

Volume 36  
issue 3 / 2017

Contracampo e-ISSN 2238-2577  
Niterói (RJ), 36 (3)  
dec/2017-mar/2018

Contracampo – Brazilian Journal of Communication is a quarterly publication of the Graduate Programme in Communication Studies (PPGCOM) at Fluminense Federal University (UFF). It aims to contribute to critical reflection within the field of Media Studies, being a space for dissemination of research and scientific thought.

## Multiple Temporalities: cultural analysis of Figueroas' music videos and performance from the maps of cultural mediations and cultural mutations

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TO REFERENCE THIS ARTICLE, PLEASE USE THE FOLLOWING CITATION:

Gomes, I. M. M.; Santos, T. E. F.; Araújo, C. S. G.; Mota Junior, E. A. Multiple Temporalities: Cultural Analyses Of Figueroas' Videoclips And Performance In Mediations And Mutations Cultural. Daily Photography. Contracampo – Brazilian Journal of Communication, 36(3), pp. 134-153.

Submitted on 29 August 2017 / Accepted on 14 December 2017

DOI – <http://dx.doi.org/10.22409/contracampo.v36i3.1066>

## Abstract<sup>1</sup>

In this article we articulate the maps of cultural mediations and cultural mutations, as proposed by Martín-Barbero (2006; 2009a; 2009b; 2014), in the analysis of the duo Figueroas' performance and music videos. These methodological choices allow us to observe how this product is embedded in a context marked by a techno-communicative environment that challenges temporalities and spatialities, juxtaposing cultural matrices and music references, especially those coming from the North, Northeast and Southeast of Brazil. Figueroas uses mockery and the culture of memes, set in production and consumption strategies characteristic of the Internet, to connect different media genres, among them, *lambada*, *brega* and *guitarrada*.

### Keywords

Temporalities; Spatialities; Media genres; Performance; Figueroas.

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<sup>1</sup> A preliminary version of the discussions in this article was originally presented at the Historicity of Communication Processes - III Meeting of Brazilian Research Groups, held on 16 and 17 May 2016 in the School of Communication of UFRJ, Rio de Janeiro.

## Introduction

A brief look at the Brazilian music scene, beyond the emergence of bands and genres, reveals an intense and pulsating process of transformation in technological and cultural scopes. In a contextual perspective, the contemporary scenario appears to be ideal to analyze ruptures regarding the production, circulation and consumption of music in the country. Although major labels and companies are still powerful on a global level, many alternative mechanisms of production and circulation enable new forms of consumption, especially when we observe the formation of “niche” markets (Trotta & Monteiro, 2008, p. 1). These markets are built from alternative commercial strategies that, through consumption, promote the consumer's identity values and stimulate the circulation of certain products in certain social groups.

In this context, the term “independent music” acquires aesthetic values, designating music genres that operate with more autonomy on the music industry or bands that try to break certain specific formulas of popular music production. Such autonomy is set in a limited distribution framework in local markets which enable “acclaim primarily from their peers” (Trotta & Monteiro, 2008, p. 5).

When we look at the technological and cultural transformations in the Brazilian independent music scene, the specific characteristics of certain media products that appropriate the circulation on social media to quickly spread songs, pictures, memes, and music videos, stand out. The identity reinforcement that these phenomena acquire in their relationship with the internet indicates an important position to observe these transformations, evidenced not only by new forms or formats, but also by other grammars of production and consumption.

Among the various hits that emerged from this scene in recent years, “Lambada Quente”, created by Figueroas, stands out. The duo is formed by keyboardist Dinho Zampier and singer Givly Simons. Organs, keyboards and music programming provide Figueroas' arrangements a certain space-time displacement: in the two albums released by the duo<sup>2</sup>, all tracks composed by them travel

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<sup>2</sup> The albums “Lambada Quente” (2015) and “Swing Veneno” (2017) were released by the label Lajã Records. On its website, Lajã Records presents itself as an *underground* label “casting material by hardcore, punk, grind, crust, power violence and rotten rock bands in general”. Retrieved from: <<http://www.laja.com.br/>>. Access on 24 Aug.. 2017.

through references of “*guitarrada paraense*”<sup>3</sup>, *lambada*<sup>4</sup> songs from the 1980s and 1990s and *brega*<sup>5</sup> styles from Recife that use plenty of programmed keyboards.

Figuerosas gained momentum from the consumption of their video and music from 2014, when they released their first music video, for the song “Lambada para Bangladesh”, which went viral and surpassed 260 thousand views on YouTube<sup>6</sup>. Over time, the duo acquired recognition from the critics, being nominated for the Prize of the Association of Critics of Art of São Paulo (APCA) in the category Best New Artist and also for Multishow Award in the category New Hit, both in 2015. In their journey they went from an amateur band from Alagoas state to gaining status similar to *hype* groups from São Paulo. What calls attention in this transit of circulation are the temporalities and spatialities that juxtapose both global and local ways of doing and seeing.

In this article, we analyze how Figuerosas' performance evokes characteristics of various genres within the context of pop culture. Such elements allow us to discuss temporalities in the framework of Latin America's specific cultural heterogeneity – especially in Brazil's case and its flows between Northeast and Southeast regions –, i.e., by delving into a geographic space marked by conflicts of time in a globalization context. Our gaze is directed towards the ways how certain cultural practices absorb various times in the consumption of a music product, and thus constitute the lived experience mediated by moments of dispute between media culture and folk culture .

Figuerosas' strategy, by evoking elements not only from *lambada*, but also other genres specific to the Brazilian context in their performance, allow us to understand the historicities of communication processes. It means our interest is not only to identify references from the past that shape the construction of a communication phenomenon in a linear and chronological fashion. On the contrary, our effort is to understand the historicities from continued movements of transition, from disputes of meaning and confluence of various time stamps.

In our analytical and theoretical framework, we adopt performance and media genre as methodological concepts in an effort to articulate two analytical approaches formulated by Martín-Barbero (2006; 2009a; 2009b; 2014): the map of

<sup>3</sup> *Guitarrada* is an instrumental Brazilian musical genre that originated in Pará, a state of Brazil, from the fusion of choro with carimbó, cúmbia, merengue, mambo, bolero, the iê-iê-iê movement, among others. The electric guitar is predominantly the soloist. Also called instrumental *lambada*.

<sup>4</sup> *Lambada* is a dance from Pará, Brazil, which became internationally popular in the 1980s, especially in Latin America and Caribbean countries.

<sup>5</sup> *Brega* is a genre of Brazilian popular music also originated from the North and Northeast regions of Brazil. The name is originally pejorative and discriminatory meaning “corny”, “cheesy” or “tasteless”. Two of its biggest icons historically were Reginaldo Rossi and Falcão, the latter following a part of a tradition of humorous *brega*.

<sup>6</sup> About 263 thousand views on 21 August 2017. See <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FEzUgFeYn00>>.

mediations and the map of cultural mutations. The map of mediations will be considered here based on the formulation proposed by Gomes (2011), which places media genre as a cultural category in the center of the map (see Figure 1), articulating relations between cultural matrices, industrial formats, logics of production, and reception/consumption competencies. Moreover, we use the second map by Martín-Barbero (see Figure 2) to analyze the transformations in contemporary society starting from migration and flows in their relation with time and space.

The two maps allow us to articulate historicities and contexts in the analysis of products and communication processes and enhances media genre, placed in the center of the map of mediations, as our main figure of historicity (Goulart *et al.*, 2017). In turn, performance is understood as restored behavior (Schechner, 2006). It allows access to elements of tradition, whereas it “draws attention to what is going on in that situation – and can even establish ruptures in those traditions which they belong” (Cardoso Filho, *et al.*, 2017, p. 2). Therefore, we observe which behaviors and which traditions are referenced by Figueroas and are subject to potential ruptures.

## Theoretical and methodological articulations: maps of cultural mediations and cultural mutations

The cultural criticism we endeavor, in the framework of cultural studies, comprehends an audiovisual text as a material product in largely historical terms. Martín-Barbero is fundamental for this critique for his conception of media genre as a cultural category by considering the contingent and transitional character of genre and the different temporalities it evokes. The map of mediations that the author formulates in the essay *Pistas para entre-ver meios e mediações*<sup>7</sup> and consolidates in the book *Ofício de Cartógrafo* is established on two axes: a diachronic one, between the cultural matrices (CM) and the industrial formats (IF), and a synchronous one, between the logics of production (LP) and the reception or consumption competencies (RC).

The configuration of these two axes allows Martín-Barbero to incorporate a more consistent methodological proposal for he is concerned, from the start, about the heterogeneity of temporalities. For the author, it is essential to understand the historical relationship that marks the passage of cultural matrices to industrial formats. The relationship between matrices and formats shows the “multiplicity of

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<sup>7</sup>Preface written by the author for the fifth Spanish edition of his classic book *Communication, Culture and Hegemony: From the Media to Mediations*.

temporalities, [in] the multiplicity of stories, with their own rhythms and their own logics” (Martín-Barbero, 1995, p. 43). Supported in Williams (1979), Martín-Barbero intends to call attention to the heterogeneity of temporalities experienced by each society or, in other words, to the fact that “in every society there are archaic, residual and emergent cultural formations” (Martín-Barbero, 1995, p. 44).

What is fundamental in Williams' cultural analysis, and is captured by Martín-Barbero for the construction of his map of mediations, is the crucial importance of considering various temporalities in any analysis of culture. The map of mediations consolidates a line of investigation in the communications field, as Martín-Barbero's successful proposal to examine the processes in its entirety, i.e., not only from the point of view of determinations and structures, but also from the practices and everyday appropriations. And the proposal we formulate, that the relations between media, culture, politics and society, articulated in the center of the map, are empirically treated through the methodological concept of genre (GOMES, 2011), is a powerful one.

Figure 1 - Map of Cultural Mediations updated by Gomes (2011)<sup>8</sup>



The four mediations formulated by the author – institutionality, sociability, rituality and technicity – reveal the strength of the notion of communication process, that is complete in this circulation. In our view, genre is a way of understanding the communication process, avoiding “the trap of context analysis that discredit the centrality of products” (Gutmann, 2013, p. 220).

<sup>8</sup> Translation of the map. Box in the middle: Communication, society, culture, politics, gender; From box on the top, clockwise: Logics of production; Technicity; Industrial Formats; Ritualities; Reception Competencies; Sociality; Cultural Matrices; Institutionalidade.

Gomes et al. (2016) argue that we should not consider cultural matrices merely as something that shapes our gaze from the present in relation to a very distant past. If our cultural experience is marked by the processes of mass communication, Gomes et al. (2016) propose considering media matrices for these contemporary products. That means to consider that, in the case of Figuerosas, the way *lambada* and *brega*, whose heyday occurred in the 1980s and 1990s, shape our way of recognizing certain distinctive features of these musical genres, mainly in an experience mediated by Brazilian television.

Among the spheres that shape the diachronic and synchronic axes, are the mediations established around the Matrices, the Formats, the Logics of Production and the Competencies of Reception. The institutionality is a type of mediation imbued of conflicting interests and powers: on one end, the regulation of speeches by the State and, on the other, the continuing efforts of reconstitution of the social by citizens (Martín-Barbero, 2006, p. 18).

With the mediation of sociability, Martín-Barbero (2006) highlights the uses of collective communication established at the moment the matrices are articulated to the forms as the reception handles them. Sociality demonstrates the everyday relationships that people establish with the media, with the media genres and media formats. Here, cultural matrices activate and forge social practices that shape the various reception competencies.

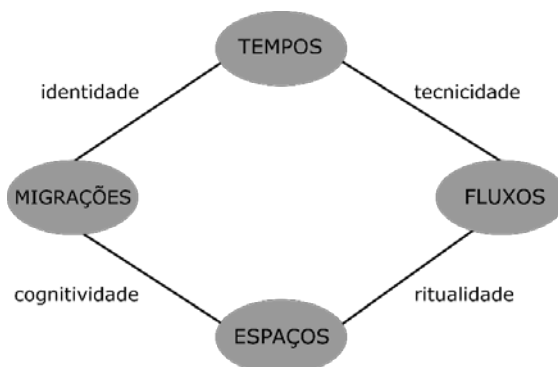
Rituality is the mediation that connects the industrial formats to reception competencies and refers to the symbolic link that underlies all communication: “at the same time repetition and innovation, anchor in memory and open horizon” (Martín-Barbero, 2004, p. 231). In the relationship with reception competencies, rituality requires looking at the different social uses of media and the multiple trajectories of readings, which are always linked to social conditions of taste, family habits of cultural and media consumption, and knowledges built in ethnic, class and gender memories.

Finally, technicity mediates the relationship between the LP and the IF highlighting the innovation capacity of the companies' formats to convene new perceptions and discourses. “Because technicity is rather a matter of perceptive operators and discursive skills than a matter of devices” (Martín-Barbero, 2006, p. 18).

For Martín-Barbero, there is a reinvention of media and genres in the television's interface with the internet, producing what he calls “cross-cultural forms of communication” (Martín-Barbero, 2009b, p. 2). These forms act “transversely” through all media. To question technological transformations in the contemporary context allow us to analyze mediations in the articulations with time and space, and

that's where cultural mutations are inserted. To account for these transformations, Martín-Barbero (2009b) formulates a new map:

Figure 2: Map of cultural mutations<sup>9</sup>



(Martín-Barbero, 2009b, p. 11.)

Martín-Barbero proposes that mediations should be seen as transformations of times and spaces, from two major movements: population migration and flows of images. From the clues left by the author himself, we believe that these migrations should be understood also as displacements that happen in contact with the internet, for example, through communication with people in other parts of the world and the use of avatars, when people assume new identities. The virtual flows (of images and information) must be considered along with migration. The author calls attention to the immersion of subjects in nature and in media institutions, and, in this sense, as we build visibility for us, as subjects, and for others. Martín-Barbero reinforces the sense of an ecosystem, an environment where these flows of images and information transit in a direct relationship with demographic directions.

Besides considering flows and migration, Martín-Barbero brings together two mediations that were already present in his map (2006) – rituality and technicity – in order to give an account of the compression of time and space. In this new map, technicity is associated to identities:

We abandon the instrumental view of the technique and the ideologist view of technology. Technicity is on the same level of identity, collectivity [...]. I connect technicity to what is moving in the direction of identity. For example, the amount of teenagers who invent a character for themselves is impressive (Martín-Barbero, 2009b, p. 9).

In this map, the cultural mediations that Martín-Barbero considers more “traditional” – institutionality and sociability – disappear in order to account for the

<sup>9</sup> Translation of the map. From top circle, clockwise: Times; Technicity; Flows; Rituality; Spaces; Cognitivity; Migrations; Identity.



transformation. Identity is placed, in the map of mutations, between migration and times, strengthening our understanding of migration not only as displacements in the physical space. Our identities are built today, on the one hand, in the relationship we have with other forms of organisation and arrangement of time, in this sharing that forms a niche, convened in products like the Figuerosas, and, on the other hand, in the displacements we make while participating in the collectives, online communities and the construction of avatars.

Technicity – the ways of doing and seeing – is then placed in the map of mediations between times and flows, leading us to allocate the products analysed in the *industrial formats* section, but articulated – being permeated and constituted – by the *flows* of the map of mutations. Understanding, as Martín-Barbero, we live in a techno-communicative environment (2009b, p. 10), we should not perceive the products solely as industrial formats linked to specific media – they extrapolate these media, constituting mixed forms.

Rituality begins to account for the flows between spaces, leading to question the very idea of space – considered not only physical but a result from the articulation with the virtual, including the presence of the flows of images and information. We consume these new products without being attached to television programming, for example, but, still, we see them operate some of the same logics of television.

Finally, cognitiveness is the mutation that highlights that our productions of meaning in this new context come from hypertextual relations that shift the place of the book in the production of knowledge and learning process. A cultural transformation that connects the new ways of knowledge with new ways of feeling, both articulated “with new ways of being together, i.e., the new figures of sociability” (Martín-Barbero, 2014, p.57-58).

In order to understand a product like Figuerosas, it is necessary to operate with various references and cultural matrices, considering several contexts established from the production/ reception/ analysis of this cultural product, using a hypertextual cognitive process. Articulating the two maps, therefore, allows us to observe how the media genres and products, permeated by this techno-communicative environment, articulate different temporalities and spatialities – on both global and local references and cultural matrices – and ways of doing and seeing that change based on cognitive, sensitive and identity transformations.

## Performance, temporalities and spatialities in Figuerosas

We consider performance as a key methodological concept to articulate Martín-Barbero's maps. We use performance for looking at the body in relation to the scene, considering the rituals that shape the body uses and how it evokes historical contextual marks. We share Schechner's view (2006) of performance as a negotiation of culturally constructed characteristics materialized on the bodies exposed in games of sharing between the one who performs and the one who consumes that performance. For the author, performance is determined by the historical and social context, the conventions, the uses and traditions.

Schechner (2006) claims that these performative realities allow new combinations and rearrangements. Thus, they are restored behaviors, units that integrate the one who performs, who executes the action and, when exposed in sociability, aggregate various other selves, because "I" is inserted in a collective environment. Schechner believes that these arrangements carry meanings that should be decoded by those who have knowledge to consume certain acts in context.

For Schechner, everyday actions are built "from known bits of behavior rearranged and shaped in order to suit specific circumstances" (Schechner, 2006, p. 29). In this sense, we understand cultural matrices also as known parts of other behaviors that are important in the analysis of media products such as Figueroas' music videos. Therefore, based on the performance, we observe how the bodies in the scenes articulate contexts and media matrices.

Givly Simons is a thin man, with a big thick moustache, 1970s rock style long hair, wearing sunglasses and tattoos. The duo uses visual elements from brega: short sleeve button-front shirt or folded long sleeve, with two or more buttons open, the same sunglasses characteristic of brega singers such as Reginaldo Rossi and Sidney Magal, and also golden rings, tight pants and sandals.

Figure 3 - Givly Simons and Dinho Zampier, the Figueroas duo



Source: *Lãjá Records*<sup>10</sup>

<sup>10</sup>These and other images can be seen on the duo's Facebook page: <<https://www.facebook.com/figueroaslambadaquente/>>. Access on 28 Aug.. 2017.

We see other examples in the five music videos analyzed<sup>11</sup>. In one of them, “Fofinha”, Givly Simons is on the back of a motorbike, climbing a favela in Rio de Janeiro. We see what happens around him and soon we are surprised by a street show. A singer dressed up with visual elements of brega singers shows up: black vinyl pants, red jacket, rings, mirrored yellow sunglasses. Seconds later, another reference: a woman holding a pink skirt, dancing *lambada* alone. The whole movement of the streets is registered by Simons, who uses plenty of spontaneous framing, always in the tone of an unpretentious and funny record. From the point of view of specialities, there is an attempt, in the video, to show the urban contrasts of Rio de Janeiro, between the famous buildings of Ipanema beach and the favelas on the hills. The singer is in the center of frames that display the favelas without explicitly exploiting them as signs of social exclusion; they are rather there to mark its musical matrices and the brega as an important popular music genre.

“Melô do Jonas”, the most viewed music video by Figueroas, is the excerpt of a television show, and in it the marks of television, of the show and the duo are mixed. The brega, the television regionalism and the musical performances characteristic of Brazilian TV form explicit cultural matrices. The duo performs on the show *Só No Vinil Na TV*, on TV Cinec<sup>12</sup>. The scene on the show builds the context that allows Figueroas' mocking improvisation. The scenarios and the presenter's performance are strongly connected to the characteristics of local programmes that give visibility to music groups of the region. There are vinyl records on the wall and the host wears trousers and a yellow button-front shirt with the first buttons open showing a thick chain on his neck; he wears a black hat tied behind the head with a leopard print scarf, carrying a hoop in his left ear.

The profusion of references and convening of different elements led the Figueroas to be considered *kitsch*<sup>13</sup>. Their performance is characterized by exaggerated elements taken from different media genres. This overlapping gives the

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<sup>11</sup>We analyzed in this article the following music videos: Melô do Jonas (<<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2sM3iEZp1Vo>>), Lambada para Bangladesh (<<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FEzUgFeYn00>>), Fofinha (<<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ewKqcDEtun8>>) and Lomba da Massa (<<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bl-WuG3TnY4>>), all from their first album “Lambada Quente” (2015), and “Boneca Selvagem” (<<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ld3iF3JmZBk>>), from the album “Swing Veneno”, recorded at Red Bull Studios and released by Lãjá Records in 2017. Access on 21 Aug. 2017.

<sup>12</sup>TV Cinec is a web TV channel founded by journalist Rodolfo Estevam. With studios located in the neighborhood of Jabaquara, São Paulo, the web TV channel produces live shows and recorded performances. Further information can be retrieved from: <<http://tvcinec.com.br>> Access on 21 Aug. 2017.

<sup>13</sup>*O Globo* newspaper published an interview with Givly Simons in which the headline addresses Figueroas' “hot kitsch”. Retrieved from: <<http://oglobo.globo.com/cultura/musica/o-kitsch-quente-do-figueroas-16088418>>. Access on 20 Aug. 2017.

music videos humorous features like those present in *Hermes e Renato*<sup>14</sup> TV show – Simons' costumes recall the characterization of the *nonsense* comedy show of the late 1990s Brazilian MTV. Humor is the possible responsible for the viralization of the music video “Melô do Jonas”. The video had an increase of hits after being published in humorous websites, such as *Não Salvo*<sup>15</sup> and *Kibeloco*<sup>16</sup>, confirming the relationship with specific characteristics of production and consumption of the current communication context.

When we approximate technicity and identity, two cultural mutations formulated by Martín-Barbero (2009b), to the discussions concerning the diachronic axis of his map of mediations, we notice that the viralization of memes, videos and excerpts of interviews, is an important cultural form of this new context marked by the internet. Of how we produce and consume products such as Figueroas. Formulating technicity in those terms allows us to observe that the use of the *kitsch* and humor is an important strategy of differentiation in social networks and insertion in a communication environment through references to TV shows, characters and styles shared with television, a very important means of communication in Brazilian culture.

Another noteworthy element to understanding Figueroas is their relationship with the Brazilian *underground* scene. An *underground* product is generally defined as an “authentic work”, “non-commercial product”, and the proximity between conditions of production and of consumption “implies a process of circulation that favours segmented consumption” (Janotti Jr. & Cardoso Filho, 2006, p.12), which leads the audience to dispute values around the authenticity of this type of music.

The disputes surrounding the *underground* in Figueroas' performance are present, for example, in Simon's trajectory in this music scene, the fact that other musicians from the indie scene participate in his albums<sup>17</sup> and the fact they have been released by a label of this niche. It is possible to perceive them still in the duo's association with the so-called “alternative cultural circuit” in some Brazilian

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<sup>14</sup>*Hermes e Renato* was a TV show aired on MTV Brazil between 1999 and 2009. It became known for dirty humor, reproducing scenes from soap operas, music videos, and everyday life, with low cost resources, creating a humor atmosphere especially using plenty of name-calling that normally were not used on broadcast TV stations. Former hosts of *Hermes e Renato* now have a Youtube channel: <<https://www.youtube.com/user/hermeserenatoficial>>. Access on 22 Aug. 2017.

<sup>15</sup>The music video for “Melô do Jonas” was published by *Não Salvo*, blog by Mauricio Cid, known for doing a series of lists with unusual and funny situations on the internet, on 27 March 2015. Retrieved from: <<http://www.naosalvo.com.br/lambada-quente-givly-simons/>>. Access on 04 May 2016.

<sup>16</sup>*Kibeloco*, one of the most visited humor websites, created by Antonio Tabet who is also one of the co-founders of *Porta dos Fundos*, published the above-mentioned music video on 24 March 2015. Retrieved from: <<http://www.kibeloco.com.br/2015/03/24/vergonha-alheia-records-parte-163/>>. Access on 04 May 2016.

<sup>17</sup>The duo's first album was recorded in Costella studios, in São Paulo, and features the song “Gatinha Gatinha”, by Fábio Mazine, from the groups Merda and Mukeka di Rato; co-production by Chuck Hipolito, former MTV VJ and member of the band Vespas Mandarinas; and special appearance by singer Wado, singer from Santa Catarina who lives in Maceió. Mazine also participates on the second album.

cities. In 2016, Figueroas performed along with Strobo band (from Pará state)<sup>18</sup> at Sesc Pompeia, in São Paulo. The band from Pará also makes references to *guitarrada* by performing an experimental sound, merging the technological resources, synthetic and acoustic tones with the funk carioca. Sesc Pompeia established itself as an important core of dissemination of Brazilian alternative music. During the month of August 2017, Figueroas participated in the City Culture Circuit<sup>19</sup> with presentations in three culture centers of the capital.

The indie scene seems to be Figueroas' place of circulation. In the example above, we observe that even when performing in a location that dominates the country's cultural production – São Paulo –, Figueroas does so in relationship with the alternative scene. Although *lambada* and *guitarrada* are among the duo's musical reference, their performances are commonly associated with alternative rock parties and cultural circuits throughout Brazil. The denial and the lack of articulation with the *mainstream* market creates an association with the type of consumption of these cultural spaces. It seems that in such places Figueroas' humorous performance gains meaning by restoring the references of the Brazilian *lambada* and building a relationship with a niche market.

Figueroas carries elements which explicit the relationship with rock music, such as the visual references that refer to the years 1960s and 1970s. The name, Figueroas, is another reference to the genre: Simons met Jesus Figueroa, Uruguayan musician who, according to him, “released a few very obscure rock and blues records in the 1970s” (Araújo, 2014). In addition, Simons began his singing career in *indie rock*, with references to the 1960s' rock music:

I formed the rock band to do a 1960s type of sound, but people did not understand the 1960s sound. [...] I used to say that the band was indie rock, but as the songs were all mine the only influence was 1960s music. We took photos with leather jackets but it was only mise-en-scène because I saw it would sell (Araújo, 2014).

The reference to rock is also present on the cover of Figueroas' first album, “Lambada Quente”, alluding to Raul Seixas<sup>20</sup> album “Krig-ha Bandolo”. The

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<sup>18</sup>Retrieved from: <<http://www1.folha.uol.com.br/saopaulo/2016/02/1738925-mostra-prata-da-casa-2016-leva-shows-de-ze-pi-e-figueroas-ao-sesc-pompeia.shtml>>. Access on 22 Aug. 2017.

<sup>19</sup>Information retrieved from: <<http://spcultura.prefeitura.sp.gov.br/evento/32118/>>. Access on 22 Aug. 2017.

<sup>20</sup>On the cover of the album “Krig-ha Bandolo”(1973), Raul Seixas appears in a black background, shirtless and with arms open and raised, showing his tattoos. The cover was designed by Aldo Luiz, Raul Seixas, Paulo Coelho, Edith Wisner and Adalgisa Rios. On the cover of “Lambada Quente”, instead of the black background, we see a red background, with Givly Simons explicitly reproducing the same pose as Raul Seixas. The cover of Raul Seixas' album can be seen at: <<http://bit.ly/2wC7Szl>> and Figueroas' one at: <<http://bit.ly/2wlp1xG>>. Access on 22 Aug. 2017.

associations caused in our imagery memory with the rock of Seixas appear in the psychedelic music video for “Lomba da Massa”, recorded using *chroma-key*, in reference to the music videos made by the rocker from Bahia on Fantástico TV show<sup>21</sup>.

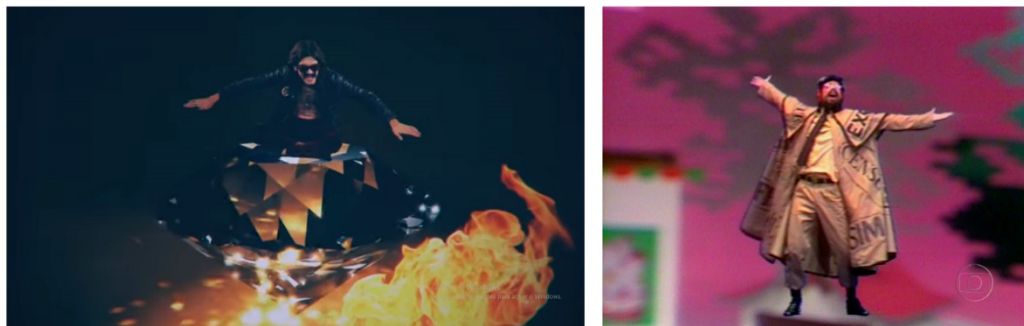


Figure 4 - Images captured from the videos “Lomba da Massa”, by Figueroas, and “O Carimbador Maluco”, by Raul Seixas, first presented on Fantástico on 17th July 1983.

There are also references to the film industry, such as the famous scene from the movie *American Beauty* (2000), in which the character Angela Hayes, played by actress Mena Suvari, lies in a bed covered in rose petals. In “Fofinha”, the video starts with Simons lying, in a “sweet” pose, on a bed covered with a red blanket that refers to that scene. When we combine the two scenes (see Figure 5<sup>22</sup>), it seems Simons mocks the mainstream industry: using exaggerated imitation and the display of the thin body that challenges the body patterns constructed as beauty reference on the movie.



Figure 5 - “Fofinha”, by Figueroas, alongside the classic scene from *American Beauty*.

<sup>21</sup>The music video for “Carimbador Maluco” was produced for the children's special *Pluct! Plact! Zum!* (1983), on Globo TV channel. It aired on July of the same year on Fantástico TV show. The music video is available on the network's website at: <<http://globo.com/rede-globo/plunct-plact-zum/v/raul-seixas-canta-o-carimbador-maluco-em-plunct-plact-zum/1132329/>>. Access on 22 Aug. 2017.

<sup>22</sup>Screenshot from “Fofinha” captured from the music video at minute 01:44. Screenshot from *American Beauty* is available at: <[http://obviousmag.org/cinema\\_pensante/2016/04/beleza-americana-e-a-nossa-sociedade-do-nada-e-o-que-aparenta-ser.html](http://obviousmag.org/cinema_pensante/2016/04/beleza-americana-e-a-nossa-sociedade-do-nada-e-o-que-aparenta-ser.html)>. Access on 22 Aug. 2017.

The various aesthetic references appearing in Figueroas' music videos seem to point to one more mockery, this time, in the form of the making of music videos. The language of the music video, whose narrative is constructed by the combination of sound and video, is broken by the amateur style of the scenes. The intention of creating a clumsy and funny scene has a strong presence in these products and shows how the duo attempts to articulate strategies of viralization, in a way that disputes hegemonic aesthetic values of production and consumption of music videos, evoking various temporalities, from the chroma keys of Raul Seixas time to the memes of nowadays.

Another source for analyzing the performance of the group is the television programmes where Figueroas performs. We see that Simon seems to dispute conventions and rituals of the body on television while there is plenty of mockery in his music videos<sup>23</sup>. We observe the way he approaches the camera, the fact that he does not follow patterns of movement on stage, at the same time he references other matrices, especially of the acts that used to be presented on variety shows like Chacrinha – such as Sidney Magal<sup>24</sup> and Beto Barbosa<sup>25</sup>. In his performances, Simons makes a point of not following the *playback* and simulating a live musical performance<sup>26</sup>.

In the group's performance there is still a reinforcement of sensuality, but a sensual gesture that seems to move away from those present in performances like those of Magal or Beto Barbosa, who explored the body through dance and rhythm. Unlike that sexy body that explores the rhythmic possibilities of lambada, Simons' body reinforces a non conventional dance. The lambada of the 1980s and 1990s works as a cultural matrix, and appears in the Figueroas' performance through humor.

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<sup>23</sup>We anticipated above some of the appropriations that Figueroas makes of cultural marks from television and music programmes to analyse the excerpt of their participation in the *Só No Vinil Na TV*, TV Cinec, São Paulo. This excerpt was transformed into the music video "Melô do Jonas".

<sup>24</sup>Sidney Magal is a Brazilian singer and actor who was a hit between the 1970s and 1990s, with romantic and sexy music and mixed elements from latin music, gypsy music, disco and *lambada*. The singer was frequently seen on music TV shows such as Chacrinha and Silvio Santos and his songs became theme songs of many Globo TV soap operas. Some of his videos can be seen on YouTube. One of the classic versions of "Meu Sangue Ferve por Você" can be accessed on: <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ER11JqZBigw>> For "Sandra Rosa Madalena", a classic reference, see: <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vbezB-fiFYo>>. And for a milestone of Brazilian *lambada*, song "Me Chama Que Eu Vou", theme song of soap opera Rainha da Sucata, Globo TV, 1990, see: <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wyi9XfepIvI>>. The vintage photos we found on his official website give a good dimension of the performance, gestures and the imaginary incorporated by the Figueroas, available at: <<http://www.sidneymagal.com.br/>>. See also his page on Facebook at: <<https://www.facebook.com/magalsidney>>.

<sup>25</sup>Beto Barbosa is a Brazilian singer-songwriter who became known as *King of Lambada* during the 1980s and 1990s. He is author of various *lambada* hits such as "Adocica", song from the album with the same name which sold three million copies, besides other hits like "Preta" and "Beijinho na Boca". He also participated on game shows such as Chacrinha, Clube do Bolinha and Sabadão Sertanejo. For performances of "Adocica" at the Brazilian Golden Globes, see: <[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I5x0IsT\\_5kg](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I5x0IsT_5kg)>. The version of "Preta", also from the Golden Globes, can be seen at: <[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=\\_M64XpIpB5k](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_M64XpIpB5k)>.

<sup>26</sup>We use as example Figueroas' performance on Programa do Ratinho TV show, where, on 16 April 2015, the duo explicit presented some of these characteristics.

Regarding the sound, unlike the lambada of the 1980s and 1990s that explored the voice of singers along with melodic bases created on electronics keyboards, we see that Figueroas gives more room for instrumental experiments and more importance to *solos* as main part of the song. In the song “Lambada para Bangladesh”, the use of keyboards, played by Zampier, leads us to the emphasis which the instrument had in songs from brega style, such as in Amado Batista, Gilliard, and Wando. The guitar also gains importance, bringing the reference to the *guitarrada*, emphasized in interviews. On one hand, the predominance of keyboards and guitars in “Lambada para Bangladesh”, in particular, paves the way to the sensual body performance, the gestures, the steps, the swing and the dance as a playful expression of the latin sensuality incorporated by Brazilian *brega* singers like Sidney Magal; on the other hand, it is a caricature of the song, in which the relationship between the verse and the sound loses any ambition of complexity and it is focused on the chorus.

Figueroas is part of a context marked by the movement of musicians located outside the axis of circulation Rio-São Paulo, who stand out in the independent market from the reconfiguration, in their songs, of familiar elements of other popular genres. We refer to names like Felipe Cordeiro (from Pará state)<sup>27</sup> and Bonde do Rolê (from Paraná state)<sup>28</sup>. The first one carries an experimental tone, appropriating the traditional music from Pará to consolidate the novelty character. While Bonde do Rolê evokes *funk carioca*<sup>29</sup> to operate the dirty humor in completely *nonsense* songs. The group appeared on MySpace and became very popular among youngsters. It explores an unpretentious and dirty tone, touching subjects like homoaffectivity of famous characters (“arriba, arriba, James Bond is a diva”) or using scatological themes in their songs. Bonde do Rolê, considered an indie band, makes a saire in relation with the *funk carioca*'s *proibidão* (meaning prohibited), songs of the genre that explore explicit content. This disengagement between sounds and performances challenges hegemonic characteristics of the *funk carioca*

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<sup>27</sup>Felipe Cordeiro is a musician from Pará who became famous as of 2011. His songs are well known by the public of the indie scene, and seek a rereading of *guitarrada*. In his performances, he uses colorful visuals, both in music videos and his printed shirts similar to those used by Givly Simons. Unlike Simons, his performance is more contained and focused on the music composition, as we see in the music video for “Problema Seu”, available at: <[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z0V5kQXt\\_Ac](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z0V5kQXt_Ac)>. Felipe Cordeiro is son of Manoel Cordeiro, also a musician, music researcher and cultural producer from the Amazon region, responsible for various records in the region during the 1970s and 1990s, such as Beto Barbosa. Considered one of the masters of *guitarrada*, Manoel plays guitar on Figueroas' album “Swing Veneno” for the song “Boneca Selvagem”, whose music video is analyzed in this article.

<sup>28</sup>Bonde do Rolê is a musical trio from Paraná state that mix rock *samples* with funk carioca beats. Characterized as an *indie* band, the group started mixing international rock hits such as “Rock You Like a Hurricane”, by The Scorpions, with funk beats. On the album “With Lasers”, released in 2007, the group explored lyrics with scatological and curse words content. To see “Marina Gasolina” on YouTube, access: <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2QHt3WCHUGc>>.

<sup>29</sup>



sound as well as of the bodies of its interpreters and its audience, as does Figueroas with *brega* and lambada.

## Final considerations

When approximating the two maps created by Martín-Barbero, taking the Figueroas' performance as object of investigation, we observed how this cultural product articulates temporalities and contexts, reinforcing our methodological choice for the analysis of communication products and processes. The media genres, then, placed in the center of the map, are our main figures of historicities. It is from the genres that we can grasp what Martín-Barbero calls cultural matrices. In that case, we can observe the operation of broader matrices of the *brega*, the latinity, the Northeast region identity and rock, in the construction of Figueroas' performance.

However, for us, the notion of cultural matrices seems to be, in Martín-Barbero's work, matrices of a culture that operates "before" or "outside" the media culture, at the same time it constitutes the diachronic axis of the map of mediations as a relationship between Cultural Matrices and Industrial Formats that translates the relationship between media culture and folk culture (in Martín-Barbero's terms, as matrices of folk culture that are present in the configuration of media culture products)<sup>30</sup>.

On the framework of the investigations developed by the Centre of Research in Cultural Studies and Transformations in Communication (TRACC)<sup>31</sup>, we explore the hypothesis of considering cultural matrices are already mediatic as they are built in the historical process of consolidation of media culture or what Martín-Barbero, in his most recent work, calls techno-communicative environment. That justifies considering media cultural matrices: the configuration of media products (or industrial formats) today takes into account cultural matrices forged in the very relationship with media culture (with television, cinema, popular music, popular culture, etc) as analysed by Gomes *et.al.* (2016). In Figueroas case, there is the

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<sup>30</sup> In his argument about the diachronic axis of the Map of Mediations (the relationship between Cultural Matrices and Industrial Formats), Jesús Martín-Barbero develops a fundamental hypothesis that media culture is necessarily produced from an articulation with values from folk culture. In that sense, a given media product – say, a soap opera – is produced based on recovering, evoking and resignifying values and practices that have their origin in the melodrama. According to the author, the relationship between Cultural Matrices and Industrial Formats, refers to the story of how melodrama came from theater to feuilleton, then to the novel, to the radio drama, and finally to the soap opera, articulating folk memory to the bourgeois imaginary and demonstrating the ambiguities and complexities in the relation between folk culture and media culture.

<sup>31</sup>Part of the Graduate Program in Communication and Contemporary Culture of the Federal University of Bahia. See more at: <<http://tracc-ufba.com.br/>>

use of media culture matrices from different temporalities and spatialities – local, regional, global, “glocal”, past and present, past-present, present-present –, in their production of “Lambada Quente”.

Concerning the context, we highlight an important methodological operation. Our analysis does not seek to draw in advance a political, economic, social or cultural context in which Figueroas would be inserted. In analyzing the diachronic axis of the map, we avoided any ambition for a chronological review of all the media / television / music history that could be imposed on our research object.

Our context is an analytic operation: it is a result of our look at the object, at what the products evoke. Context, for us, in this scenario, is precisely what allows us to understand Figueroas' characteristic mockery – what it evokes as cultural and historical matrices, in their relationship with the *brega* (in terms of performance, sound, and creation of their audiovisual proposals in the mockery of the very form of the music video). It is our gaze to Figueroas that “triggers” the context. By looking at Figueroas, Sidney Magal emerges as a cultural matrix and the romantic, sensual, and dancing lambada appears as a historical context. By looking at Figueroas we recognize that we too, analysts, are inserted in the possible sharing of times and spaces.

Sidney Magal, among other matrices referenced by Figueroas, in this case, articulates the symbolic link that underlies all their communication: as stated by Martín-Barbero, “at the same time repetition and innovation, anchor in memory and open horizon” (Martín-Barbero, 2006, p. 231). Our relationship with Figueroas, therefore, is anchored in memory and their rhythms and forms, their scenarios of interaction and repetition. The multiple reading trajectories that they evoke are always linked to social conditions of taste, habits of cultural and media consumption, and knowledges built – and shared – in ethnic, class or gender memory.

Following Martín-Barbero's claim that we should look at the cultural mutations and pay attention to mediations such as migration and flows, the effort here is to understand the transformations of time and space. And, in the Figueroas case, migrations represent more than demographic displacements. Displacements, in this context, require to expand its geographical meaning to validate information movements that circulate and are consumed by the subjects in relation with the world of the internet. The new map, which articulates time, space, migration and flows is, for Martín-Barbero, a clue to investigate the transformations of time and space. A clue that we glimpse in approaching Figueroas as the connection of technicity effectively as a reorganizer of our social experience, and technology as an element of articulation of the North and Northeast migration towards South,

reversing the direction of flow of images from Rio and São Paulo to the other states. Besides effectively showing that the mockery takes advantage of a scenario marked by flows of memes and the constitution of a specific niche, in relationship with the underground scene, which consumes and identifies with products like Figueroas.

The approach to “Lambada Quente” through the map of mutations made us realize the relations with technicity, which moves in the direction of identities. It seems that Givly Simons is an example for dealing with the invention of characters for themselves, one of the mechanisms that articulates identities in the online scenario.

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