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Original Article

PEDAGOGIES OF MASCULINITIES IN BODILY PRACTICES: POSSIBLE DIALOGUES BETWEEN DISCURSIVE AND DECOLONIAL STUDIES

PEDAGOGIAS DAS MASCULINIDADES NAS PRÁTICAS CORPORAIS: DIÁLOGOS POSSÍVEIS ENTRE ESTUDOS DISCURSIVOS E DECOLONIAIS

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ABSTRACT
This article proposes a theoretical rapprochement between Foucauldian discursive studies and decolonial approaches, with the aim of analysing discursive and pedagogical devices that operate in the production of masculinities within bodily practices linked to the physical education field. Drawing on a critical attitude informed by the archaeogenealogical method and decolonial thought, the study investigates and offers reflections on the constitution of modes of 'being a man', by intersecting discursive practices that produce gendered body-subjects. By focusing on the strategic function of these devices, the article identifies points of convergence in the inflection between the two epistemological frameworks, contributing to critical readings of modes of existence and embodiment in contemporary contexts. Within this horizon, the importance of queer, insurgent, and decolonial pedagogical practices is reaffirmed – practices that are open to difference and to plural possibilities of the bodies.
Keywords: Gender. Masculinities. Physical education. Queer pedagogy. Decoloniality.

RESUMO
Este artigo propõe uma aproximação teórica entre as abordagens dos estudos discursivos foucaultianos e dos estudos decoloniais, com o objetivo de analisar dispositivos discursivos e pedagógicos que operam na produção de masculinidades em práticas corporais vinculadas ao campo da educação física. A partir de uma atitude crítica informada pelo método arqueogenealógico e pelo pensamento decolonial, o estudo investiga e propõe reflexões sobre a constituição de modos de 'ser homem', interseccionando práticas discursivas que produzem corpos-sujeitos generificados. Ao focalizar a função estratégica desses dispositivos, o artigo identifica pontos de convergência na inflexão entre as duas abordagens epistemológicas, contribuindo para leituras críticas a respeito dos modos de existência e corporificação na contemporaneidade. Nesse horizonte, reforça-se a importância de práticas pedagógicas *queer*, insurgentes, decoloniais – abertas à diferença e à pluralidade dos corpos.
Palavras-chave: Gênero. Masculinidades. Educação física. Pedagogia queer. Decolonialidade.

Introduction

Bodily practices, often associated with health, education, and the shaping of subjects, are crossed by devices of power and knowledge that operate through markers of social differentiation such as gender, race, sexuality, class, among others. Particularly within the field of physical education, these practices have historically contributed to the production of normative masculinities, that is, those aligned with ideals of strength, virility, and discipline. Such normativities, however, do not emerge in isolation: they are sustained by discursive and institutional arrangements that shape bodies and their (im)possibilities of existence. Considering these conditions, this article focuses on the effects of power associated with discursive and pedagogical gender devices in the education of 'masculine' bodies – that of men

and boys – with emphasis on bodily practices, specifically those situated in school and sporting contexts.

Through this analytical lens, we propose to articulate two theoretical strands which, although sharing critical concerns, are rarely brought into systematic dialogue: Foucauldian discursive studies and decolonial studies. Thus, motivated by dialogues surrounding data from an ongoing research project, this study emerges from the authors' concerns situated at the intersection of these two strands, which may be synthesised in the following question: what are the limits within which these theoretical approaches may be brought into dialogue to analyse the constitution of masculinities in educational contexts, particularly in relation to bodily practices within the domain of physical education? We acknowledge that this question is inscribed within a broader movement of critique against hegemonic forms of knowledge and subjectivity production, whose genealogy may be traced to cultural studies – a shared field of inquiry between the authors and the basis from which the issues explored in this study are conceived.

In discussing the articulation between culture and power, Stuart Hall[1], for instance, had already pointed to the need to understand how meanings are produced and contested within specific historical contexts. Put differently, Hall emphasised the necessity of grasping the cultural and dynamic dimension of relations as a terrain of symbolic dispute. This perspective, foundational to cultural studies, contributes to an understanding of culture as a situated discursive practice that participates in the constitution of identities and subjectivities. By recognising that meanings are not fixed but constantly negotiated amid power relations, cultural studies establish a new epistemological *ethos* that is particularly relevant for thinking about how bodies are educated, performed, and regulated within pedagogical contexts. In this regard, both discursive and decolonial studies draw upon this critical matrix to investigate the regimes of truth that produce masculinities, especially in contexts where the body is simultaneously object and vehicle of normative and insurgent knowledges.

Discursive studies have offered powerful tools for understanding how subjects are constituted through relations of language, knowledge, and power. The Foucauldian notion of 'device'[2,3], for instance, enables the analysis of historical arrangements that regulate bodies and produce subjectivities. When expanded by authors such as Judith Butler, Teresa de Lauretis, and Paul Preciado, this notion brings into question gender, sexuality, and even the materiality of bodies as effects of discursive practices. In the field of education, such contributions have been fundamental for thinking about how bodies are taught to perform gender, desire, and belonging.

On the other hand, decolonial studies – driven by authors such as Aníbal Quijano, Catherine Walsh, and Walter Mignolo – shift the critique of Western normativity to include the colonial dimensions of the constitution of the modern subject. By denouncing that categories such as gender, race, and class are coextensive with the 'modern-colonial project', these authors highlight how colonial difference is discursively produced and materialised in bodies, territories, and knowledges. Lugones[4,5], for example, proposes the concept of the 'modern/colonial gender system' to demonstrate how coloniality imposed a binary and hierarchical matrix upon colonised populations, dismantling subjective and collective organisational forms that escaped European logic. Concepts such as this make it possible, for instance, to conceive decolonial pedagogical actions through which gender and sexuality may be questioned and denaturalised within bodily practices[6].

Nonetheless, the rapprochement between these two theoretical strands is not without tension. While discursive studies tend to operate with analytical categories that privilege language and regimes of truth, decolonial studies call for an ontological and epistemic critique

that questions the very foundations of modern rationality. However, as suggested by Neves and Gregolin[7], it is possible to identify points of convergence between these approaches, particularly when analysing how knowledges, powers, and subjectivities are produced and hierarchised. The archaeogenealogical attitude, in this sense, may be expanded by a decolonial inflection that allows pedagogical and discursive gender devices to be situated as historical effects of racialisation, cisgendering, and the naturalisation of violence.

Thus, by analysing the functioning of discursive and pedagogical devices that operate in the production of masculinities within school and sporting bodily practices, this study materialises an effort to bring together two theoretical fields committed to critiquing hegemonic forms of knowledge and subjectivity production. Physical education, as a privileged space for the shaping of bodies, offers fertile ground for such analysis. As demonstrated by Louro[8,9] and Ahmed[10], pedagogy is not confined to formal schooling but is manifested in everyday practices that orient affects, gestures, and modes of being. Thinking of physical education as a device for educating bodies therefore entails recognising its normalising potential, but also its capacity to produce fissures, misalignments, and disidentifications – movements that may open space for pedagogies that foster freer, more affective existences committed to social justice.

It is important to note that the analysis developed here recognises that masculinities are constituted within societies structured by historical relations of power that secure structural privileges for men within the patriarchal order. Through the dialogue intended, the article aligns itself with approaches that foreground how devices of gender and sexuality regulate bodies, bodily practices and subject positions, producing hierarchies, exclusions and asymmetries. If, at certain points, the focus turns to experiences that reveal suffering, tension or conflict lived by men in educational contexts, this does not entail a shift in the analytical axis towards a narrative of male victimhood, nor does it obscure the historically inherited benefits accrued to men. Rather, the aim is to demonstrate that the very devices that sustain privilege also enact normative forms of violence and oppression upon those who structurally benefit from them, that is, the so-called 'masculinity crisis' can be interpreted as a context of disputes and tensions. The problematisation proposed here therefore does not seek to re-centre manhood as a privileged object of knowledge, but to contribute to fostering debate on inclusive masculinities within gender studies, in dialogue with agendas emerging from the feminist political field, as well as to question the normative frameworks that organise social life, thereby opening space for more critical and non-normative formative practices in physical culture.

Pedagogy of masculinity in body practices

Studies on men and masculinities emerged in academic literature during the 1990s, when socially experienced male privileges and patriarchal oppression began to be discussed not only as affecting women, but also men themselves. Feminist and homosexual movements of the 1970s made significant contributions to this debate, particularly by positing masculinity as a social construct[11]. As Medrado and Lyra[12] highlight, these studies sought to understand phenomena related to men's experiences and the multiple masculinities present in both local and global contexts, based on their historical, cultural, social, and linguistic constitution. The emergence of these studies was also driven by the recognition that masculinities form part of the relational dimension of gender, concerning men's relationships with other men and, especially, with women, as well as possessing an institutional dimension, referring to the construction of masculinities through relations and institutional devices of power[12].

According to Bento[13], research on men and masculinities continues to seek broader recognition and legitimacy within the field of human and social sciences, whose hegemony

remains focused on issues concerning women and femininity, thereby marginalising approaches to masculinities. In the field of education, Brito and Leite[14] echo this view, emphasising that research on men and masculinity also strives for wider consolidation within the extensive academic production of gender studies. For these authors, gender studies could pay closer attention to the education of boys and young men, and to pedagogical practices aimed at deconstructing so-called toxic masculinity. However, fostering such approaches requires a rupture with epistemic devices that sustain both sexism and machismo as technologies of power, which in turn implies questioning, to some extent, the limits imposed by the very domain of knowledge inherent to the constitution of the field of gender studies.

Harmful modes of 'being a man', often associated with what Raewyn Connell describes as hegemonic masculinity, have been socially denounced as affecting people as a whole. In this context, education within a truly democratic society, committed to reducing inequalities, must not focus solely on girls and women ideologically subjugated by machismo, but also on toxic masculinities, which are products of the same machismo[15], as extensions of sexist policies. By shifting the gaze towards how such masculinities affect others – namely subaltern masculinities such as those that are homoaffective, black, indigenous, or peripheral – space is opened for a critique that not only denounces machismo as practice, but also sexism as structure. When embodied in pedagogical practices, this critique may become a tool for destabilising colonial regimes of knowledge, calling upon educators and researchers to reimagine the links between body, language, and power.

Within this horizon, it becomes pertinent to distinguish between machismo as a practice and sexism as a structure. Machismo manifests in everyday behaviours, attitudes, and discourses that diminish women and gender dissidents, operating as a socially learned and reiterated practice – akin to an institution, in the sense proposed by Foucault[3]. Sexism, on the other hand, refers to the structural framework that sustains and legitimises such practices, shaping institutions, policies, and bodies of knowledge that naturalise gender inequalities. This distinction is essential to understanding how harmful elements embedded in qualities deemed 'typical of masculinities' emerge as concrete expressions of a sexist structure, reinforcing patterns of domination, emotional repression, and both symbolic and physical violence. In this regard, hegemonic masculinity, as theorised by Connell[16], functions as a normative model that delineates legitimate ways of 'being a man', marginalising alternative masculinities and discriminating against other gender identities and expressions. Pedagogically, it is therefore necessary to denaturalise these practices and structures, fostering educational spaces that encourage critical reflection, active listening, and the plurality of gender expressions – including the multiple articulations of masculine identity.

To conceptualise gender pedagogies, and specifically masculinities pedagogies, entails engaging in systemic, relational, situated, and nuanced debates and analyses, as exemplified by studies such as those by Meyer[17], Mulley and Epstein[18], Reyno-Freundt *et al.*[19], and Reese, *et al.* [20] among others. In this context, and with regard to the foundational principles that inform possible frameworks for masculinities pedagogies within bodily practices, it is crucial to recognise the importance of valuing diversity, critically examining normative gender and sexuality devices, and promoting bodily practices that embrace diverse modes of existence. Accordingly, concrete pedagogical objectives include: (a) deconstructing gender stereotypes in physical education classes; (b) creating spaces for dialogue on meanings attributed to masculinity and femininity and how these are perceived by students; and (c) providing ongoing teacher training to address gender-based and sexual violence. Strategies such as facilitated discussion circles, critical analysis of sports media, collaborative bodily practices, and the inclusion of dissident narratives can bring these principles into everyday school and sporting

contexts. Such actions render visible the transformative potential of this approach, aligning with an education committed to social justice and the pluralisation of ways of being – which necessarily encompasses the lived experiences of men and their masculinities.

As hooks[21;27] affirms, "men of all ages need environments in which their resistance to sexism is reaffirmed and valued", in order to contribute to the transformation of power structures, including those of gender. In this sense, it is inevitable to associate the notion of toxic masculinity with modes of bodily education present in physical education. Bodily and sporting practices have historically been linked to the construction of masculine bodies, for instance, as a means of forging strong, virile, and robust subjects, disseminating processes that hierarchise more and less legitimate ways of 'being a man'[22]. The historical construction of Brazilian masculinity is clearly connected to physical education and sport, as well delineated by Miskolci[23]. According to the author, between the turn of the nineteenth century and the early twentieth century, the rise of sport was directly related to the end of slavery and the need to valorise labour, since a society focused on work activities regards sedentarism and idleness as major threats. Consequently, time outside of work came to be disciplined and governed by utilitarian values.

In that Brazilian context, physical education – still referred to as 'Gymnastics' – entered schools in the late nineteenth century, initially directed only at boys, propagating eugenic ideals and justified by the influence of militarism, which advocated for the construction of healthy and strong boys and young men[24].

> There was an emphasis on physical education as a means of distancing adolescents – particularly those from elite backgrounds – from masturbation and relationships with other men. It was as though the construction of a "healthy" body also entailed the construction of a socially responsible morality, as made evident in the reflections of Rui Barbosa, a staunch advocate for the expansion of physical education throughout the entire educational system[25;5].

Contemporarily, we continue to encounter remnants of ideologies that, in addition to being eugenicist and hygienist, may also be classified as masculinist. Numerous studies indicate that the ideal of 'being a man' remains deeply embedded in school-based physical education classes[26,27], reinforcing hegemonic masculinity as theorised by Connell. According to the author, sport is a highly present and significant instance in the process of embodying hegemonic masculinity, as it influences the formation of boys and young men towards a singular model of 'being a man', even though few actually attain this ideal. Sporting practices, for this social scientist, are gender-segregated and male-dominated, in which the strongest and most capable enjoy some prestige within social contexts. Success in bodily practices, Connell[16;144] argues, is almost as important to men as the exercise of sexuality and,

> during adolescence, the embodiment of masculinity takes on new forms and begins to resemble adult models. However, this does not, in any way, imply a standardised process that follows a predetermined path. In fact, bodily practices – such as sexual encounters and organised sport – become key means of differentiation among boys and young men, and spaces for the production of both hegemonic and subordinate masculinities.

We then mobilise the Foucauldian notion of device to engage with the categories of gender and masculinity throughout this text as, for Foucault[3], a device refers to strategies, architectural arrangements, regulations, and general enunciations mobilised by discursive and non-discursive practices traversed by relations of knowledge and power. According to the

philosopher, a device may be understood "as a type of formation which, at a given historical moment, had as its principal function to respond to an urgency. The device therefore has a dominant strategic function." [3;362]

Recent research on school-based physical education demonstrates how toxic/hegemonic masculinity, operated through pedagogical and discursive gender devices, proves harmful within classroom spaces. It negatively affects the participation of girls, boys whose identities diverge from normative conceptions of masculinity, LGBTI+ students, and even the relationships with teachers[28-30]. In this regard, it is imperative that both schools and the broader field of education develop educational strategies that promote healthier masculinities within society. Within this scenario, we advocate for a pedagogy of masculinities that re-signifies the toxic meanings of 'being a man' towards paths that reject violence, authoritarianism, and domination – aiming for a society (including schools and physical education) with men who are more balanced, respectful, and free to express emotions and feelings.

By bringing sport into this debate – another bodily practice crossed by the effects of such devices in the production of masculinities –, we understand it to have historically constituted one of the principal spaces for the production and reproduction of toxic/hegemonic masculinity. Particularly in football, this production can be observed both on the pitch, among players, and in the stands. Supporters frequently reproduce codes of belonging marked by racism, homophobia, and sexism. This reveals masculinity itself functioning as a device within the context of football, as a space of male circulation and domination that is hostile to difference[30]. In this sense, it is worth noting the regularity, even among football players, of public statements that reiterate misogyny, homophobia, and various forms of violence – as exemplified by the recent convictions of players Robinho and Daniel Alves for rape.

Nonetheless, fissures have begun to emerge in relation to masculinities within sport. In Brazil and other contexts, movements have arisen that challenge toxic/hegemonic masculinity and highlight disputes over the meaning of 'being a man'. These include the visibility of non-heterosexual players in volleyball, the presence of men in artistic swimming – a discipline strongly associated with 'femininity' – as well as the growth of amateur football and volleyball leagues organised by gay, bisexual, and trans men, which foster alternative and less violent forms of sociability[31].

Thus, we observe that different devices intersect and complement one another in what may be recognised as the device of masculinity. Within these intersections, bodily practices are contested and reconfigured as spaces of intervention upon bodies, challenging the monopoly of toxic/hegemonic masculinity by creating spaces of recognition for other ways of living and expressing the 'masculine'. From this analytical standpoint, sport ceases to be merely a territory for reproducing normative and toxic masculine order and becomes a possible site for contestation, dialogue, and the invention of other masculinities. In this regard, we understand the dialogue between discursive and decolonial studies as one among several that foster and strengthen this condition of alternative invention of masculinities, particularly within bodily practices in physical education.

Dialogues between discursive and decolonial studies: in what terms are possible?

It is notable that analyses grounded in Foucauldian thought continue to offer powerful tools for problematizing the gendering of bodies and subjectivities nowadays, contributing significantly to the fields of gender studies, masculinities, sexuality, and bodily education. However, epistemic and ontological disputes that crossed these fields suggest the importance of challenging the limits of this framework, particularly with a view to mapping possibilities

for articulation with the urgency of decolonial thought in formative spaces. Accordingly, we seek to identify the terms that bring these two epistemological strands – discursive and decolonial – into proximity, enabling dialogue between them. We approach this not as an attempt to 'translate' one epistemology into the mould of the other, but rather by recognising that they share common interests, such as tracing relations of knowledge hierarchisation, inscriptions of power upon bodies, and the production of truths and subjectivities, to name the most evident.

One of the terms that authorises this dialogue is expressed through the critical archaeogenealogical and decolonial attitude[2,3,32-35]. By articulating the axes of archaeology – which highlights how subjects are constituted through relations of language – and genealogy – which traces historical correlations between practices, discourses, and power relations –, the archaeogenealogical method of discursive analysis enables a critique of the regimes of truth that sustain discourses on diversity and gender identities. This critique materialises through an exercise in cartography of the history of the present, combined with the denaturalisation of knowledges that regulate the body, sex, sexuality, pleasures, desires, and identities of subjects. It focuses on the productive nature of power and the effects of disciplinary, biopolitical, and normative technologies upon the constitution of subjects.

Inspired by this Foucauldian theoretical-methodological foundation, authors such as Butler[36] – gender performativity – de Lauretis[37] – gender technologies – and Preciado[38] – technopolitics of the body and gender regime – expand analyses of normative practices surrounding sexualities and subjectivities. They demonstrate how such practices discursively produce 'sex', 'gender', and the 'materiality' of bodies, and thereby the nature of the 'subject'. In their respective ways, these authors update the Foucauldian notion of device in the analysis of subjectivity formation. In doing so, they contribute to a critical attitude that encourages attention to the procedures that reorder discourses concerning gender relations and how they operate in the education of bodies. Thus, what is today understood as a 'gender device' – unfolded into and complemented by the device of masculinity – emerges as a tool of critical analysis that updates Foucauldian thought in response to demands for approaches that interrogate the effects of gender relations on existential conditions.

Butler[36], in developing the concept of gender performativity, argues that gender is not an essence or fixed identity, but rather a reiterative effect of discursive and bodily practices that produce the illusion of a stable identity. This perspective enables us to understand how bodies are shaped by norms that regulate what is intelligible as masculine or feminine, and how the repetition of such norms may be subverted through dissident performances. Performativity, in this sense, becomes both an analytical and political tool for rethinking pedagogical practices that destabilise gender binaries and expand the range of possible modes of existence. Complementarily, de Lauretis[37], in proposing the concept of gender technologies, highlights the social, cultural, and institutional mechanisms that produce and sustain gender identities. Among these mechanisms, Preciado[38], in discussing the technopolitics of the body, focuses on the intersections of biomedical, pharmacological, and media devices, demonstrating how bodies and desires are regulated within this dimension.

These three conceptualisations of the relations that constitute the devices of bodily education – operating through gendered institutions – contribute to an expanded understanding of the devices as a field of forces that acts upon the constitution of subjects, as proposed by Foucault[3]. Incorporating these reflections into the field of Physical Education entails recognising that bodily practices not only reflect gender norms but also produce them, and can therefore be reconfigured as spaces of resistance and invention. Particularly regarding masculinities, such spaces of resistance and invention emerge when bodily practices challenge

the normative models of hegemonic masculinity and allow for the emergence of dissident, affective, plural, and non-violent masculinities. Performativity, as theorised by Butler[36], enables subjects to enact and reiterate gender norms, but also to subvert them through performances that escape normative intelligibility. In Physical Education, this may translate into pedagogical practices that embrace expressions of masculinity not centred on strength, competition, or virility, but rather on care, cooperation, attentive listening, and affection.

De Lauretis[37], in discussing gender technologies, points out that bodies are shaped by institutional devices that can be pedagogically reconfigured. This implies, for instance, revisiting school curricula, assessment criteria, and the dynamics of Physical Education classes so that they do not reproduce gender hierarchies, but instead promote bodily experiences that allow boys and young men to explore alternative ways of 'being a man'. Preciado[38], in turn, when addressing the technopolitics of the body, invites reflection on how the bodies of boys, adolescents, and men are regulated by biomedical and media discourses – discourses that can be challenged through insurgent pedagogical practices, such as the critical use of sports media, the valorisation of narratives from trans, gay, and bisexual men, and the creation of spaces for emotional expression and listening. Thus, by recognising that gender devices operate in the constitution of masculinities, Physical Education can become a fertile ground for the invention of 'queer' masculinities pedagogies – that is, pedagogies that promote masculinities decoupled from heteronormativity, oriented towards care, coexistential ethics, social justice, and openness to bodily plurality. Such a queer pedagogy of masculinities does not limit itself to critique, but rather proposes the creation of new possibilities of existence, in which male-gendered bodies may be educated for care, vulnerability, and solidarity.

Analyses proposed from such approaches – feminist, masculinities, queer – frequently seek to identify how certain discourses emerge as enunciations in different historical contexts, such as the expressions 'beautiful, modest, and domestic', 'dissident bodies', and 'gender ideology'. The archaeogenealogical exercise, in turn, invites us to examine the mapping of knowledge and power relations that articulate the strategies of rarefaction through which discourses are produced and sustain domains of truth[2,3]. This analysis is constructed by displacing, unveiling, and contrasting the regularities, dispersions, continuities, and discontinuities of discourses under different conditions of emergence and operation, thereby allowing their rules of functioning to surface.

By grounding a diagnosis of the present that helps trace the relations through which we become and understand ourselves as gendered subjects, the archaeogenealogical exercise of discursive analysis makes it possible to understand the conditions under which masculinities – 'hegemonic', 'toxic', 'complicit', 'inclusive'[39-41] – are authorised or not to compose discourses on gender today. Within the scope of this study, this archaeogenealogical exercise helps us not only to situate enunciations of masculinities within the domain of gender discourses, but also to understand their potential impacts in terms of bodily education. Simultaneously, this tool assists in questioning how something like the very perception of a gender device, or the gendering of bodies, becomes real and material – a point we understand to be in dialogue with decolonial studies, particularly in terms of the power structures that operate such materialisation.

The Foucauldian theory-method for discursive studies has inspired and equipped numerous scholars to interrogate the epistemic domain of hierarchical knowledge-power relations across various disciplinary and cultural contexts, particularly within knowledge production. In Latin American realities especially, this questioning proved foundational for authors whose work influenced the formation of what is now recognised as decolonial thought, or organised as the field of decolonial studies. This field has been developing since the 1990s,

strongly driven by figures such as Aníbal Quijano, Catherine Walsh, Nelson Maldonado-Torres, María Lugones, Walter Mignolo, Luciana Ballestrin, among others commonly associated with the 'Modernity/Coloniality Group' – characterised primarily by its critique of Eurocentrism and its impact on the constitution of subjects and their conditions of existence[34,42,43].

The proposal of this study, however, is to enact a critical inflection: is it possible to challenge gender studies through the lens of decolonial studies? To what extent does this tension extend to discursive studies? Rooted in traditions of cultural and critical studies, both decolonial and discursive approaches share an interest in denaturalising hegemonic modes of knowledge and subjectivity production. Decolonial thought, however, shifts the critique of Western normativity to include the colonial dimensions of the constitution of the modern subject. That is, it denounces categories such as gender, race, sexuality, and humanity as coextensive with the modern-colonial project[5,42,44]. Yet, rather than erasing differences, Eurocentric modernity institutes a classificatory logic based on the production of 'colonial difference'[45]: a stratification between subjects deemed human and those rendered subaltern, inferior, and governable. This difference, discursively constructed, materialises in and through bodies, territories, knowledges, and affects.

Colonial difference, as Walsh[45] warns, is the mark produced by modernity/coloniality to classify, hierarchise, and subalternise non-European 'others' – racialised, gendered, marginalised – from a Eurocentric standpoint. Paraphrasing Lopes[46], it constitutes a mode of thought and a political attitude that 'assimilates the coexistence between cultures, yet without blending them', promoting practices that justify difference and dominance between them, while simultaneously assimilating exclusion. It is worth noting that colonial differences are produced, perceived, and articulated through processes of bodily education and subjectivation intertwined with neoliberal dynamics of consumption, via varied strategies that reinforce their ties to modernity[47]. These are, in Foucault's[3;367] terms, "strategies of power relations sustaining types of knowledge and being sustained by them", which materialise the strategic functions of devices.

As a tool within the archaeogenealogical method, the notion of device underpins the analysis of enunciations centred on biopolitics, through which normalising processes materialise amid knowledge-power relations via discursive practices focused on the governance of bodies and life. Foucault[2,32] helps to understanding device as a heterogeneous set of elements which, involved in a power dynamic, respond to a specific historical urgency. At the same time, devices produce knowledges, powers, subjectivities, and regimes of truth. Based on this understanding, Neves and Gregolin[7] conceive the notion of colonial device as a 'global architectonic' – i.e. Civilisation, Nation, Gender – a spatio-temporal configuration through which elements function to respond to a given urgency, constituting various devices "without fixed forms, [which] frequently intersect with one another"[7;14]. Within this architectonic, other devices are activated, such as gender and pedagogical devices, which are the focus of this study in order to address their enunciative functions in the education of bodies through bodily practices.

The colonial device[7,35] relates to European colonisation initiated in the late fifteenth century and updated through contemporary practices. It supplied primarily to the need for domination via control over bodies and territories by European metropoles. Among strategies of production and erasure of subjectivities and cosmovisions, 'civilising' missions, and economic, territorial, and cultural disputes, this device enabled discursive practices and knowledges specific to Eurocentric domination, imposed upon colonised peoples and fabricated as hegemonic truth. This imposition relied not only on language and its regulation – as

exemplified by the production of the Portuguese language in Brazil – but also on the disciplining of bodies, since "there is no governance of language without the body being involved in a power dynamic and regimented into a new order."[7;15]

In this regard, Lugones'[4,5] proposal concerning the modern/colonial gender system stands out. The author argues that coloniality imposed a binary and hierarchical gender matrix upon colonised populations, dismantling other forms of collective and subjective organisation among Indigenous and African peoples. This imposition 'racialised sexual difference and sexualised racial difference', constituting gender as a technology of power directly linked to the logic of colonial racist domination. Thus, thinking masculinities within this system requires situating them as historical effects of practices of racialisation, cisgendering, and the naturalisation of violence, which operate the production of subjects legible to colonial-modern rationality. It is, in part, a matter of establishing the formative rules of pedagogical strategies through which the coloniality of gender operates, in order to identify the elements by which bodies are educated to perceive, differentiate, and become 'gender'.

Drawing on contributions from queer studies, authors such as Guacira Louro and Sara Ahmed, we may conceive pedagogy not as a field restricted to formal schooling, but as a set of forces and practices that orient bodies, affects, and ways of being in the world. Although neither author explicitly names a 'pedagogical device', their work allows us to conceptualise it as an arrangement of knowledges, norms, affects, repetitions, and violences that teach – often in non-verbalised ways – how a body should occupy space, feel, desire, move, perform gender, and belong to a given social order. Louro[8,9] has shown how these learning processes involve the internalisation and contestation of gender and sexuality norms, often through everyday gestures, silences, glances, exclusions, and insinuations that teach and shape subjects. Ahmed[10], in turn, demonstrates that we learn to 'orient ourselves' affectively in the world, moving towards certain objects and subjects and away from others, based on histories sedimented in the spaces we inhabit, how it affects us, and how we extend to it or not.

By pedagogical device, we refer to a relational field that shapes learning about gender and masculinities in various contexts, such as locker rooms, dance halls, social media, drag performance, family interactions, and conversations among friends. In these spaces, one learns to be a man, to perform gender, and to 'fail at being a man', as Louro[9] provokes – especially when deviant or dissident bodies perform queer masculinities[31]. The way a boy is ridiculed for crossing his legs, how a trans man learns to walk 'with masculine posture', or how a racialised body undergoes hypervisibility or control in dance environments are examples of pedagogical practices that, though informal and often unspoken, teach conduct, regulate the sensible, and produce possible and impossible masculinities.

By recognising these forms of learning as part of a broader pedagogical device, attention is shifted away from formal institutions towards everyday modes of subjectivation and resistance. This shift enables an understanding of how certain masculinities are naturalised and reiterated, while others are persecuted, silenced, or celebrated within subcultural niches – and how all of this contributes to the political cartography of gendered existences and the desires that move each subject[40,48]. Pedagogical practice, in this context, is not neutral: it is affective, racialised, gendered, sexualized, and situated. Conceiving it as a device entail acknowledging both its normalising and insurgent potential.

Physical education presents itself as a privileged space for examining how pedagogical, gender, and colonial devices operate in the education of bodies and the materialisation of discursive practices that produce masculinities. Traditionally implicated in the shaping of bodies, the construction of behavioural normativities, and the regulation of affects, physical education may function both in the production of masculinities aligned with Eurocentrism and

gender normativity, and in their contestation. As Louro[8] suggests, pedagogical institutions contribute to the gendering of bodies from early childhood, with normative masculinity functioning as a model of performance, authority, and belonging. However, by adopting a critical posture grounded in decolonial and archaeogenealogical thought, it becomes possible to identify fissures, contradictions, and resistances within the modern colonial gender system and its knowledge-power devices[3-5,7,42].

Here, notions such as misalignment and disidentification gain analytical traction. To misalign is to break with the normative lines that organise ways of living gender, sexuality, desire, and belonging within spaces[10]. To disidentify is to destabilise the markers that regulate the intelligibility of bodies, opening cracks for forms of existence not foreseen by the device[32]. Thus, displacing devices – or inhabiting their margins – is not merely a gesture of refusal, but also one of inventing other pedagogies, other ways of being a body, of existing as a subject; other epistemologies. It is through misalignment with certain regularities of gender studies and disidentification with the border elements of its discursive hegemony that we propose to conceive both teaching and student bodies as gendered bodies, in order to recognise that physical education operates within a web of devices which, crossed by discursive practices of various orders, perform strategic functions in the production and materialisation of a pedagogy of masculinities, as well as other ways of gendering.

Final Considerations

By proposing a dialogue that brings analytical elements from Foucauldian discursive studies and decolonial approaches into closer proximity, this article seeks to materialise reflections arising from examinations of the power effects associated with discursive and pedagogical devices of masculinities – particularly through observations of how these are embodied in bodily practices within the domain of physical education. The article argues for the articulation of these theoretical perspectives in order to offer a more robust analytical framework capable of denaturalising hegemonic forms of masculinity production by situating them not only within regimes of truth, but also within the logic of the modern/colonial gender system. Through the notion of device, we recognise how the historicity of bodily practices in physical education and sport structures their operation as privileged territories for the reproduction of toxic or hegemonic masculinities. However, by applying a decolonial inflection to the archaeogenealogical exercise, we demonstrate that the normalisation of 'masculine' bodies and modes of 'being a man' is intrinsically linked to the production of colonial difference, which operates through processes that hierarchise and subalternise existences that deviate from the modern Eurocentric standard.

The effort to bring these two epistemological strands – discursive and decolonial – into dialogue thus emerges as a crucial tool for critiquing normativity, the production of absolute truths, and colonial modes of domination and existence. This theoretical engagement has enabled reflection on the construction of pathways that reveal fissures, misalignments, and disidentifications in relation to masculinities within bodily, sporting, and physical education practices, thereby conceiving physical education as a site of contestation and invention. From this initial exercise in approximation, the challenge posed by this text is to foster the emergence of other possible masculinities: freer, more affective, respectful, and committed to social transformation. Likewise, it invites the examination of other possible terms for dialogues that, like this one, encourage an understanding of the intricate colonial and discursive power-knowledge networks in which the bodies of 'modern subjects' are inscribed and through which they are gendered and educated, as well as the pursuit of alternative modes beyond such

networks. This horizon reinforces what we recognise as queer, insurgent, and decolonial pedagogical practices – articulated to plural meanings of the masculine, the feminine, and the body movements.

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