (V-VI century BC) and *Phaedo* XXX (V-VI century BC), Plato established two ideas through which one acknowledges beauty and, consequently, truth: *Harmony* and *Splendor* (ECO, 2013). According to Eco (2013, p. 45), Plato thought beauty did not have an autonomous existence, distinct from the physical support by which it was accidentally expressed. Therefore, beauty is not linked to a particular physical object but shines through all.<sup>3</sup> Beauty does not correspond to that which is perceived: the “sensitive perception” should be overcome by the intellectual exercise of the “dialectic art” (philosophy) which reveals immutable and perfect essences. Art (a copy of the real, “mimesis”) is not an educating factor and should be banished and replaced by the beauty of geometric forms and by perfectly mathematical constructions.

The same logic is applied to Plato’s appreciation of the body: “a grave” harnessing the soul to the world of mutable and imperfect forms should be replaced by the exercise of self-contemplation:

Now in the earthly copies of justice and temperance and the other ideas which are precious to souls there is no light, but only a few, approaching the images through the darkling organs of sense, behold in them the nature of that which they imitate, and these few do this with difficulty. But at that former time they saw beauty shining in brightness, when, with a blessed company—we following in the train of Zeus, and others in that of some other god—they saw the blessed sight and vision and were initiated into that which is rightly called the most blessed of mysteries, which we celebrated in a state of perfection, when we were without experience of the evils which awaited us in the time to come, being permitted as initiates to the sight of perfect and simple and calm and happy apparitions, which we saw in the pure light, being ourselves pure and not entombed in this which we carry about with us and call the body, in which we are imprisoned like an oyster in its shell. (PLATO, 1925, 250a-250b).

<sup>3</sup>The Greek ideal of perfection is given by the term *kallokagathia*, a compound of *kállos* (normally translated “beauty”) and *agathós* (normally translated “good”). The quality of being *kalos* and *agathos* defined a person by dignity, courage, style, capacity and renowned sporting, military or moral qualities. According to this ideal, Hellenism established a vast literature on physical and moral ugliness (ECO, 2014, p. 23).

After more than a thousand years, the exercise of self-contemplation was transformed into penance in Medieval Europe, leading towards the celebration of the mutilated Christ as a proof of commitment to faith. In Augustine's sermons, Christ's deformity on the cross is an unmistakable sign of his love for the human race (ECO, 2014, p. 51). Consequently, the noblest thing is to imitate his example by punishing the body, the 'dirty hole' of sin and vice (GELIS, 2012, p. 55). Aggression against the flesh is treated in detail in a 17<sup>th</sup> century treatise on the mortifications of St. Ignatius of Loyola, comprising deprivation of food, application of thorns on the flesh and self-flogging with the *silex* which must be furiously struck on one's bare breast (ECO, 2014, p. 61).

During the Age of Reason and the Enlightenment, Medicine appropriated the human body as an object of study and investigation. The body was used for anatomical and physiological analysis and even for entertainment. According to Aldersey-Williams (2013, p. 28), in the 1631-32 winter, in Amsterdam, Adriaen Adriaenszoon was caught stealing a man's cap. He was sentenced to death and his body was dissected for all to see – a common punishment for graver crimes.

In the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the dissection of the human body had theatrical nuances. It could be undertaken when a corpse was available and when the cold weather could conserve the body for the period necessary for the demonstration until the bad smell made the job unbearable. Aldersey-Williams (2013, p. 29) writes that entrance to the 'show' cost between six and seven pence (more expensive than admittance to a contemporary play). Adriaenszoon's dissection is known through the famous painting "The Anatomy Lesson of Dr. Nicolaes Tulp" by Rembrandt. It was a symbol of man's curiosity in his contemplation of God's perfect machine, making bare the body's mysteries.

In these three cases, the body is the material surface of a discursive inscription: as a disposable material with regard to its appearance and essence; as a site of vices that requires restraint since it is sin's indelible mark; as a set of connected systems whose secrets may and should be revealed. The body is beautiful because it is a harmonic site; the body is beautiful because it is the symbol of the divine; it is beautiful because it works. Understanding such shifts in truth implies in the fact that all things dealt with in language or by language (or other types of material inscription) fail to have any fixed and prior existence. On the contrary, the objects of discourse are blended within the same discourse, within the exercise of the enunciation function, following Foucauldian archeology (2008). The adjective 'beautiful' related to the body refers to the 'gaze regime' as desired, useful, appreciated, under the given perspective.

The "knot in the net" (FOUCAULT, 2008, p. 26) does not occur in a chaotic manner. It actually corresponds to order: it is not any other thing, in any place where you can say anything. The presupposition that "[...] discourse is not simply that which brings struggle or the domination system, but that for which one struggles, the power which we would like to dominate" (FOUCAULT, 2005 p. 10) is derived from power relationships (a re-signified concept with regard to orthodox Marxist and Hobbesian theories).

In other words, the following is at issue: what determines true discourse with regard to the [body of the] subject? More specifically: who establishes a model of maleness which the young man has to follow at the end of childhood and the beginning of adulthood? Within the analysis, the administration of masculine behavior passes through the religious (the site of the true discourse on the subject's moral appreciation) and the medical (the site of true discourse on the function and maintenance of life) milieus and establishes ways of specific verifications wrapped in the adjective 'manly'.

In a young man, the reproductive organs start functioning much earlier than at the age in which he is prepared to father a child. Likewise, the reproductive organs of a young woman start functioning prior to the time when she may marry and bear children. The period between the age in which the reproductive organs start functioning and the time in which she marries gives her the opportunity to adjust herself to her new feminine role. (SHRYOCK, 1969, p. 39).

According to Foucault (2015, p. 235), power relationships are complex phenomena and do not comply with compartmented dialectic formulae. The dominion and conscience of the body may be acquired by investing in the body through power, physical training, exercises, muscle building, nudity, the exaltation of the beautiful and others. All these factors lead towards the desire of the body through insistent, meticulous, hard labor which power exercises on the body of children, soldiers, healthy bodies and others. One should discard a highly advertised doctrine according to which the power of bourgeoisie societies would have denied the body's

reality in favor of the soul's (as in Plato): actually, nothing is more materialistic, nothing is more physical or more corporal than the exercise of power.

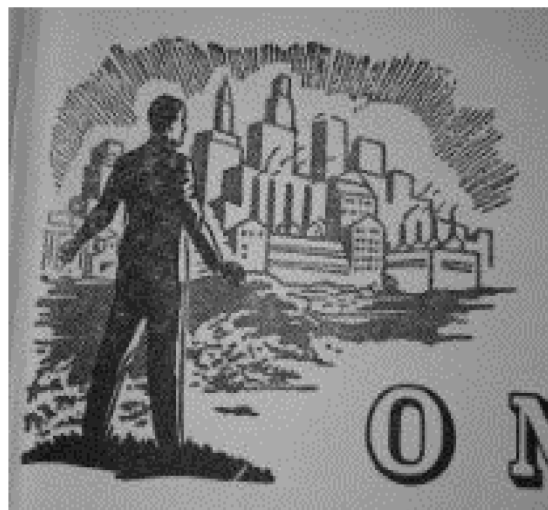
Tasso (2013, p. 114) coined the expression “bodies on guard” to define sets of discursive networks circumscribed to conditions of emergency and existence in contradictory spaces to political and social behavior of a population. In the present analysis, this expression is used to define the administration of behavior in terms of the production of the ‘true man’s subject and story. Consequently, scientific knowledge (true knowledge) foregrounds the existence of the discourse object ‘reproductive organs’, which, in their full development as parts of the organism, enable the gift (the natural path) of motherhood to the female – even though, strangely enough (the prerogative of God’s perfect work), the genital organs start functioning prior to the appropriate time.

We will now analyze the governability of the body on guard (TASSO, 2013) whose truth games circumscribe regimens of perceiving the “true man”, the beautiful man (physically and morally), the “link subject”.<sup>4</sup> Or rather, man as male.

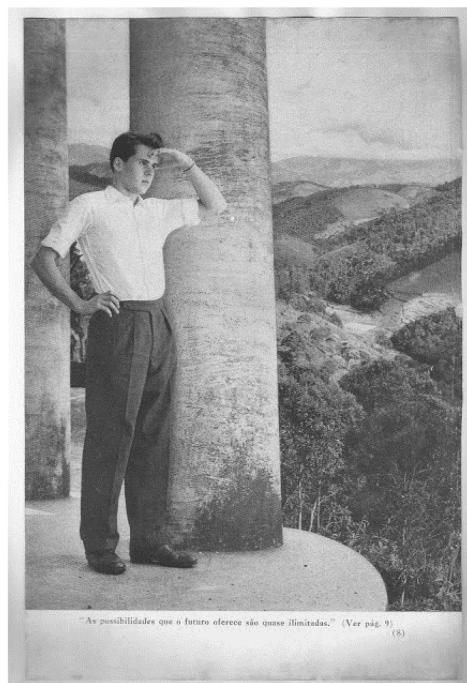
### 3 ICONOGRAPHIC STANDARDS OF THE IMAGE IN DISCOURSE

Dr. Shryock (1969) describes the growing and developing young man that slowly distinguishes himself from the young woman. In fact, he provides a series of explanations ranging from the body’s anatomy to money administration. It is a handbook that gradually shows the young man that he is no longer a boy and that he should take up his new role in society.<sup>5</sup> Our analysis will not focus on the individuality of a voice but will discuss the functioning of discourse that establishes modes of rationality. In other words, it will discuss the administration of correct behavior for the production of ‘worthy gentlemen’.

The pictures below may be found respectively at the beginning of the book and after the contents:



**Figure 1:** Illustration of the book's cover  
Source: Shryock (1969, p. 5)



**Figure 2:** Illustration at Chapter 1  
Source: Shryock (1969, p.8)

<sup>4</sup> The term used by the advertising slogan of the telecommunications company Oi in 2010, as discussed below.

<sup>5</sup> “During childhood, the evidences of his development accumulate slowly and he frequently becomes impatient and desires to skip the remaining years and become a ready-made man. Now that he has reached the adolescent stage, his expectations are satisfied. A time arrives in the life of a boy when in a few months he acquires the traits of a young man.” (SHRYOCK, 1969, p. 7).

The young man gazes the future or “unlimited possibilities” (according to the linguistic enunciation of Figure 2). Figure 1 iconically reveals the hands of the young man wide open, as if reacting to the surprises that the labor market will offer to him. However, it is not a fearful attitude but one of ecstasy. It is the unique moment in the life of the young man when, at the start of a new day, he feels himself prepared to face life. The parallel lines above the city present it as a new place, full of light, the expression of freedom that starts soon.

On the other hand, Figure 2 (a full-page colored picture, related to the section ‘The Advantages of Adolescence’, Chapter 1) shows a reined enthusiasm brought about by reflection, wisdom and maturity. Reflection is not a passive factor; on the contrary, it is the manifestation of the safety of the man who verifies the adverse conditions that he has to cope with, protecting himself from the sun rays that may darken his vision, placing his hands on the waist (where, at other times, the sword sheath lay), while a forest looms at the background. It is the symbolic and primary expression of the warrior’s preparation to enter the battle field.

In the 20<sup>th</sup> century the ideal of the body’s capacity was examined under the aegis of medicine, focusing on anatomic (an adequate genital apparatus) and physiological criteria for sexual intercourse (what brings about an erection for penetration). If during the 19<sup>th</sup> century it was believed that man’s supremacy lay in the blood, the birth of endocrinology and hormonal paradigms shifted the definition of masculinity towards testosterone (which replaced the sperm) as the agent of virility (CAROL, 2013).

Carol (2013, p. 45) states Science was also urged to attribute behavior effects to testosterone, particularly aggressiveness, which was considered a male-linked feature in evolution. However, Medicine committed itself to restore the lost manhood or enhance it through the transplantation of animal endocrine glands (dogs and bulls) to combat feminization, homosexuality and erectile dysfunction. Between 1916 and 1921, the Austrian physician Eugen Steinach, a pioneer in opotherapy, emphasized the lack of male hormones caused problems in sexual identity. He succeeded in making crossed transplants in male and female guinea pigs. After the operation, the two animals adopted the sexual behavior of the other gender. Other researchers made experiments on humans with alleged “promising results” (CAROL, 2013, p. 72).

Dr. Shryock (1969) explains that body changes during adolescence:

[...] occur in the young man’s body during the transition from childhood to manhood. They are motivated and controlled by the *testicles*. Testicles are two glands in the scrotum. They are small and inactive during boyhood, preparing for the attack of manhood. (SHRYOCK, 1969, p. 31).

Manhood is an “attack” since man is thought in war terms. According to Corbin (2013, p. 8), the boy should stiffen his upper lip from the earliest age. Frequently he has to endure the divorce of his parents, overcome pain and cold, refrain from shedding tears, receive punishments and ill-treatment without blinking. From early childhood he has to face violent scenes. Within the “triumph of 20<sup>th</sup> century manhood”, man should resist physical fatigue, execute dangerous tasks, defend his country when needed and forebear his parents and friends so that they would not die of hunger. “Be a man” – the imperative, evoking a religious stance (CORBIN, 2011), is a burden and the manifestation of glory. This is the reason why man has to show constantly his manhood through his acts.

[Within] this perspective, manhood is identical to greatness – an essential term –, superiority, honor, strength – as virtue –, self-restraint as sacrifice, knowing how to die for true values. Manhood occurs in the exploration and conquest of territories, in colonization, in everything that reveals supremacy over nature within economic expansion. This is the stuff of greatness. (CORBIN, 2011, p. 9).

The effect of truth, shown through Greek, Roman and Medieval memories on man and split by data from Medicine (highly defined anatomic profile in the soldier's body), Religion (male centrality within the family) and Economics (bread earner), underlines, according to one interpretation, five characteristics that define the manhood-domination relationship: power, strength, physical and moral beauty, self-assurance and maturity. Within the materiality of images, the body is the place of feeling in so far as the historical constitution of the manifestation of manhood reveals itself in attitudes, in body promptness that faces the unknown, the novel and the perilous.

The production of subjectivity, called 'the true man', due to the watchful gaze on bodies within the administration of behavior (TASSO, 2013), fixed in the enunciation 'Be a man!', has been currently criticized and rebuked. According to Nolasco (2001), it has been adopted as a significant mythical parameter of Western culture, mainly foregrounded on Greek-Roman models. There is a metaphoric dichotomy that tags his study ("From Tarzan to Homer Simpson"): on the one hand, it presents the prototypical representation of manhood dominating Nature; on the other hand, the representation of the character in mass culture, depicted in the trivialization of old forms of manhood.

According to Nolasco (2001), man, suffocated by the so-called minority discourses, had his male features neglected by symbolic and cultural organizations. The latter impaired his emergence, skipping the factors through which right and wrong were instituted in the 'new' model for family and society. It may be the origin of the crisis of male identity what enhances the circulation of depreciative discourses with regard to demonstrations of virility and opposes the discourse in Dr. Shryock's handbook, tagging it "chauvinist", "sexist", "outdated" and "dangerous".

The author argues the Industrial Revolution in 19<sup>th</sup> century Europe sparked an age of hope and progress, which triggered a series of changes in the private world and in male-female relationships. The struggle for equality of minority groups increased with the vindications of the proletariat and changed the individual's social representations. These discourses brought about equality and an opposition to the representation of maleness that was common at the time (NOLASCO, 2001).

Due to this discursive unstableness, underscored by several occurrences that mediated and brought forth new representations (and memories) on manhood (and especially on womanhood), Dr. Shryock's book may not be advertised as it was decades ago in Brazil. In fact, it does not provide a scientific-medical and moral-religious truth accepted by all. In fact, it is a strange remnant from bygone times that would cause laughter and confusion to contemporary readers.

However, one may perceive that several contemporary publicity campaigns insist on the values of a type of subjectivity that once upon a time was built upon "healthy guidelines". They range from the speakable order to the almost non-publishable due to their opposition to the position of the subject of discourse that the genders are (or should be) on an equal standing. Regulated by "tradition" which, in the Foucauldian sense, captures, determines, intercepts, ensures and control gestures, opinions and behavior of living beings for the production of truth (AGAMBEN, 2009, p. 40), there are numberless channels in social and publicity media that return man to his 'rightful place', as if the social struggles for equality throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century had ruptured the good values lost in an idealized past (which composes the reason for the term 'tradition').

The following are social media posts<sup>6</sup> from *Sujeito Homem* (1.194.199 subscribers) and *Homem Tradicional* (529.773 subscribers):

<sup>6</sup> Content published by the administrators of virtual pages that may be followed by Facebook users by subscribing to them.

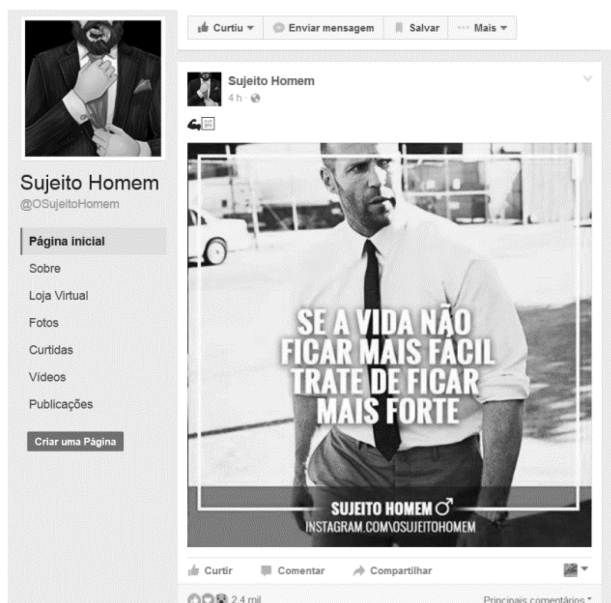


Figure 3: Facebook Page: *Sujeito Homem*.  
Source: Sujeito Homem (2016)



Figure 4: Facebook Page: *Homem Tradicional*.  
Source: Homem Tradicional (2016)

The soldier's pose is inflexible. The armor (Figure 4) and clothes (Figure 3) represent the man's strength. He has the world's responsibilities on his shoulders. He is undaunted (he becomes even stronger) and does not complain (he does not show any pain). Such discourse is materialized by the recurrence of the body's iconographic standards: a stiff pose, head turned to the right, the fixed gaze towards a threat which the viewer does not see (even though these men do so).

Such idealized male beauty (desirable, useful and appreciated) is totally excluding. With very few exceptions, the subject highlighted by these pages is always the same: white, middle-aged, tall, thin and heterosexual. The production of the 'true man' or, according to certain nomenclature, 'the male subject' and the 'traditional man' goes through the restrictive aesthetic of existence with regard to the body, gestures and behavior. In other words, they are "bodies standing vigil".

The production of advertisements directed to the general public is more subtle. Even though they use the same strategies in the production of truth within the discursive plot, humor is included and, thus, everything is allowed. The 2010 publicity campaign of the mobile telecommunications company *Oi*, together with NBC, showed the advertisement *Oi Agenor* favoring the client with a package of free phone minutes. He may use them as he likes. The 30-sec advertisement says:

If you want to remain connected, beware of the wrong chip. You may become Agenor. Agenor is not a popular person. The bonus of his telephone operator limits calls even to his mother's wireline. Only the caller receives up to nine hundred Brazilian reais to make wireline calls or to *Oi* phones. He is free to use the bonus as he likes without any restrictions to a fixed phone. Do not be Agenor, demand *Oi*'s chip and become a caller.<sup>7</sup>

In the previous advertisement of the same series, there was a distinction between people who were *callers* (a privileged condition) and people who were receivers (a non-privilege condition). Agenor<sup>8</sup> (a language trait: the *-or* suffix in Portuguese means the agent of the activity, similar to the English *-er* in *fighter*) is the materialization of perils that Dr. Shryock (1969) also reveals on the demasculinized man. The picture below describes him:

<sup>7</sup> Transcription of the advertisement from COMERCIAL *Oi*... (2010).

<sup>8</sup> The term "receiver", though morphologically referring to the agent, semantically describes a "passive" attitude since it is an answer to a previous action (which depends on the caller). The attribution of dominance to the constitution of maleness is a discursive fact, and thus it is analyzed.





Figure 5: Scene from the advertisement “Oi Agenor”.

Source: COMERCIAL Oi... (2010)

The man’s pose is degraded and the gaze is subjected to the dominating mother who, as the book *On becoming a man* explains, she wears man’s trousers in that family. The “social death” of the historical condition of manhood may be totally turned upside down: Agenor (he is a condition, not the name of the character) merely needs to buy a chip (the advertised product) and he turns into a caller with all the freedom (the word appears once more) and the agency that such an active condition provides him.

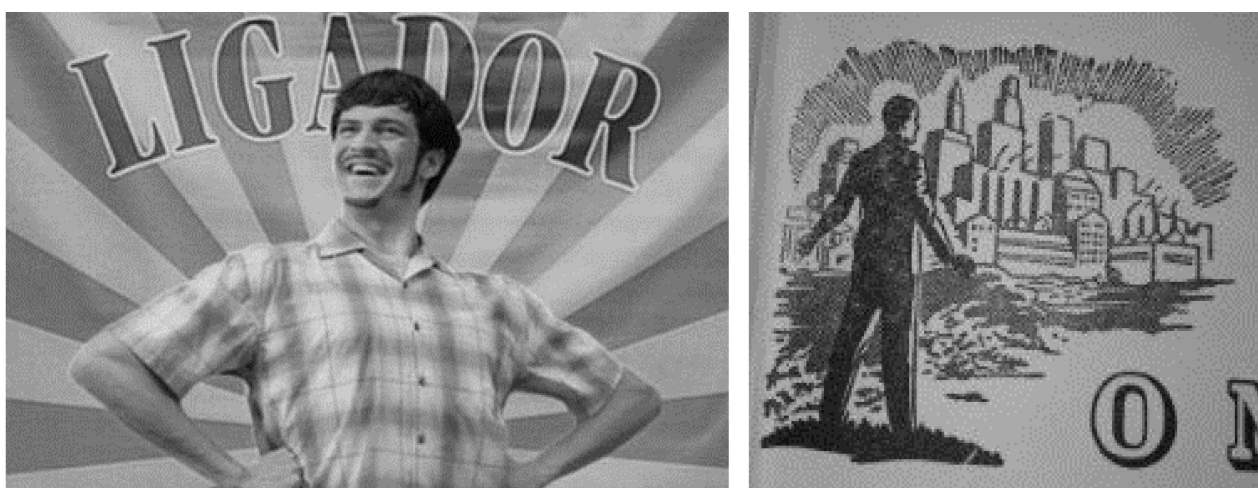


Figure 6: Scene from the advertisement “Oi ligador”

Source: COMERCIAL Oi... (2007)

One interpretation shows certain constants with regard to the posture of the male body in the advertisement and to the “healthy guidelines for young men”. It is a repetitive standard of iconographic elements with a historical composition in so far as man’s gesture is broad and mobilizes all muscular strength to be exerted to the utmost” (THOMASSET, 2013, p. 159). He releases energy

from the body. On the other hand, the female's act is short, repetitive and follows a two-way rhythm, such as harrowing, winnowing, weaving, sewing and others. In classical iconography, the supreme deed – inclusive and harmonious – is undertaken by a male sower and not a female one. Exhibiting the efficiency of his strength, the man lacks rivals. This is what the Bible insists, as Dr. Shryock (1969) repeatedly says: “For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the Church, his body, and is himself its savior” (Ephesians 5:23).

If anyone insists in being Agenor, a loser (who cannot even call his mother on the phone), manly behavior is required (“Be a man!”). Money (the prerogative of freedom) is the first condition that foregrounds maleness.

#### 4 FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

The exclusive discourse of maleness is problematized in the current analysis. Such discourse has been materialized in contemporary Brazilian media practices, which provide and circulate repetitive image patterns. These patterns incorporate factors of the (true) man's corporality, such as the pose and the gaze (from posts from Facebook pages), as regular systems that have historic substance within the strict process in the production of beauty (desirable, useful and appreciated, as Eco (2013) insists).

Disparate fields of knowledge, such as Religion and Medicine (as in the handbook of Dr. Shryock) and the discussion of an economic discourse which features the sale of a product and the good values are associated within the enunciation plot (such as in the publicity campaign of the telecommunications company Oi).

If discourses, as a series of paired enunciations, foreground social practices, the possible effects of the production of the “true man's” subjectivity should be taken into account. One research hypothesis is that, due to the positivity of discourse formations, the conservational paradigm (the tradition design) ruptures perilous discourses due to the Brazilian social and political events. The adjective ‘perilous’ is employed to refer to words and images that somehow support endemic issues such as the aggression of females at home, rape, the murder of homosexuals, the shunning of fat people, and others.

Owing to his interests in analyzing marginalized subjects, Foucault (2005) asks why and at what price have we made every effort in producing a true discourse on the subject that is *not* us. In other words, there is great difficulty in accepting deviant behavior to certain patterns of the correct and the incorrect which tend to be adjusted and normalized until they disappear from sight. One should eliminate the different factor in the name of a regime of hermetic truth with regard to different forms of expression in being (reducing it to one). No one wants to be Agenor, even if for sport's sake.

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