

**BRAZIL: “QUE PAÍS É ESTE”?**  
**MUSIC AND POWER IN**  
**LEGIÃO URBANA**

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## **Abstract**

This thesis addresses, amongst other issues, the phenomenon of protest music with particular reference to Brazil within its pre- and post-dictatorship period. The time-frame being understood as that which finds its roots many decades prior to the 1964 so-called revolution – a *de facto* military putsch – and comes to flower in the democratic moment of the 1980s and since. The focus will be, eventually, directed to one of the most celebrated Brazilian rock phenomena, the band Legião Urbana, the impact of which still resonates across the artistic, cultural and political scene in Brazil and beyond. In order to establish the context in which such a claim can be viable, the thesis explores the ideological and historical background to the emergence, on a national, and international, stage of something beyond the artistic and cultural ‘dependence’ seen before that period within Brazilian music.

## **Key Words**

Rock’n’Roll, Punk rock, protest music, popular culture, BRock, Brazilian music, dictatorship, Legião Urbana.

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## Introduction

Eu quis cantar  
Minha canção iluminada de sol  
Soltei os panos sobre os mastros no ar  
Soltei os tigres e os leões nos quintais  
Mas as pessoas da sala de jantar  
São ocupadas em nascer e morrer  
Mande fazer  
De puro aço luminoso um punhal  
Para matar o meu amor e matei  
Às cinco horas na Avenida Central  
Mas as pessoas da sala de jantar  
São ocupadas em nascer e morrer...  
(*Panis et Circences* – Caetano and Gil, 1968)

This is not supposed to be a thesis about protest movements or protest music. Yet, for the matters of the discussion which will follow it is impossible to avoid talking about these movements in the context of so many world struggles in the turbulent political decades of the 1960s and 1970s, when Brazil was developing its own, very particular and very new, protest movements. A country of Carnival and football, Brazil would soon become the birthplace of one of the most prolific and successful Rock'n'Roll bands of all times.

Just as Brasília, Brazil's capital, had been conceived at the end of the 1950s, as a kick-start to a new political and social era, replacing Rio de Janeiro as the capital of the country, a new beginning for Brazilian politics was starting in the mid-1970s, despite (or possibly because of) the military dictatorship, initiated in 1964, which purportedly ruled both the country and its culture for over twenty years. Much before, and strongly throughout this period, new bands were forming, changing, and

reshaping the way Brazilians made and listened to music. Different genres were created and assimilated. One of the important developments of this process was the formation of a band which would change forever the way young Brazilians approached issues such as distribution of wealth or corruption, faced by their own generation and the generations of their parents and grand-parents.

One of these groundbreaking bands was Aborto Elétrico or AE (Electric Abortion) formed at the beginning of the 1980s, by André Pretorius, a young man who was the son of a South African diplomat living in Brazil, and who enjoyed walking around Brasília's night scene dressed as a 'Punk'. The other member was the 16 year-old Fernando Lemos, who, in the 1980s, had recently returned from England, where he lived for a few years, a country in which he got in touch with the music of bands such as the Ramones, Sex Pistols, and The Clash. These were the same bands that yet another young man was listening to and performing at local parties in Brasília. His name was Renato Russo, and he was to become the leader of one of the most successful bands in Brazil: Legião Urbana.

The band Legião Urbana, the case study of this thesis, and whose albums, musicians and song-texts will be analysed in more depth in Chapter 7. This case study follows a pertinent discussion about the band and its uniqueness in the Brazilian music scene. The band was never confined to one musical genre (Rock'n'Roll, Punk or Brazilian Popular Music, known as MPB), and its song-texts and style demonstrate the cross-fertilization of these genres and others. This eclecticism is partially regarded as arising from the charismatic and acknowledgeable image of its leader, Renato Russo,

whose biography conspicuously reflects the 1980s and 1990s in Brazil and around the world. As such, as we will see further in the thesis, Legião Urbana is a major example of BRock, a specific Brazilian descent of Rock'n'Roll.

When they started their professional career in the mid-1980s, the 'boys' from Legião Urbana were just another four dreamers from the capital witnessing the return of democracy to the country in the mid-1980s, who were also questioning where Brazil was heading to, due to the changes which were happening in front of their eyes. Amongst the many 'questions' they asked in their songs, the one which is stronger and more powerful than any other, is the homonymous theme song of their 1987 album *Que País é Este* (1978/1987) [What Country is This (1978/1987)], which gives title to this thesis. This simple and important question opens the space to so many others when one considers that this particular song was not written in 1987 but in 1978, nine years prior to the release of the album and still within the period of a military dictatorship that would beleaguer the country for more than twenty years, between 1964 and 1985.

The military ideal of a dictatorial regime was not a new one in Brazil, though. The second dictatorship of the twentieth century followed the same Positivist idea of *Ordem e Progresso* [Order and Progress] (Silva, 1992:178) defended by the Brazilian army since the establishment of the New Republic, at the end of the nineteenth century. This was after all a proposal for a national salvation through the organisation and ruling of society by a military regime.



Putting it simplistically, Brazilian military forces and politicians were moved by the fear of some popular movements in Latin America and established a military dictatorship in 1964. During that dictatorial period (of twenty one years), many stages and changes were witnessed by Brazilian society. The civil governments of the late 1950s and early 1960s gave way to a period of conflict, censorship, prosecution, imprisonment, exile, and death. As a reaction to the claustrophobic cultural environment during the regime, many artists (writers, painters, cinema and theatre directors), songwriters, musicians and bands turned their careers round with the urge to speak-up and contest the operative powers. For periods of time many of them performed clandestinely and composed song-texts with a hidden meaning in order to avoid censorship, whilst still holding the power to spread the word of unreconciled dissatisfaction and aversion to the system in power.

This thesis shall focus on one specific case, in the realms of Brazilian Pop Music or, rather, Brazilian Rock (BRock), the band Legião Urbana. Likewise, other bands shall be mentioned for being part of a prolific phase of Rock'n'Roll and Punk music production in Brazil. In order to focus on the scope of this work even more narrowly, I shall be taking into consideration Legião Urbana's more politically committed production as key example for discussion and textual analysis,<sup>1</sup> and also a few samples of other artists and bands before and after them. For doing so, I shall 'walk the line' of the history of national and international Rock'n'Roll to contextualise its phases, similarities and differences – when compared to the United States of America

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<sup>1</sup> Legião Urbana's whole song collection can be found at their official website: <<http://www.legiaourbana.com.br/discografia>>

(USA) and the United Kingdom (UK), amongst other countries – in regards to the historical and sociological fabric of Brazilian culture from the 1960s to the 1980s, in order to establish its influences in the country.

In this short ‘trip’ through what I consider one of the most interesting, invigorating and powerful moments in the above decades in Brazilian music and arts, as a representation of the cultural and historical accounts of this ever-changing country, I would like to draw attention to the impossibility of separating certain songs, such as the ones studied here, from their cultural, historical, geographical and political background, and/or their source of inspiration, be it an event, a place, an individual, or a personal experience, as the artistic representation is always going to be a reflection of the memories and observations of a certain reality.

In order to conduct these discussions and analyse the songs used in the thesis more appropriately, I shall be inspired by Robert Pring-Mill, who considers the written words of songs as “song-texts in preference to ‘lyrics’ so as to avoid any suggestion that they are necessarily lyrical [, whilst] most ‘committed’ songs are exhortatory (often with epic, tragic, or satirical elements or overtones)” (Pring-Mill, 1990:5-7) – and in many different levels, playfull, I might add. However, by analysing these ‘song-texts’ I shall still keep in mind, that what Pring-Mill considers “the power and poetry of song” should, in the case of the songs used in this thesis, corroborate to a perception of those as strong and efficient tools for portraying the perceived or witnessed reality of a period and of its people.

Assuming that we can indeed discuss these songs as a representation in their own right, as a powerful explanation of Brazilian culture *per se*, by resorting to them throughout this thesis they will, I hope, be able to avoid (and sometimes even overcome) the appropriation of extensive theories in order to focus onto, but not exclusively, a stronger and exhortatory quality of the music we are working with. Nevertheless, a theoretical framework on music, and cultural anthropology studies can be helpful here, and the one we have chosen to illustrate some of the issues we are covering throughout the thesis is Josh Kun's *audiotopia*. To Kun,

music functions like a possible utopia for the listener, that music is experienced not only as sound that goes into our ears and vibrates through our bones but as a space we can enter into, encounter, move around in, inhabit, be safe in, learn from. (Kun, 2005:2)

This space granted by the *audiotopian* framework can be seen in the Brazilian music scene since the period of the dictatorship with movements such as Tropicália. But in order to analyse BRock bands and their legacy to Brazilian culture, one could also resort to the notions of *emic* and *etic*, found in the studies of Marvin Harris (1968), in Cultural Anthropology. Harris proposes a dichotomy of views regarding the insider and the outsider observer and commentator, because these musicians are within society yet they take the 'anthropologist' point of view, i.e., an observer who does not interfere in the course of society.

The reason for choosing Legião Urbana amongst so many other bands in Brazil is both personal and professional. In personal terms, they were the ones I was listening to and engaging with throughout my adolescent years; and, professionally, because of their legacy and success since their appearance in the mid 1980s and beyond their

dissolution in the 1990s. With more than twenty recorded albums and millions of them sold, Legião Urbana can be considered to be one of the most successful pop-rock groups in the history of Brazil, having their music repeatedly recorded generation after generation, with different arrangements, different genres, and also performed by the most significant Brazilian musicians from different generations.

The ‘do-it-yourself’ and ‘no future’ attitude of Punk, which was the main *motto* of the movement when it first started in the UK with bands like the Sex Pistols and The Clash, has heavily influenced Legião Urbana. These band’s diverse and eclectic influences lead us into the discussion of how to categorise their music. Is it protest music? Songs of rebellion? Revolutionary songs? Politically committed or engaged music? Songs of complaint or of raising awareness? What are the differences and/or similarities between them?

Within a social and political tissue of revolutions and dictatorships during the 1960s and 1970s, many musical movements could have influenced Brazil, such as the Latin American movements Poesía de Compromiso, Nueva Canción, Nueva Trova, Canciones de Lucha y Esperanza. We must acknowledge here that these movements were, and in some cases still are, important in their own right for the countries they originated, but in the case of Brazil the resulting songs of the same period are beyond these categories.

The play of words that Pring-Mill does with the Spanish *protesta* and *contesta* (Pring-Mill: 6-9) might work for the Spanish world, but they are not enough to

describe and symbolise the Brazilian model of contest or protest songs, as an overt form of protesting against the *status quo* and the military regime in power.

What happened after more than twenty years of dictatorship and of strong censorship? Amidst the miscellany of events and changes, what is the role of Rock'n'Roll and Punk rock in Brazil? Was there a real protest movement in Brazil? And if so, when was it and who was involved? In order to address these questions, and also to understand the origin of these more contemporary protest movements, we have chosen to draw our comments on Ian Peddie's insightful book *The Resisting Muse: Popular Music and Social Protest*, where he argues that

Protest songs are defined as such by virtue of their words, but many make their impact in tandem with their sonic elements, the emotionality of the music, the strength and confidence of the vocals, or their simplicity and repetitive phrases, which allow the audience to sing along. (Peddie, 2006:4)

In other words, a combination of musical elements and the inspiration that the song brings to its audience, through its song-texts, is going to be directly responsible for its categorisation as protest or not.

Ian Peddie also gives us some directives in order to classify in which levels we protest in protest songs, based on the multiple dimensions of the issue. The first dimension would be the most expected: it is linked to "an opposition to a policy, an action against the people in power that is grounded in a sense of injustice". The next is based on the "specificity of the injustice", coming from a general power, a "particular policy", or a distinct "instance of abuse of power", in which case it is sometimes treated as a *re-ax* song, as in a song of reaction. (Peddie, 2006:3-4) Re-ax

songs generally focus all their might on a “single act of injustice”, such as discrimination based on social or economic background, like in Brazil, which could sometimes be treated as a lamentation instead of protest. A third layer in these dimensions is when a song is classified as protest for its impact, for the attention it receives from the public and the media. To explain, we could have “at one extreme... songs that most listeners fail to perceive as protest songs and thus have no influence... At the other extreme are the few rock songs that inspire action of one kind or another.” Based on that, in the case of rock music, “the number of protest songs varies by how inclusive we define ‘protest’ and ‘rock’.” (ibid.)

The importance of popular culture and, within it, popular music, cannot be denied when dealing with the reflections on identity, entertainment, and expression of societies in different countries in contemporary history. And taking into account the fact that the world’s culture witnessed such moments which could never be reproduced again, such as “two world wars, the assassination of Presidents and civil rights leaders, coups and famines, the dropping of the atomic bomb and the discovery of the structure of DNA” (Frith *et al*, 2001:ix), we understand the powerful stakes that they carry for the representation and memories of events that marked humankind. Brazil is but one example of the repercussion of such a momentous era, which also holds strong importance to the world in many art forms. For Brazilians, music is a great part of their lives and identity, and the story of the twentieth century in this country could be perfectly told through its musical movements.

When studying Brazil, and its musical diversity, one cannot avoid talking about popular culture and popular music, and also to delve into the roots of one of the first Afro-Brazilian genres of music, and one of the most popular: Samba.<sup>2</sup> Even with so many different styles, there is one thing that can be said that they all have in common: the fact that they derive from a mixture of African and European musical origins, and that they use similar instruments (with variations)<sup>3</sup> in order to express their feelings, ideas and place in time.

Amongst these styles there are: *samba de roda* from Bahia (which became UNESCO World Heritage in 2005) which appeared at the beginning of the nineteenth century, and is represented by Afro-Brazilian cultural elements, such as hand-clapping, chanting and dancing in a *roda* (circle). *Samba-canção* surfaced in the 1920s with softer rhythms and romantic song-texts which talk about suffering and disillusionment of being in love, like in the song *Ai, Ioiô* (1929), by Luís Peixoto. In the 1930s it was the time of *samba-exaltação*, which is accompanied by an orchestra and carries patriotic song-texts that praise Brazil's many wonders, like in *Aquarela do Brasil* [Brazil] (1939), by Ary Barroso. *Samba de partido alto*, created in the 1930s, is the one that mostly talks about the reality of the *favelas* (shanty-towns), and

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<sup>2</sup> For the origin of the name samba there are many theories. The most interesting one being from “semba” which is a form of ritual dance which means “umbigada” (belly button hitting) in Quimbundo, one of Angola's languages. Angola was one of the Portuguese colonised countries in Africa where most of the slaves taken to Brazil originated from.

<sup>3</sup> Amongst the many instruments played in samba are drums for percussion such as *surdos* (a large bass drum) and *timbau* (conga drum or a type of *atabaque*, which is a tall hand drum), accompanied by *violão* (Spanish or acoustic guitar, also known as *viola*), *cavaquinho* (small four-string guitar), *ukulele*, *berimbau* (musical bowl from African origins, largely used in *Capoeira*), *chocalho* or *caxixi* (types of ‘shaker’), and *pandeiro* (hand frame drum).

is considered the masters' style which is produced by a *contenda*.<sup>4</sup> The *samba de gafieira* was created in the 1940s and, being fast on the instrumental arrangements with some resemblance to the Argentine *tango*, it is ideal for ballroom dancing and dancing competitions. *Sambalanço* started in São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro in the 1950s receiving a strong influence from jazz, with Jorge Ben Jor as its strongest contemporary representative. *Samba de breque*, popularized in the 1950s by Moreira da Silva, characterised by its breaks within the song where the singer inserts criticisms or funny comments about the people or the place he is singing about. *Pagode* made the scene in Rio de Janeiro in the 1970s and was popularised in the 1980s by singers/songwriters such as Zeca Pagodinho. It has a very repetitive rhythm and more instruments than the original Samba, with sometimes romantic and easy to memorise song-texts, using much more underground expressions and slang. The *samba carnavalesco* or *marchinha* is made to be sung and danced in the Carnival club gatherings. It was very popular between the 1920s and the 1960s (rivalling and losing its popularity to the massive movement of the *escolas de samba* and their *samba-enredos*, themed songs, from the 30s), with some very well-known titles, such as *Abre alas*, *Cabeleira do Zezé*, *Cidade Maravilhosa*, *Bandeira Branca*, amongst others. Appearing in the 1930s, but mostly popularised from the end of the 1960s, *samba-enredo* (samba in song) is used as the theme of *escolas de samba* (samba schools) during the famous Carnival parades in February all around Brazil.

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<sup>4</sup> A *contenda* is a type of verbal duel where the participants (*versadores*) compete, in general in a humorous way, to out-verse each other following the topic given by the refrain, repeatedly sang by a crowd around them.



The roots of Samba are intrinsically connected with the colonisation of the country and the urbanisation of Brazilian main cities (mostly South-eastern region), and its themes range from mundane, urban (mostly within underprivileged communities) scenes and preoccupations. Samba is also recognised as one of the features of Brazilian culture, as much as a strong representative of Brazilian identity for being a genre with unique characteristics of the amalgamation of races that happened, and still happens, in the country. According to William Boyd, Samba is “a democratic music” (2010:42), as one will find people from all ages and social backgrounds in the clubs and samba schools. Boyd ends his article asserting “that it seems to him that samba’s inclusiveness offers a metaphor for Brazil. In going to clubs and listening to samba you, the fortunate foreigner, gain a small sense of what it is to be a Brazilian. You feel envious. A country united by its music.” (ibid.) Boyd’s is a short and very pertinent depiction of a country moved by music and its rhythms.

However, many new movements arise every day from the pressures of the opposing ‘new’ against the saturated ‘old’ fashion in different realms of society, in the case of music the pressure between Samba and other genres. More specifically, one can say that since the end of the 1940s, the world, Brazil included, was trying to recover from, and erase, the bad omen of the Second World War (WWII), with the youth rebelling against the consequences of that war, arguing that it was time for a change. Although even Samba had its flirtation with Rock’n’Roll with the creation of the *pau elétrico* (electric stick)<sup>5</sup> for Bahia’s Carnival street parades at the end of the 1940s, it

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<sup>5</sup> The musical instrument *pau elétrico* was created by Adolfo (Dodô) Nascimento e (Osmar) Álvares Macêdo, in Salvador, and resembles a Chapman Stick, which would be commercially created by

was definitely time for pop music and proper Rock'n'Roll to invade the arena, if the youth of that period wanted to oppose its 'old' or traditional musical fashions operating in Brazil, and follow a more universal genre which would prove to have arrived to stay: Rock'n'Roll.

According to Arthur Dapieve (2005:9-21),<sup>6</sup> Brazilian Rock'n'Roll, or BRock, was treated (until recently) as a "febre passageira" (a temporary fever), or something that would not last, that "soon the green-yellow globules would get in charge of expelling it from the body of Brazilian popular music, thus returning to its sanity" (2005:11). During the 1960s, this genre was treated as a marginal, imperialistic and crude invasion, like a disease, much contested, even with the excuse of a "demonstration against the electric guitar". (Calado, 2004:108)

The influences that Legião Urbana had received from other bands and genres, and their own importance towards the Brazilian music scene are going to be considered in this thesis, as much as the future of the genre of Rock'n'Roll in the country since the band's dismissal in 1996. One could say that in a very distinctive way, most of today's Brazilian rock bands owe a moral and artistic legacy to Legião Urbana for their originality, power, courage, and style which influenced generations.

In Chapter 1 of the thesis, we will draw on Maria Helena Paes to understand the context of post-WWII in the world and in Brazil, focusing on the political, social and cultural turbulent changes of the post-war period, and the division of the world into a

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American jazz musician Emmet Chapman in the 1970s. Ironically *pau eléctrico* is also the name of a torture instrument used by the military during the dictatorship in Brazil (Catholic Church, 1998:19).

<sup>6</sup> All the English quotations from Arthur Dapieve's work are my own translation.

bipolar stage, which reverberated in Brazil through its authoritarian, pro-American and military dictatorships during this period.

In Chapter 2, we continue to dwell on the 1950s, when Rock'n'Roll first appears, and Elvis shakes his hips invoking his 'Black' legacy which would bring America into turmoil in the following decade; and progress in the history of music and the social uprisings in the USA, such as the Civil Rights Movement, in order to draw parallels between America and Brazil in the 1960s. I shall also develop a discussion which involves an affair between politics and music, and argue the ever-imposing American influence in Brazilian culture through a short discussion of Bossa Nova as a strong and lasting international representative of the Brazilian 'Jazz', and its appearance prior to the 1964 coup d'état which gives place to a new dictatorial regime in Brazil. In this same chapter, departing from a discussion on protest music in the USA, in particular (with Bob Dylan and the protest movement against the Vietnam War), I shall focus on Brazil, and, once again, draw a parallel with the USA in terms of the affairs between music and politics in the 1960s and the 1970s.

In Chapter 3, we shall continue to explore the 1960s and 1970s, but this time Tropicália movement takes to the stage, creating an *audiotopian* (Josh Kun) movement in Brazil, with its iconic symbols of Brazilian resistance and artistic creativity until nowadays: Caetano Veloso, Gilberto Gil, Chico Buarque, Geraldo Vandré.

In Chapter 4, I shall look at the way some of the Sociologists, Anthropologists, and Artists interpret and write about Brazilian society; and also analyse these discourses developments and consequences which in my opinion will lead to a notion of Gadismo, a concept which originated during the research for this thesis and my teaching of Brazilian Cultura Studies.

In Chapter 5, I develop a short discussion on the fabrication of a nationalistic spirit which arises from the campaigns promoted by the military regime during the football World Cups, with further echoes even within a re-democratised Brazilian society from the 1990s onwards.

In Chapter 6, we reach the 1980s and the emergence of BRock as a genre in its own right in the Brazilian music scene. Here, I discuss the appearance of bands such as Aborto Eléctrico, Barão Vermelho and Legião Urbana. I argue that Punk movement had indeed arrived in Brazil and that it was thriving.

Chapter 7 is an analysis of our case study, one of these BRock bands, Legião Urbana. Here I discuss how the charismatic leader of this band, Renato Russo, determined the course of his/its career and success. As such, I analyse in detail some of the most important songs by this band, arguing that, contrary to the Tropicália *audiotopian* movement, Legião Urbana creates a kind of *audiodystopian* one, which instead of singing about an idealised collective space manages to distort their listeners' vision in order to show reality, as they witness it, in its most visceral form.

Within the conclusion of this thesis, these *audiotopian* and *audiodystopian* notions shall be ‘subverted’ and treated as an *audiotranstopia*<sup>7</sup> when discussing the movements which followed the paths of those 1980s and 1990s precursors of any kind of social engagement.

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<sup>7</sup> *Audiodystopia* and *audiotranstopia* are my interventions to Kun’s *audiotopia*.

## **Chapter 1 – Historical Background**

A brief overview of some of the most important historical events around the world is considered necessary when dealing with the social and political issues through Cultural Studies, as to give evidence of the changes and developments in Brazilian society throughout the period under research here, the 1960s to the 1980s. This has to happen in respect to the texts, and also the political, social and cultural international references that will echo throughout the discourses analysed in what follows.

As a starting point we are taking one of the most important contemporary events in human history, the Second World War (1939-1945). WWII was a period of extreme challenges and changes around the world, both during and after the war, and the 1950s and 1960s emblematised the years to come as years of turmoil and struggle for freedom, which witnessed accelerated progress and development for most countries, involved or not in the matters of the war. In the case of Brazil it could not be different, as this country was, as many others, following the North-American model of modernisation and capitalism.

## **The Post-WWII and the North American Communist Fear**

It is inevitable to assert that WWII changed the way people perceived, shared and ruled the world. Because of its political and military influences, the United States of America (USA) became a world power, having two Presidents in power throughout the war period, Franklin D. Roosevelt and Harry S. Truman. Just over a month before the end of the conflict, the thirty-second American President, Roosevelt, died and his Vice-President, Truman, took up the presidency of the country on the 12<sup>th</sup> April 1945. Truman was the President when one the most overwhelming wars of all times came to an end, on the 8<sup>th</sup> May 1945 in Europe, with a death toll of more than fifty million people, amongst military and civilians. That was not the longest war in history, but it was one which involved countries from all continents, and brought with it changes in warfare, politics and economics, which would resonate in the choices made by millions of people in adhering to a capitalist model in the following decades, under the influence of the USA.

Immediately after the end of WWII, and following the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki by USA forces,<sup>8</sup> a new conflict, which would be later known as Cold War,<sup>9</sup> was initiated between the USA and the USSR and their

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<sup>8</sup> Both bombed in August 1945, within three days from each other. Hiroshima on the 6<sup>th</sup> at 8.15am, and Nagasaki on the 9<sup>th</sup> at 11.02am.

<sup>9</sup> The Cold War was an ideological and political conflict between the USA and the Soviet Union which started after WWII, and according to Maria Helena Paes, was the continuation of an already existent “antagonist conceptions on the organisation of society: Capitalism and Communism” (Paes, 1995:6). The conceptualisation of the Cold War followed the creation of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (hereupon referred to as the Soviet Union or USSR). In the aftermath of WWII, this conflict was followed by Mao Tse-Tung’s Chinese Revolution in 1949, the Vietnam War in 1955, or Fidel

respective allies. This resulted in a long-term conflict, with capitalism and socialism/communism, respectively, as the ideological centres of the differences and divisions on a geopolitical sphere. The conflict also provoked tensions and fears of a global atomic war due to American nuclear experiments in the Bikini Atoll Island in the Pacific over Christmas 1946, followed by Soviet Union's similar initiative in August 1949.

The bipolarisation of the world due to the Cold War, encouraged by both sides (USA and Soviet Union), started the 'arms race' and the expansionist political, economical and technological competition in order to gather allies to their own cause. Consequently, for the USA and its allies, the Soviet Union represented the 'red scare'<sup>10</sup> that had the mission of subverting other nations into strikes, syndicalist movements and other demonstrations and forms of protest against the capitalist system which would become known, from 1954, as the Domino Theory.<sup>11</sup> Chomsky also referred to this as the "rotten apple theory",<sup>12</sup> a remark to Secretary of State

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Castro's Cuban Revolution in 1959, among other events of worldwide repercussion. The conflict lasted until 1991, the year of the collapse of the USSR, and after the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989.

<sup>10</sup> The post-WWII 'red scare' (related to the red colour of the Communist flag) is considered to be the second, following the first which took place after the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917 and during the First World War (1914–18).

<sup>11</sup> Domino Theory is a foreign policy theory used by USA President Dwight D. Eisenhower referring to the threat of Communist worldwide take-over. Eisenhower's campaigning started during a press conference in 1954, when Eisenhower, answering a question related to the importance of Indochina to the free world, made a reference to countries being like pieces of a domino, warning that one should have "considerations that might follow what you would call the 'falling domino' principle. You have a row of dominoes set up, you knock over the first one, and what will happen to the last one is the certainty that it will go over very quickly. So you could have a beginning of a disintegration that would have the most profound influences" (Ingalls, 2009:89-9). This theory would justify, on its own, the American fear of the 'domino effect' with regards to the Vietnam War being a development of their 'failure' when dealing with China, Korea and Indochina. Also, according to Raymond Tanter (1999:231), there was a "domestic political danger of inaction in foreign affairs [which] was a motivation for actions abroad that inadvertently spiralled out of control."

<sup>12</sup> In his book *What Uncle Sam Really Wants* (1992:22-44), Chomsky discusses the fact that in his opinion what the USA feared the most was not the 'bad' examples of Communist countries, but the



Dean Acheson's warnings that "one rotten apple can spoil the barrel", as in a possibility that the "'rot' – social and economic development – may spread". For the Soviet Union and its allies, the USA represented the imperialist fist, the economic domination and exploitation which would lead to submission and injustice (Paes, 1995:3-5). This division of power fragmented Europe into Eastern and Western countries, formally establishing the Iron Curtain, which culminated with the building of the Berlin Wall, in 1961, physically separating West and East Germany, and ultimately becoming a strong symbol of two distinctive Europes. This political schism triggered the creation of NATO<sup>13</sup> in 1949 which had the role of a security and defence system, and the goal of "keep[ing] the Russians out, the Americans in, and the Germans down" (Reynolds, 1994:13), a useful 'weapon' to fight the fear of a Communist wave which was much reinforced by the Berlin Blockade (1948–49), the Chinese Civil War (1946-50), the Korean War (1950-53),<sup>14</sup> and the First (French) Indochina War (1946-1954). The Cold War would last until the beginning of the 1990s with the collapse of the Soviet Union.

According to Tanter (1999:230), President Truman "was hammered incessantly" with questions about "Who Lost China?", and the clear answer was that the Democrats had indeed lost China. Consequently, the Democrats acquired a strong image problem as they were seen as 'soft' on Communism, which raised further

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"good example" it could represent, as if it was a "threat to stability" that had "to be destroyed before the virus infects others". In that sense, the 'good example' would be anything that propagated the idea that countries could succeed on their own without foreign (i.e., American) help and/or any sort of intervention considered suitable by foreign powers.

<sup>13</sup> NATO, North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

<sup>14</sup> In the Korea War both the USA and the Soviet Union supported the two different sides of the conflict as external powers of alliance.

questions on whether that was equivalent to ‘political suicide’, and when questioned about it in the Congress, Senator McCarthy<sup>15</sup> “explained the loss as a product of a great conspiracy on a scale so immense as to dwarf any previous venture in history”. (ibid.:327) This notion of a conspiracy increased the “fear of loss to Communism” which in itself “explains why successive administrations were willing to expend blood and treasure without much hope of success” (ibid.:327), as on many other occasions to come.

The world also witnessed, between November 1945 and October 1946, “twenty-four major political and military leaders of Nazi Germany indicted for aggressive war, war crimes, and crimes against humanity”<sup>16</sup> in the Nuremberg Trials before an International Military Tribunal, which brought some sense of justice to the dramatic end of WWII. After this process many war criminals exiled themselves in Latin America. One of the most famous cases was Josef Mengele, known as the ‘Angel of Death’ for his experiments with humans, who lived in Argentina and Paraguay before moving to Brazil around 1960, where he died in 1979.

The post-WWII years brought transformations and conflicts which cascaded from the divisions and struggles of the war, and the rupture of alliances and treaties made even before the beginning of the conflict. In 1947, millions died in riots in India following partitions after its independence from the United Kingdom, and its population mourned the assassination of its leader Mahatma Ghandi in January of the following

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<sup>15</sup> American senator from Wisconsin, Joseph Raymond ‘Joe’ McCarthy, was born in 1908 and died in 1957.

<sup>16</sup> For more information on the Nuremberg Trials, see the online resource of the Library of Congress, in Washington DC: <[http://www.loc.gov/rr/frd/Military\\_Law/Nuremberg\\_trials.html](http://www.loc.gov/rr/frd/Military_Law/Nuremberg_trials.html)>

year. The independence of India also triggered the beginning of the end of colonial oppression, not only in Asia, but later in Africa too. On the 10<sup>th</sup> December 1948, the United Nations instituted a Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which would become the ‘bible’ of the world’s fights against injustices, adopted by most countries around the world. From this Declaration onwards, those established rights would make the world more aware and less vulnerable to issues such as abuse of power, slavery, and violence against women and children.

A series of developments in the fields of science and communications gave a kick-start to changes in concepts and the way the world behaved towards complex technologies. A couple of examples of those changes can be found in the USA television broadcast and sales which started to rise, with almost one million households having TV sets in 1948 compared to 5,000 in 1945. The world also started to witness years of controversy in human behavioural studies when the zoologist Alfred Kinsey (1894-1956) published his study *Sexual Behavior in the Human Male* (1948) and *Sexual Behavior in the Human Female* (1953), in which he discussed certain conventional notions of human sexuality, and on that account touched upon many taboos and delicate subjects, such as paedophilia.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> Kinsey’s research might also have helped to start, together with the invention of the birth-control pill (1960s), a wave of woman liberation throughout the 1960s and beyond.

At the end of the 1940s society was changing drastically and, in September of 1947, the music scene saw Mahalia Jackson (1911-1972)<sup>18</sup> recording the hit *Move On Up A Little Higher*:

I'm gonna move on up a little higher  
Gonna meet old man Daniel  
Gonna move on up a little higher  
Gonna meet the Hebrew children  
Gonna move on up a little higher  
Meet Paul and Silas  
Gonna meet my friends and kindred  
Gonna move on up a little higher  
Gonna meet my loving mother

Composed by Rev. William Herbert Brewster (1897-1987),<sup>19</sup> the song, which is an encouragement for black people to seek for religious, social and economical upward mobility, celebrates an Afro affirmative attitude within post-war American society, and became some kind of a national anthem in the USA for those fighting for equal rights between white and black people. Brewster said of the song:

The fight for rights here in Memphis was pretty rough on the Black church.... and I wrote that song "Move on Up a Little Higher."... We'll have to move in the field of education. Move into the professions and move into politics. Move in anything that any other race has to have to survive. That was a protest idea and inspiration. I was trying to inspire Black people to move up higher. Don't be satisfied with the mediocre... Before the freedom fights started, before the Martin Luther King days, I had to lead a lot of protest meetings. In order to get my message over, there were things that were almost dangerous to say, but you could sing it. (Ramsey, 2003:52)

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<sup>18</sup> Mahalia Jackson was a black female gospel singer from the USA. A prominent supporter of the Civil Rights Movement, and considered the world's greatest gospel singer, she sang *I've Been 'Buked, and I've Been Scorned* at her good friend Martin Luther King Jr.'s *I Have a Dream* speech in 1963, and *Take My Hand, Precious Lord* at his funeral in 1968. (Donloe, 1992:151-7). Other important black female singers from the same era as Mahalia Jackson were Marian Anderson and Rosetta Tharpe.

<sup>19</sup> Brewster was a pastor at East Trigg Avenue Baptist Church, one of the places where Elvis Presley learnt the moves from his heroes of gospel music.

Brewster's words above bring a sense of occasion common to any following protest movements: although one could not say it in an outspoken way, possibly because of censorship or persecution, one could sometimes sing it without much trouble, which is something quite similar to what happened within many societies that practiced censorship. About Mahalia Jackson's performance and voice, her friend Martin Luther King Jr. commented that a voice like Mahalia's would come along once in a millennium or so. Hers was a voice which would represent and sing the rights of black people in America for many years throughout her extremely successful career.

The 1950s did not bring a more peaceful perspective, and in 1951 the nationalisation of the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company (AIOC) by the Iranian Prime Minister Mohammed Mussadeh, which was under British control, precipitated a crucial and long crisis (the Abadan Crisis)<sup>20</sup> with Britain and the USA, which ended with Mussadeh being overthrown by a coup d'état in 1953. In 1952, the Mau Mau revolt<sup>21</sup> attacks on British colonial land policies started, and some of its leaders were imprisoned by British forces in 1953 due to their fight for independence. Meanwhile, rebels of the MNR (Movimiento Nacionalista Revolucionario) [Revolutionary Nationalist Movement]<sup>22</sup> in Bolivia gained control of the government and set out a nationalist programme for agrarian reform in the country.<sup>23</sup> In 1953, the Republican

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<sup>20</sup> The Abadan Crisis was regarded as a victory for the Russians and soon ended with the coup d'état codenamed as Operation Ajax by the MI6 and the CIA.

<sup>21</sup> The revolt happened in Kenya which was known at that time as British East Africa.

<sup>22</sup> Even after an electoral victory in 1951, the MNR was obstructed by the military from exercising its power, which was regained in 1952 with a revolt establishing Víctor Paz Estenssoro as Bolivia's President.

<sup>23</sup> The agrarian reform in Latin America would become an important and unsolved issue to be dealt with for the decades to come. In Brazil it has been tirelessly discussed and defended by writers, singers and movements such as the Movimento dos Trabalhadores Rurais Sem Terra, the MST.

Dwight D. Eisenhower was elected USA's 34<sup>th</sup> President and Richard Nixon was his Vice-President.<sup>24</sup> In the arts, American disc-jockey Alan Freed<sup>25</sup> organised what was recognized as the first ever Rock'n'Roll concert, the five-act show "The Moondog Coronation Ball", on 21<sup>st</sup> March 1952 at the Cleveland Arena. In January 1953 Arthur Miller's *The Crucible*, an allegory of the Communist witch-hunt,<sup>26</sup> was premiered and received a Tony Award as Best Play of the year. In the same month in Yugoslavia,<sup>27</sup> Socialism was established by President Josip Broz Tito, who replaced Ivan Ribar. Joseph Stalin died in March 1953, initiating a prominent political power struggle between different thinkers and politicians in the Soviet Union. Following the 'red scare', the couple Julius and Ethel Rosenberg, from New York, was accused of passing information to the Soviet Union about the atomic bomb, and became the first civilians to be executed for espionage in the USA in June 1953. In science, experiments using mice linked cancer to the use of tobacco for the first time; and the 'double helix' of DNA was found by Francis Crick and James Watson. In the media, commercial advertisement campaigns became wide-spread, and with the USA households operating over twenty million television sets, the power of media and its potential range became much stronger than at the beginning of the decade, which

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<sup>24</sup> Nixon would become well-known for his resignation from the presidency (in 1974) due to the possibility of impeachment and conviction in the Senate in relation to the Watergate scandal.

<sup>25</sup> Freed was known for promoting African-American and blues music by the name of rock and roll on the radio in the USA and Europe at the beginning of the 1950s.

<sup>26</sup> The play is based on the 1692 events that led to the Salem Witch Trials, which were a series of hearings to prosecute over 150 people accused of witchcraft in the colonial province of Massachusetts, and it is considered to be a response to McCarthyism, when the USA government blacklisted people accused of Communism, Miller included.

<sup>27</sup> Following June 1950 - when an important bill on 'self-management' (*samoupravljanje*), written by Milovan Dilas and Tito, was approved by National Assembly which explored profit sharing with workers through state-run enterprises – in 1953 a law was institutionalised on self-management as the basis of the entire social order in Yugoslavia. The name Yugoslavia was completely nullified in 2003 with the creation of the State Union of Serbia and Montenegro, which became independent in 2006.

would start a trend of unstoppable force of that segment of communication. As this thesis develops, it will become apparent how the porousness of Brazilian social fabrics evinces time and again the lived histories of not only a set of often highly manipulated 'national' images but also an often unconscious, or semi-conscious social imaginary of 'the other', 'other', 'otherness'.

## Brazil during the Post-War Period

During and after WWII Brazil was experiencing an extremely difficult political period, dominated by the figure of Getúlio Vargas ruling a dictatorial system, which lasted from 1930 to 1945 - when he was deposed by a military coup d'état – to his democratic election in 1951 until his suicide in 1954. Vargas was very close to Franklin Roosevelt's ideals and the USA model of development, and his regime is fundamental to understand Brazil's (and Latin America's) history in the first half of the twentieth century, and the directives that many countries took in regards to their proximity with the USA. Vargas first presidency was marked by the collapse of the American economy, the Great Depression and the Second World War; and his second mandate was a right-wing regime, dominated by a strong Communist scare, typical of the period, which would support and represent a desire, from the part of the army, to control the country and avoid the spread of Communist ideals.

The end of the 1950s was a period of musical awakening for Brazil in terms of Rock'n'Roll, and the radios started to play songs of the national "mulatinho americano", as the Brazilian Rock'n'Roll was called by then. (Dapieve, 2005:11-13) Many songwriters and singers of this era of Rock'n'Roll were singing versions or parodies of the original American songs, and satirising them. The song *Chiclete com Banana* (1959), by Gordurinha and Almira Castilho, is a good example immortalised by Jackson do Pandeiro, where Gordurinha challenges the foreign genre and



knowledge of “Uncle Sam” as a figure representative of the all-American trends, and their misinterpretations of Brazilian music and culture:

- 1 *Eu só boto bip-bop no meu samba*  
I will only put be-bop in my samba
- 2 *Quando o Tio Sam tocar num tamborim*  
When Uncle Sam plays a tambourine
- 3 *Quando ele pegar no pandeiro e no zabumba*<sup>28</sup>  
When he holds the pandeiro and the zabumba
- 4 *Quando ele aprender*  
When he learns
- 5 *Que o samba não é rumba*  
That samba is not rumba
- 6 *Aí eu vou misturar Miami com Copacabana*  
Then I'll mix Miami with Copacabana
- 7 *Chiclete eu misturo com banana*  
Chewing gum I mix with banana
- 8 *E o meu samba vai ficar assim*  
And my samba is gonna sound like this
- 9 *Tirurururiruri bop-be-bop-be-bop*  
Tirurururiruri bop-be-bop-be-bop
- 10 *Quero ver a grande confusão*  
I want to see the great confusion
- 11 *É o samba-rock meu irmão*  
It's samba-rock my brother
- 12 *É o samba-rock meu irmão*  
It's samba-rock my brother
- 13 *Mas em compensação*  
But on the other hand
- 14 *Eu quero ver um boogie-woogie*  
I want to see a boogie-woogie
- 15 *De pandeiro*<sup>29</sup> *e violão*  
Using the pandeiro and the acoustic guitar
- 16 *Eu quero ver o Tio Sam*  
I want to see Uncle Sam
- 17 *De frigideira*  
Using a frying pan
- 18 *Numa batucada*<sup>30</sup> *brasileira*  
In a Brazilian batucada

Gordurinha criticises the lack of cultural knowledge on the part of the Americans because they confuse *rumba* with *samba* (line 5), and challenges their notion of the

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<sup>28</sup> *Zabumba* is a type of bass drum, similar to an *atabaque*, used in Brazilian traditional genres, mostly coming from the Northeast of the country, such as *forró*, *xote*, *xaxado*, and *baião*.

<sup>29</sup> *Pandeiro* is a type of tambourine which can be tuned on its head, and has metal jingles cupped giving it a crisper sound.

<sup>30</sup> *Batucada* is a drumming sessions, generally using different types of drums.

In the land of ‘Uncle Sam’, one of Brazil’s most famous female singers of all times, Carmen Miranda, created a national polemic related to her choice of living in the USA in the 1940s and 1950s.<sup>31</sup> Although singing in Portuguese in most of her performances abroad, she was accused by the Brazilian media of having deserted her Brazilian and Portuguese roots; and also of being an instrument of American interests in Latin America, and a supporter of Getúlio Vargas populist campaigns. Miranda’s response to those allegations would come through the song *Disseram Que Eu Voltei Americanizada* [They Said I’ve Come Back Americanised], written by Luiz Peixoto and Vicente Paiva in 1940.

<sup>31</sup> Miranda was also criticised because of her following of Getúlio Vargas's "Good Neighbour" campaign in regards to the USA.

4 *E fico arrepiada ouvindo uma cuíca*<sup>32</sup>  
 And that I get goose-bumps listening to a cuíca  
 5 *Disseram que com as mãos estou preocupada*  
 They said that I'm worried about my hands  
 6 *E corre por aí que ouvi um certo zum-zum*  
 And there is a rumour that I heard a buzz  
 7 *Que já não tenho molho, ritmo, nem nada*  
 That I no longer have spice, rhythm, or anything else  
 8 *E dos balangandãs já nem existe mais nenhum*  
 And that there are none of the trinkets anymore  
 9 *Mas p'rá cima de mim, p'rá que tanto veneno?*  
 But why me, why so much venom?  
 10 *Eu posso lá ficar americanizada?*  
 How can I become Americanized?  
 11 *Eu que nasci com samba e vivo no sereno*  
 I was born with samba and live in the dew  
 12 *Topando a noite inteira a velha batucada*  
 Going all night long with the drum-beat  
 13 *Nas rodas de malandro, minhas preferidas*  
 In the trickster's circles, my preferred ones  
 14 *Eu digo é mesmo "eu te amo" e nunca "I love you"*  
 I really say "eu te amo" and never "I love you"  
 15 *Enquanto houver Brasil... na hora das comidas*  
 Whilst there is Brazil... when it comes to foods  
 16 *Eu sou do camarão ensopadinho com chuchu!*  
 As for me, I go for shrimp with chayote

Carmen Miranda can be considered the, albeit constructed, Brazilian precursor 'queen' of the international immortalization and stylization of the caricatured image of the Brazilian, and Latin-American, woman as jealous, angry, with heavy accent and exaggerated manners. However she was the one who actually projected Brazil's national cultural production outwards, not only bringing the foreign inwards, but exporting a controversial notion of Brazilianess (Lisa Shaw, 2005:185-7), with her portrayal of the Bahiana, with her trade-marked dresses, jewelry and fruit-filled turbants.

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<sup>32</sup> *Cuíca* is a type of friction drums generally termed as a 'laughing' or 'crying gourd' because of its screechy sound.

Still within the nationalist sphere, after the withdrawal of the French troops and the division of Vietnam into Southern and Northern regions in 1954, a conflict started between the two Vietnams with allies from both sides of the hemisphere fighting against each other. The Northern Communist Vietnam creating an alliance with China and Russia generated a strong fear in the USA of a Communist dominance in the region. Communism and the Cold War had then become an evil threat to the USA, and because of the ruling of the Soviet Union in Eastern Europe, the Korean War and the unrest in Cuba, an anti-Communist witch-hunt was accelerated and enforced by Senator Joseph McCarthy through the nationally televised Army-McCarthy Hearings, which were formally censored by Congress.<sup>33</sup> Following McCarthy's fear that Latin American countries would eventually embrace Communism, Guatemala's President Jacobo Arbenz<sup>34</sup> was deposed by a CIA-supported coup d'état and replaced by a military junta, headed by Colonel Carlos Castillo in 1954.

In a certain way, Latin America became a special case in the 1950s and 1960s due to its almost collective revolutionary spirit and its threat to American foreign policies against Communism. In Brazil it would not be different, and the best representative of the witch-hunt over the 'red scare' was one of its most influential Presidents,

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<sup>33</sup> This period became known as McCarthyism, the politically motivated practice of making accusations of disloyalty, subversion, or treason without proper regard for evidence. The hearings were an investigation on allegations from the Army part that McCarthy, and his chief counsel Roy Cohn, were seeking special military treatment to Gerald David Schine, who published in 1952 an anti-communist pamphlet called *Definition of Communism*, becoming friends with the two men. McCarthy reacted accusing the Army of retaliation over his eventful investigations of suspected Communist and security safety in the Army; which might have caused his decline in popularity.

<sup>34</sup> Arbenz went into exile just after the coup, and died in his bathroom in Mexico in 1971 under suspicious circumstances.

Getúlio Vargas. At the time a populist governor of the state of Rio Grande do Sul and pro-industrial nationalist, and also an anti-Communist politician, Vargas had a very, perhaps too, close relationship with his country's politics, and ended up paying the price by taking his own life because of the pressures during his presidency. Democratically re-elected in 1951, he committed suicide in the Palace of presidency in 1954 over political demands coming from the same army which had supported him twenty-four years before.

Following the two great wars, Brazil had become known as the 'sleeping giant of the Americas'<sup>35</sup> with a potential to become a world power, a country facing an ever rapid industrialisation and urbanisation period. At the same time, the dominating powers of the oligarchs and land owners did not have a strong enough interest in developing certain social aspects such as urbanisation or industrialisation.

Installed by the politically active Brazilian army as the provisional President,<sup>36</sup> Vargas's regime substituted a military junta which ousted President Washington Luís, from 1930 to 1934, through a coup d'état led by the bourgeois industrialist and military discontentment against the *política café com leite* and the *coronelismo*

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<sup>35</sup> The expression 'sleeping giant of the Americas' is a taking on the old saying that Brazil is the "country of the future", which comes from the Brazilian National Anthem, with song-text by Joaquim Osório Duque Estrada, and music by Francisco Manuel da Silva, made official by the *Lei nº 5.765 de 1971*. A passage of the anthem reads as follows: "A giant by thine own nature"; "Eternally lain on a splendid cradle"; and also "thy future mirrors thy greatness". These verses could be interpreted as if one day this colossal giant is going to awake and show its power to the rest of the world. See <[http://www.planalto.gov.br/ccivil\\_03/constituicao/hino.htm](http://www.planalto.gov.br/ccivil_03/constituicao/hino.htm)>

<sup>36</sup> Vargas was brought into power three weeks before the President elected on March 1930, Júlio Prestes, could be officially inaugurated.

dominance.<sup>37</sup> Vargas aimed to take Brazil out of the Great Depression crisis praising the nationalistic bourgeois. He was then elected President by the parliament, and served from 1934 to 1937, when he passed a new Constitution (1934) which would resemble the Italian corporatism of industrial growth and suppression of left-wing forces. This was a period marked by changes in Vargas's policies and an ever growing anti-Semitism feeling through the popularisation and "support to the Integralists".<sup>38</sup> Founded and led by Plínio Salgado as Ação Integralista Brasileira (AIB) [Brazilian Integralist Action], according to Sandra Mcgee Deutsch, the Integralists

Greeted each other by raising their right arms and saying *Anauê*, repeating the term three times to greet the Chefe and twice to greet other officials. The salutation supposedly came from the Tupi word for "good", thus tying Integralism to what was indigenous, yet the arm gesture obviously was the Italian Fascist one. (Deutsch, 1999:257)

In 1950, Vargas was back in the Palace, this time democratically elected and known as the 'father of the poor' for his populist policies by legalising labour unions, or granting suffrage to women, and organising many social security reforms such as maternity leave, paid vacation, and minimum wages for workers. (Levine, 1998) At

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<sup>37</sup> The Coffee with Milk politics refers to the dominance of the states of São Paulo (for its coffee production) and Minas Gerais (for its dairy products) during the Old Republic period (1889-1930); and Colonelism was a "plan [which] depended on the action of the 'colonels', who were great landowners whose title derived from their participation in the National Guard, an institution that secured the national order during the Empire. They controlled the regional electorate, campaigned for the official candidates and supervised the non-secret vote and its count." [http://www.tse.gov.br/internet/ingles/historia\\_eleicoes/coronelismo.htm](http://www.tse.gov.br/internet/ingles/historia_eleicoes/coronelismo.htm) For more on the issue of Colonelism in Brazil, see: Chapter 4.

<sup>38</sup> The Integralists, from Integral Nationalism, were followers of a fascist rooted movement within urban Brazil. One of the most well-known examples of its anti-Semitic roots was the deportation, by Vargas in 1936, of the pregnant Olga Benário Prestes, German-born Jewish wife of political enemy Luís Carlos Prestes, leader of the *Movimento dos Tenentes*. Olga was accused, and convicted, of being an illegal immigrant and a spy working for the Soviet Union. She was sent to Nazi Germany, as a gift to the Fuehrer, where she would be gassed in a concentration camp in 1942. Her story became an acclaimed movie in Brazil in 2004, *Olga*.

the end of his mandate, Vargas would aspire to a nationalist policy, rendering to Brazil's natural resources and far afield from foreign dependency. It was with that nationalistic thinking in mind that in 1953 Vargas founded the Brazilian Oil Company Petrobras (Petróleo Brasileiro), a mixed-ownership state company which, until 1997, was the only company allowed exploring, producing, refining and transporting oil in Brazil. Created to be the salvation of the Brazilian economy, Petrobras was 'resuscitated' in 1974 with the discovery of an oil reserve at the Bacia de Campos, Rio de Janeiro.

Vargas regime ended with a request by the military for his resignation, which he rejected. As a reaction to the pressures, he committed suicide on the 24<sup>th</sup> August 1954 in the Catete Palace in an attempt to avoid a military coup d'état. The military attempt of a coup d'état in Brazil during Vargas regime could be considered as a prenunciation of what would happen in the nation, and other Latin American countries throughout the following years, as if in a cascade of dictatorial systems.

Following Vargas's suicide, the popular commotion surrounding his death might have been the reason for the failure of the desired coup d'état. Vargas's elected Vice-President (João Fernandes Campos) Café Filho (1899-1970) could then peacefully take control of the office following the President's suicide, resigning from his position two months later. Café Filho was replaced, for two days, by the next in the line of succession, Carlos Coimbra da Luz, President of the Chamber of Deputies. Carlos da Luz was deposed through efforts of General Henrique 'Teixeira Lott' (1894-1984), War Minister, by having the Congress approving "a military request for a

stage of siege (a form of martial law), which only elapsed with the inauguration of President [Juscelino] Kubitschek [de Oliveira] in January 1956” (Roett, 1999:109-10), and his vice-President João [Belchior Marques] Goulart (1919-1976).

According to Riordan Roett, the presidency of Juscelino Kubitschek (popularly known as JK) (1956-1961) was

politically the most tranquil of the... Republic. By maintaining political stability and a relatively high rate of economic growth, the administration achieved a large degree of legitimacy. By combining nationalism and economic development, Kubitschek received sufficient popular support to ward off any challenge from either civilian or military dissidents. (Roett, 1999:110)

Following his candidacy’s slogan “fifty years of progress in five” (Roett, 1999:148), JK had many achievements in terms of democracy, society and politics, yet the greatest would be through the construction of the modern capital of the country, Brasília, in 1957. The capital was an old project for the integration of the country’s regions which only materialised in 1960, the same year that Jânio (da Silva) Quadros (1917-1992) won the elections for President.

Even though the country was seemingly enjoying a calm and optimistic period, President Jânio Quadros would stay in power for less than seven months, resigning on the 25<sup>th</sup> August 1961. With Vice-President João Goulart (popularly known as Jango) absent due to a visit to the People’s Republic of China, the “President of the Chamber of Deputies became acting President” (Roett, 1999:111) whilst “the military ministers, led by War Minister General Odílio Denys opposed Goulart.” (ibid.) An opposition of forces between the military and the legalists would not allow



Jango to be inaugurated, and had Ranieri Mazzilli<sup>39</sup> as the official President until 7<sup>th</sup> September, a few days after Jango's return from China, when he was finally inaugurated as President of the country.

Jango aimed high with his polemic *Reformas de Base* [Basic Reforms] when planning to tackle adult illiteracy; giving the right to vote to illiterates; proposing a land reform at a time of larger agricultural than urban population, amongst other economic and social measures. With those proposed reforms, Jango upset the military and jeopardised his political future by precipitating “the events that led to the collapse of the democratic regime in 1964” (Cohen, 1994:78), also leading Jango into exile to Uruguay.

The mid-1960s onwards were still to prove to be years of more unrest and transformations for this developing country walking towards its dreamt future.

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<sup>39</sup> Born Pascoal Ranieri Mazzilli (1910-1975), Italian descendent, was a Brazilian politician who would be President of Brazil twice, in 1961 and 1964.

## **Chapter 2 – The World in Rock’n’Roll, an affair between music and politics in the 1960s and 1970s**

In this chapter, I shall argue that in terms of artistic, cultural, and, ultimately, musical development, a generation is almost inevitably going to follow an inverted path as to that of its prior generation, shifting paradigms and choices so to reinforce its own re-constructed way of feeling and expressing. A tension between styles, topics, and genres is going to be sought for as in an attempt to shock and distinctively deal with the models of a generation ‘gone by’ in the minds and hearts of the younger ones. Moreover, I also want to argue that as the political and social circumstances of Brazil were deeply transformed from the 1960s to the 1980s, a distinct need of representing the anxieties of society witnessing those changes was fulfilled within song-writing and performance.

Most importantly, as it will be explored in this chapter, the 1960s was a time of protest and reactions to a changing world being reshaped since WWII, and many other smaller, but not less significant, conflicts around the world. In order to contextualise Brazil in this period, we are first going to go ‘around the world’ through a simple summary of events and musical movements related to them, which can be considered relevant for the discussion of this thesis, as an awareness of these events is essential for an understanding of the songs which shall be analysed in a later stage.

In the music scene, the summer of 1954 saw Elvis Presley (1935-77) recording the rockabilly<sup>40</sup> song *That's All Right (Mama)* by Black Tupelo bluesman Arthur 'Big Boy' Crudup, which would become one the anthems of the white rebellious youth from the South who combined "the raw, emotive, and slurred vocal style and emphasis on rhythmic feeling from the blues with the string band and strummed thym guitar from the country" (Friedlander, 2006:44) Following public outrage against Presley's 'black' singing, in Kansas, the Supreme Court unanimously ruled that state laws which established separated public schools for black and white children denied black students equal educational opportunities, and that racial segregation violated the 14<sup>th</sup> Amendment of the Constitution. Coincidentally, a year later, in 1955, Rosa Parks<sup>41</sup> was arrested and fined after she had refused to move to the back of a bus in Montgomery, Alabama, which started the famous Montgomery Bus Boycott, a political and social protest campaign which propelled the fight for the Civil Rights of blacks in America that would continue in the following decades.

With his "innate ability to fuse musical elements from black and white forms, creating a commercially viable synthesis" (Friedlander, 2006:48), Elvis was a star who could represent both the white "growing teen uneasiness... [and] black traditions", (ibid.) which were exploding in the 1950s. Although it is clear that Rock'n'Roll already existed before him, with the likes of Chuck Berry and Little Richard, Presley was undoubtedly one of the most popular Rock'n'Roll performers

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<sup>40</sup> Rockabilly, a portmanteau of rock'n'roll and hillbilly (or country music), is a 1950s Rock'n'Roll earliest style immortalised by Elvis Presley, Jerry Lee Lewis, Johnny Cash, amongst others. It comes from a mix of blues, R&B, boogie woogie and gospel.

<sup>41</sup> Parks is considered the 'Mother of the Modern-Day Civil Rights Movement' for her resistance to racial segregation. She also organised and collaborated with other civil rights leaders, including Martin Luther King.

of all times. However, the King of Rock'n'Roll 'was born no king'. Elvis's musical background was very diverse, as he was strongly influenced by his humble childhood, his birthplace and religious upbringing, adapting the singing and dancing of famous gospel singers of his time, such as Mahalia Jackson (1911-72) and Sister Rosetta Tharpe, of whom he recorded *Up Above My Head, Just A Closer Walk With Thee* and *Down By The Riverside*, amongst other tunes. From Elvis onwards the music scene would never be the same. His great success combined with an innovative managerial expertise, promotion and marketing of his artistic persona (helped by his manager Colonel Parker), served as a model for many artists who would follow him, changing concepts within the music industry, and also its distribution and consumption.

Even under strong criticism regarding his music as being a "nonmusic by and for subhuman juvenile delinquents" (Friedlander, 2006:48), Elvis was a symbol of "rebellion, sexuality, and youthful vitality" (ibid.), inspiring the youth of the 1950s to break with its prior generation, inspired by post-war values, thus becoming a pioneer of the social, cultural and political unrest of the following years.

Contrarily to the rebelliousness of Rock'n'Roll in the USA and the UK a different trend was starting in Brazil at the end of the 1950s, almost as a reaction to the internationalisation of music, Bossa Nova.

## **Bossa Nova, the Brazilian Jazz?**

Bossa Nova was probably the right response for the musical tensions of this era of changes and divergences. It is interesting to notice that on an internet search for ‘Bossa Nova history’ in 2010, the first hit that comes up is one for the *All About Jazz* homepage. The website announces on the first lines of the article that for almost “all Americans, the words ‘Bossa Nova’ are synonymous with Brazilian jazz” (Jacobson, 2003), whilst in Brazil it is considered to be a genre on its own, with influences from jazz and other genres. It is controversial to call Bossa Nova a movement because, according to Ruy Castro, it was a short lived moment in history as many other vanguard movements such as Tropicália, but as not many of them it survived its alleged five years of production and broadcast in Brazil with its songs being revitalised year after year by different performers over and over again, both within the country and abroad. (Castro, 2000:x-xi)

Brazil was, in the 1950s and 1960s, a country where influences coming from abroad were seen as unacceptable by many. It was then a country influenced by thoughts of a Brazilian music that would ‘fight’ the American Rock’n’Roll introduced at the end of the 1950s, which was fed by the first American record companies established in the country, working hand-in-hand with the modernized Brazil sponsored by the developmental-nationalist and capitalist government of Juscelino Kubitschek (1956/60) (Natalino, 1998).

Bossa Nova music with its national, subtle and intimate mood was created as a possibility, an alternative to overshadow and ostracise the noisy foreign-like sound of Rock'n'Roll, although for many critics it was still considered a genre too close to foreign influences through its touch of American Jazz, which was still far away from the 'rooted' and 'authentic' Brazilian rhythms.

Born in the heat of the Rock'n'Roll fever in 1958, with João Gilberto's release of *Chega de Saudade*, written by the famous duet Vinícius de Moraes and Tom Jobim, Bossa Nova was destined, from birth, to be the representative of Brazilian music from and to the 'intellectual' milieu. Most of its elements were previously members of selected clubs<sup>42</sup> and belonged to the well-educated middle-class, surrounded by the modernist ideals of Juscelino Kubitschek and the construction of the country's new capital, Brasília, replacing Rio de Janeiro. Some of the song-texts from this period can be considered a reflection of the discontent that many *Cariocas*<sup>43</sup> felt regarding the perceived debasement of Rio de Janeiro, and their way of voicing it by attempting to give back to the city its 'lost' cultural value.

It would be impossible to write about Bossa Nova without emphasising the importance of its three mentors: Tom Jobim (1927-1994), Vinícius de Moraes (1913-

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<sup>42</sup> A good example is the "Sinatra & Farney Fan Club" which was founded in 1949. Dick Farney, born Farnésio Dutra e Silva, was the Brazilian Sinatra who in 1946, aged 25, recorded the very famous song *Copacabana*.

<sup>43</sup> *Carioca* is the demonym (name for a resident of a locality) given to both men and women born in the city of Rio de Janeiro, and comes from the Tupi language (kara'iwa=white man, oka=house) meaning "white man's house" referring to the first Portuguese dwellings established along a clear stream of water. It is also a synonym for easy-going people, who are friendly and know how to enjoy life. The Portuguese spoken is another characteristic of the Cariocas, with emphasis on the strong way of pronouncing the 's' at the end of the words; and the presence of rhotacism (the conversion of another consonant into 'r') as in Creuza for Cleuza. This feature shall be relevant to the analysis of some songs in this thesis.

1980) and João Gilberto (b. 1931), as they were the brains and voices of this petty-bourgeois movement. Born Antônio Carlos Brasileiro de Almeida Jobim and Marcus Vinícius de Moraes, both in Rio de Janeiro, and João Gilberto Prado Pereira de Oliveira in Bahia, respectively, they were all influential characters in the Brazilian music scene throughout their careers; and in the case of João Gilberto, he still is. Some of their biggest hits include: *Chega de Saudade* [No More Longing] by Jobim and Moraes (1958), and *Corcovado* (1960) by Jobim, amongst others.

Culturally, the country was living a time of development and ‘national optimism’ with the modernity envisaged by its rulers, mostly Kubitschek’s, and *Rádio Nacional*<sup>44</sup> was a very important channel for transmissions which would reach many Brazilians across the country. It dominated the mass media with its *radio-teatro* [radio-theatre], *programas de auditório* [auditorium programmes], and *radionovelas* [radio soap operas], which would directly influence the nation on its taste for *telenovelas* [serialised soap operas]<sup>45</sup> when TV became popular in Brazil at the end of the 1950s. According to Lisa Shaw and Stephanie Dennison:

The state-run Rádio Nacional dominated Brazil’s airwaves, taking these intrinsically *carioca* shows to all four corners of the nation... [with] the Brazilian fascination for these programmes [laying] both in their artistic merits and in the attraction of the idealised federal capital of Rio de Janeiro, particularly for the

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<sup>44</sup> Also according to Shaw and Dennison, Rádio Nacional “was founded in 1936 and set about contracting the leading lights of Rio and São Paulo’s entertainment world, such as... singers Emilinha Borba, Ângela Maria, Cauby Peixoto... In 1940 Rádio Nacional was placed under government control and thus became the premier station in Brazil for over twenty years. The importance of radio in the lives of Brazilians living in remote communities was notably portrayed in Andrucha Waddington’s acclaimed film *Eu, tu, eles* (*Me, You, Them*, 1999).” (Dennison and Shaw, 2004:29) Rádio Nacional also helped immensely Getúlio Vargas spreading his nationalist ideologies.

<sup>45</sup> Shaw and Dennison argue that the well-developed “social routine of watching several *telenovelas* every night was established between 1968 and 1974, the most repressive period of the military regime... as people tended to keep off the streets after dark.” (Shaw and Dennison, 2005a:236)

inhabitants of Brazil's less developed regions, who were eager to taste modernity. (Dennison and Shaw, 2004:24)

The modernity aspired by the government and the population was well-represented by Brazilian cinema, which was also enjoying some prosperity through companies such as Atlântida and Vera Cruz<sup>46</sup> producing several films which would receive national and international appraisal, such as the award-winner *O Cangaceiro* (1953), by Lima Barreto, produced by Vera Cruz. This nationalist uplifting mood was also encouraged by the 1958 World Cup in Sweden, which Brazil won; followed by the 1959 victory of Brazil's basketball team in Chile, and the tennis player Maria Esther Bueno's success at Wimbledon. These achievements in sports helped bringing a sense of pride and victory to the Brazilian people, and a belief that the country was indeed 'the sleeping giant of the Americas', finally awakening with the industrialisation and progress envisaged by the successive governments since the 1930s.

According to Ruy Castro,<sup>47</sup> even though everything was proving to be satisfactory for this recently 'rediscovered country', the 'economic miracle' of "Brazil conjured up by Kubitschek's bold initiatives, Brasília's bold shapes, and Bossa Nova's bold sounds never quite materialized" (Castro, 2000:xii-xiii), and the hype of the Bossa Nova 'movement' would die-off within a few years within "the last months of 1962". (Severiano and Homem de Mello, 2006:15)

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<sup>46</sup> Atlântida was a film company (1941-1962), which became famous for its *chanchadas* (a Brazilian genre of comedy which parodied Hollywood movies and stars); and Vera Cruz was another producer from 1949 to 1974, the year in which it became mainly a movie distributor.

<sup>47</sup> Ruy Castro's book *Bossa Nova* (first edition in 1990) is noted here as one of the most relevant references of this musical genre. It is, however, beyond the scope of this thesis to explore this genre in any more depth.



It was only when Bossa Nova was already losing its ‘colours’ in Brazil that the album *Getz/Gilberto*<sup>48</sup> was released in the USA, in 1964. The album was a great success winning the 1965 Grammy Awards in the USA for Best Engineered Recording, Best Instrumental Jazz Album and Best Album. In the same award it also won Best Song of the Year<sup>49</sup> with the hit *Girl from Ipanema*, written by Vinícius de Moraes and Tom Jobim in 1962, which became one of Brazil’s postcard songs.<sup>50</sup> The album also introduced Astrud Gilberto,<sup>51</sup> João Gilberto’s wife since 1959, who became famous for singing this track and for her participation in the 1964 movie *Get Yourself a College Girl*, directed by Sidney Miller. The album became, throughout the years, a classic of Bossa Nova, with its iconic tracks:

1. *The Girl from Ipanema* (Antônio Carlos Jobim and Vinícius de Moraes)
2. *Doralice* (Dorival Caymmi and Antônio Almeida)
3. *Para Machucar Meu Coração* (Ary Barroso)
4. *Desafinado* (Jobim and Newton Mendonça)
5. *Corcovado* (Jobim and Gene Lees)
6. *Só Danço Samba* (Jobim and Vinícius)
7. *O Grande Amor* (Jobim and Vinícius)
8. *Vivo Sonhando* (Jobim)
9. *The Girl from Ipanema* (English version by Norman Gimbel)
10. *Corcovado*

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<sup>48</sup> Although *Getz/Gilberto* is one of the most famous Bossa Nova albums, Stan Getz himself was the international precursor of Bossa Nova with the release of *Jazz Samba*, in 1962, with songs by Jobim, Baden Powell, Ary Barroso, amongst others. With this album, Getz won the Best Jazz Performance-Soloist or Small Group (Instrumental) in the 1963 Grammy Awards for *Desafinado* (by Tom Jobim). In that year, Getz was in good company in the Awards ceremony: Peter, Paul and Mary (Folk and Pop); Mahalia Jackson (Gospel); Ella Fitzgerald and Tony Bennett (Pop); and Ray Charles (R&B) were some of the other winners.

<sup>49</sup> Some of the names running for the same award were Louis Armstrong with *Hello, Dolly!*; The Beatles with *I Want to Hold Your Hand*; and Barbra Streisand with *People*, all of whom won in the Pop category.

<sup>50</sup> The song is sometimes sung by female interpreters (Shirley Bassey, Ella Fitzgerald, The Supremes, Sarah Vaughan) as *The Boy From Ipanema*.

<sup>51</sup> Astrud Gilberto was born Astrud Weinert in Bahia in 1940. She married João Gilberto in 1959, and soon became the icon of Bossa Nova. In November 2008, she was awarded a “Lifetime Achievement” Grammy Award. <<http://www.astrudgilberto.com>>

As controverse as it can sound, Bossa Nova was such a success in the 1960s that it “became an obligatory pit stop on the career path of every sixties pop singer”. (Castro, 2000:x) Such ‘obligation’ can be witnessed, for example, through Elvis Presley’s recording of the song Bossa Nova *Baby* (by Jerry Leiber and Mike Stoller), for his 1963 movie *Fun in Acapulco*. The song is a rockabilly with Elvis playing with a Calypso band – and one could consider that the use of the expression ‘Bossa Nova’ here reminds us more of (Giacomo) Casanova, the 18<sup>th</sup> century Venetian author famous for being a womaniser, than the actual Brazilian music genre. Another example of the influence of Bossa Nova during this period is the song *Blame it on Bossa Nova* (written by Cynthia Weil and Barry Mann in 1963). In a Brill Building Sound style,<sup>52</sup> singer Eydie Gormé makes it clear that Bossa Nova is a contagious genre which made people connect with a romantic mood due to its soft tunes:

Blame it on the Bossa Nova with its magic spell  
 Blame it on the Bossa Nova that he did so well  
 Oh, it all began with just one little dance  
 But then it ended up a big romance  
 Blame it on the Bossa Nova  
 The dance of love  
 (Now was it the moon?)  
 No, no, the Bossa Nova  
 (Or the stars above?)  
 No, no, the Bossa Nova  
 (Now was it the tune?)  
 Yeah, yeah, the Bossa Nova  
 (The dance of love)

Bossa Nova soon became some sort of nostalgic memory for a grandeur time that was greater abroad than at home, reducing Bossa Nova to versions and reinventions of background music for lounge lovers and lift riders nationally and abroad. It comes

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<sup>52</sup> The Brill Building Sound is a musical aesthetics created in the 1960s addressed to female teenagers, and was named after the building at 1619 Broadway, New York, which housed more than 160 musicians during the 1960s, producing music like Neil Sedaka’s *Breakin’ Up is Hard to Do*, *Next Door to an Angel* and *Calendar Girl*.

not as a surprise that, despite its international short-lived success, without a strong nucleus which could hold it together, Bossa Nova was “left for dead [and] faded quietly and imperishably into the background” (Castro, 2000:xi), easily succumbing to the fast changing surroundings of Brazilian and the world’s society, and consequently its arts and culture. We only need to look around the struggles that were erupting around the world as an avalanche of hot political, social and economic lava. Its heat was surrounding the planet, and in each of the six continents many populations were affected by its ashes of claims and consequences.

Possibly because of the naivety of this foreign-like genre, frequently compared to Jazz, the “dizzying interplay between [João] Gilberto’s voice and his guitar” (Castro, 2000:xii) was not enough for younger singers and songwriters, whom, at the end of the 1960s, formed what would be known as Jovem Guarda [Youth Guard], which would soon be changed into a more socially and politically committed music, more in tune with Brazil’s reality of the 1960s of pre- and post- military coup d’état. Although even more rooted genres such as Samba, would get “steady influences from the American pop machine and [mixed with] the richly musical Brazilian hinterlands, midcentury commercial samba was a graceful, cosmopolitan product – a splendid example of modern pop-cultural design” (Castro, 2000:xii), and would succumb to those foreign influences.

The 1960s started with some disconcerting events such as the building of the Berlin Wall in 1961, and the diplomatic relations between Cuba and the USA worsening, leading to the Bay of Pigs Invasion as an attempt to overthrow Fidel Castro. As a

follow up of that attempt, the Cuban Missile Crisis would become the closest the world would get to a nuclear war, which, according to Robert McNamara, probably did not materialise because the American President John F. Kennedy (1917-63) “followed his own advice” on the 27<sup>th</sup> October 1962, “probably the single, most dangerous moment of the crisis” (McNamara *et al*, 1999:153). Discussing the events of that with his brother, Attorney-General Robert Kennedy, and “alluding to Tuchman’s book [*The Guns of August* (1962)],<sup>53</sup> the President told Bobby: ‘I am not going to follow a course which will allow anyone to write a comparable book about this time, *The Missiles of October*.’” President Kennedy was comparing this moment with the events which led to WWI, when the Austrian Archduke Franz Ferdinand was assassinated, even though American surveillance had indeed discovered Soviet missiles installed in Cuba, just a few miles away from the Florida coast.

A year later, in 1963, the USA lived another immense commotion with John F. Kennedy’s assassination, on the 22<sup>nd</sup> November, in Dallas, Texas. Vice-President Lyndon B. Johnson (1908-73) took up the office. On a brighter note, at the beginning of the 1960s in Greenwich Village (New York), one of the best-known music symbols of the Civil Rights movements and hippie culture in the USA “was discovered and signed to Columbia by John Hammond, the label’s maverick executive, in 1961.” (Covak and Spencer, 2010:42). His name was Robert Zimmerman (b. 1941), who, in 1962, became Bob Dylan.

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<sup>53</sup> *The Guns of August* is a Pulitzer Prize-awarded book written by Barbara W. Tuchman in 1962, where she retells in great detail the events leading to the First World War, from August 1914 onwards.

According to Ronald Lankford, “1963 was the moment of the American Folk Revival” (Lankford, 2005:ix-xvi) during the Newport Folk Festival. During the days of the festival, the audience saw and sang with some of the biggest names of the American folk music. Amongst them were “Peter, Paul, and Mary, the hottest folk act in America... Joan Baez, the queen of the folk scene, joined them, as did the recently crowned prince Bob Dylan.” (ibid.) In Rowland Scherman’s words (2009), Newport was the place where folk “was on its zenith in those days... [and] Dylan went from zero to hero” within a week. It would be the same Dylan - who, in 1963, shocked the audience with his songs – that two years later terrified them with his electric guitar.<sup>54</sup> It was possibly a premonition of the way folk should be heading in order to be more acceptable “for [a wider] public consumption”, changing from the “rough and wild as the rural enclaves it originated from”. (Lankford, 2005:xii)

According to Will Schmid, Bob Dylan “dedicated his life to becoming the next Woody Guthrie”. (Schmid 1990:17)<sup>55</sup> Dylan’s dedication would pay-off when he was made famous in 1963 with one of the most iconic American folk songs of all times, *Blowin’ in the Wind*.<sup>56</sup> Songs such as *We Shall Overcome* and *Down by the*

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<sup>54</sup> However, things were not always that good for Folk music, as from the 1950s groups such as The Weavers (performing regularly, but mostly clandestinely, between 1948 and 1964) were blacklisted on an unofficial list, which would lead them into hiding their guitars for a long time in 1953. McCarthy’s powers would be about to face a downfall, and at Christmas 1955 The Weavers would make “a triumphant comeback at Carnegie Hall” (Lankford, 2005:xii-xiii), followed by the contract signature of nineteen-year-old Joan Baez by Vanguard in 1958. The Great Folk Scare was then set up for success with songs such as “So Long (It’s Been Good to Know Yuh)” by Woody Guthrie (1937). Guthrie was a famous folk singer/songwriter who had “set the the mold for generations of singers and songwriters... [such as] Pete Seeger, dean of the American folk movement since 1950.” (Schmid, 1990:17)

<sup>55</sup> Still according to Schmid, “Dylan read and quoted Guthrie from his autobiography *Bound for Glory* or from *Sing Out!* Magazine, dressed like Guthrie, listened to all his records, sang, and played guitar and harmonica in the Guthrie style.” (Schmid, 1990:17)

<sup>56</sup> For striking images of the end of the 1963 Newport Folk Festival, see Murray Lerner (2007).

*Riverside*, were also widely performed “at rallies against American involvement in Vietnam [which] suggests that their general nature made them easily adaptable to a very specific situation”. (Perone, 2001:13) Those rallies made it possible for such songs to become famous and for *Blowin’ in the Wind* to be one of the leading anti-war songs in history.

How many roads must a man walk down  
Before you call him a man?  
Yes, ‘n’ how many seas must a white dove sail  
Before she sleeps in the sand?  
Yes, ‘n’ how many times must the cannon balls fly  
Before they’re forever banned?

(Refrain)

The answer, my friend, is blowin’ in the wind,  
The answer is blowin’ in the wind

How many years can a mountain exist  
Before it’s washed to the sea?  
Yes, ‘n’ how many years can some people exist  
Before they’re allowed to be free?  
Yes, ‘n’ how many times can a man turn his head,  
Pretending he just doesn’t see?

How many times must a man look up  
Before he can see the sky?  
Yes, ‘n’ how many ears must one man have  
Before he can hear people cry?  
Yes, ‘n’ how many deaths will it take till he knows  
That too many people have died?

Following the blowing of that wind, it is not surprising that nationally and, very soon, internationally a strong protest song movement would grow and develop as a way to reinforce the cry for answers to Dylan’s questions. Dylan’s song in particular, and protest song in the USA in general, were extremely important in the context of Civil Rights Movement in the country and as a fierce reaction to the deployment of troops to Vietnam. But those seeds of rebellion were brought to other pastures, and

soon those winds of change would work as a perfect propeller to empower other parts of the world where movements alike were already been developed. Note that by 1963 those same seeds of rebellion blown by the wind that Dylan's protest song caught were reaching south-east Asia and Vietnam, but they were also spreading in Europe (where soon revolutions would explode), and certainly, also in many African countries which became independent from the beginning of the 1960s.

Based on the power that protest music performed, and still performs, I would like to argue that music is made up of relationships, in the sense that although it does affect existing relationships, it also strongly establishes and represents new ones, which would be the case for different cultures to share and assimilate each other's music. According to Ian Peddie, "music affects a relationship. The myriad assumptions at the heart of this assertion are the foundations upon which the study of popular music is based. Yet like any other relationship... our experience of music defies easy analysis." (Peddie, 2006:xvi) Within the relationships music develops with humans, one of the most powerful and most important for the analysis of the songs in this thesis is its relationship with politics. It is almost like an affair, virtually illicit. It is an affair because it involves infidelity, bringing about complex consequences due to its ups and downs, its moments of passion followed by hate, mutual understanding followed by conflict and disagreement. A relationship where such disagreements can lead to manifestations of discontent, of perplexity, which can create an animosity which ultimately contributes to a break up, to a separation of ideals and dreams, with a possibility of producing great noise and disturbance to the once quiet association.

This disturbance can be named protest, and the noise, its music, reverberates in many different forms and genres.

A strong example of this relationship is Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and the delivery of his famous speech *I Have a Dream*,<sup>57</sup> on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial in Washington D.C. in 1963. Luther King's "words sparked one of the biggest social upheavals that the United States has ever seen", and allegedly it was his deep trust and friendship with Mahalia Jackson what gave her the confidence, and the right, to call him forth with her cry "Tell them about the dream, Martin!" which ignited his stating of his 'dream' passages, and at that moment "it was about Martin *and* Mahalia, the politics *and* the music." (Werner, 1998:10)<sup>58</sup> It was about their intimate and personal relationships with each other, and with one's politics (the man) and the other's music (the woman), being able to prove the point of the inseparable relationship between music and politics, two lovers who fight, but reconcile in the end to perpetuate their love story. The same type of 'love story' would be amplified in Brazil...

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<sup>57</sup> According to Silverman, this speech was at the centennial celebrations of the Emancipation Proclamation, to an audience of 200,000 civil right supporters gathered at what became known as the March on Washington. (Silverman, 1992:41)

<sup>58</sup> Italics is in the original.



## Revolution or coup d'état? Brazil 1964

It has been almost half a century since the dictatorship was first established in Brazil in April 1964, and for many people within different groups related to the events which led to a twenty-year long dictatorship, it is either a vague, resilient and recurrent memory, or a traumatic and historical moment. For those same people, due to many different personal and/or political reasons, the Brazilian military dictatorship can be viewed as either a revolution or a *golpe de estado* [coup d'état] depending on which side of the debate the argument is coming from, and whether it is supported by its people or not. As a wider concept, a dictatorship is considered a revolution when it is coming from “sectors of society which do not belong to the ruling elites”, be it military or not; whilst it is considered a coup d'état when perpetrated by “key sectors of the Estate bureaucracy: the military leaders”. (Paes, 1995:17) Although there is a view that it was a necessary step in order to stop the ‘Communist wave’ which was suffocating Latin America and many other parts of the world, we are dealing with the Brazilian case, as previously mentioned, as a coup d'état based on the assumptions above. A tension point is achieved when contrasting the two ideas based on fragments of ideologies of that time, on one side the Left, “defeated Nationalists”, who saw the coup d'état as a “reactionary and *entreguista* dictatorship” (ibid.:20);<sup>59</sup> on the other side is the Right, who considered the Left as “defenders of Socialism” who needed to be defeated so that the Right itself could “defend an endangered

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<sup>59</sup> *Entreguista*, as in the verb *entregar* (to hand over), “was a widespread term used... to indicate the action of those social sectors allied to foreign capital, which ‘handed over’ the country to the action of American Imperialism.” (Paes, 1995:20)

country.” In that sense, the coup d’état in Brazil in 1964 is seen by the Right as a patriotic measure. (ibid.:20-21)

This is a vague deliberation if considering the fact that most of the younger generation, sons and daughters of the 1970s and 1980s, do not know or understand much about the times of repression and imprisonment, torture and murder. They can continue to express this internalised censorship, this social amnesia, because people who lived the period either genuinely do not remember, or do not want to remember. It could be said that there is a sense of ‘forgetting in order to forgive’ amongst the Brazilian population, and students do not protest against the persistent problems still faced in Brazil: Education, Health, and Housing system. It is as if not writing or not talking about it would erase the experiences and consequences of a military presence which lasted for more than twenty years. But the fact is that *there was* a military dictatorship, installed by a coup d’état, on the 31<sup>st</sup> March 1964, which overthrew the President João Goulart.

João Goulart (Jango) was the President of Brazil since Jânio Quadros’s abdication in 1961. The beginning of his mandate was characterised by the attempt at a friendly relationship with the USA, mainly through President Kennedy since their first meeting in April 1962 in Washington. However, after Jango’s return to his daily presidential activities in Brazil, with the building up of the financial crisis and a small heart attack, he was on the brink of considering resigning. His resignation did not happen, but the Parliamentary crisis in June 1962, when the Prime-Minister Tancredo Neves and his whole chamber resigned, ultimately lead to a plebiscite to

analyse the Presidential crisis, culminating in the end of his mandate through the establishment of the military dictatorship in 1964.

Because of the Missile Crisis in Cuba, President Kennedy had to postpone yet again his visit to Brazil. The meeting would happen in December 1962, but Kennedy was replaced by his brother Robert Kennedy, USA's Attorney-General. The meeting was a disappointment for the USA, for Jango acknowledged the infiltrations of Communists in certain syndicates in Brazil, yet "declared to have total control of the situation." (Parker, 1977:37-52)<sup>60</sup> With the death of President Kennedy in November 1963, Parker considered that the connection between the two countries was broken, which is confirmed by the fact that Jango's "visit to Washington did not turn into a foundation for a strong collaboration between Brazil and the USA." (Parker, 1977:75-6) The already unstable Brazilian military forces started to organise under the leadership of the Chief of Staff of the Army, General Humberto de Alencar 'Castelo Branco' (1900-67), and on the 30<sup>th</sup> March 1964, "Governor Magalhães Pinto announced a manifest denouncing Goulart's government and defending the right of the military to fight for the 'glorious' fate which was given to them by the Constitution." (ibid.:98) At the same time, the USA had sent instructions to all its consulates in Brazil to be vigilant, and on the 31<sup>st</sup> of March, a meeting in Washington was already considering what kind of aerial and naval support the USA could provide, supplemented by the dispatch of weapons and ammunition as "preventive support to the conspirators." (ibid.:101)

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<sup>60</sup> Note that because of the impossibility of obtaining a copy of Parker's original book in English, I will use my own translation in the thesis.

On the 1<sup>st</sup> April a naval command was established at Copacabana Beach, and a teletype sent to the American Department of State at the end of that afternoon stated: “We believe that everything is finished, with a 95% victorious democratic rebellion... and the ostensible military support from the United States for the overthrow of Goulart became unnecessary.” (Parker, 1977:108) According to Parker, in the morning of 1<sup>st</sup> April, “Auro de Moura Andrade, President of the Brazilian Senate, declared vacant the Brazilian presidency, without the vote of Congress... [and] the President of the Supreme Federal Court held the investiture of an interim President, Paschoal Ranieri Mazzilli, [then] President of the Chamber of Deputies”. (ibid.:111) Mazzilli was in the office for a few days until the first military President, former General and now Marshal Castelo Branco, was inaugurated, with the civilian politician José Maria Alkmin (1901-74) as vice-President. One of the most extreme international measures of Castelo Branco was to sever diplomatic relations with Cuba. (Gunson, 1989:54) In March 1967, Marshal Arthur da Costa e Silva (1902-69) succeeded Castelo Branco, with another civilian politician, Pedro Aleixo, as vice-President. (ibid.:83) Echoing McCarthyism in the USA, this was a time of distress and prosecutions against those Brazilians considered anti-nationalistic.

Possibly because of the persistence of innumerable social and political problems of that period, those who lived through them kept a resilient memory of the dictatorship. Perhaps that can be explained by the fact that some of the issues the singers and songwriters were complaining about and fighting for are still pertinent in the present day, such as a better Education and Health System. A sense of déjà-vu, of things not past, not dealt with, is still engraved in the memories of that generation, when

listening to Caetano Veloso singing *Tropicália*, or Chico Buarque's *Roda Viva*, for example. One can just attempt to grasp the mood of the 1950s and 1960s by trying to understand what those people who fought those fights were thinking, but in the case of Brazil, it is almost like a silent memory, a quiet cry. (Paes, 1995:3)

Following the world's armament race and economic growth came the industrial and technological boom mainly characterised by the dominance of multinationals from the Capitalist world, which, according to Paes, would 'invade' or erase the national boundaries of the countries in which they were implemented. These companies, settled in foreign countries, would make their own rules and decisions on production and administration based on their national models, disregarding, and sometimes colliding with, local, both social and governmental, interests, rules and goals. The disruption caused by such programmes would generate what is known as "inverted wealth distribution" (Paes, 1995:7), where the proceeds of their activities within the country in question would be taken back to the head office in higher concentration than the ones invested in the country of production, in a relationship where a richer investor 'exploits' an underdeveloped, dependent country. In that sense, the USA became one of the strongest enemies of poorer countries, in Latin America in particular, and the rest of the world, with emphasis on the cases of "Sukarno's Indonesia, Vargas and Goulart's Brazil, Allende's Chile, and Perón's Argentina" (ibid.), to name just a few. In order to fight against Imperialism, the Socialist countries formed an anti-imperialist alliance which united different social sectors in order to expel capitalists from their countries and thus strengthen a workers-based structure for those emerging societies.

Not only for Brazil, but also for many other countries, 1964 was a year of disillusionment and struggle. For others it was a year of achievements, in society, sciences and politics, such as the October march, in Berkeley, California, where students march for Civil Rights, performing songs and crying for freedom, creating the Free Speech Movement. In the South there was a clamour for the end of the Vietnam War, which would be followed by riots against “overcrowded and badly equipped universities” in Western Europe (Meyer & Tarrow, 1998:1). The American Civil Rights Act of 1964, overruling the Jim Crow Laws,<sup>61</sup> was an achievement after so many years of protest and struggle, which was immediately followed by the Voting Rights Act of 1965, finally providing racial and social minorities with some rights denied until then. Very close to seeing his wishes come true was Bill McAdoo who, in 1957, inspired by the Montgomery Bus Boycott of 1955, wrote the song *Walk On, Alabama* in which he mentions this episode and the Jim Crow Laws in the lines “If we don’t ride those buses don’t roll/Gonna quit payin’ money to that old Jim Crow/Come on brother, join our line/Cause I’m sick and tired of those Jim Crow signs.” (Silverman, 1992:47) This is a strong and passionate song crying for the end of the racial segregation achieved through the Civil Rights Bill passed on 2<sup>nd</sup> July 1964, just a few months apart from South African National Congress leader Nelson Mandela being sentenced to life imprisonment, which became a major point of contention for supporters of anti-apartheid ideals.

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<sup>61</sup> The Jim Crow Laws were local and state laws which originated from the Black Laws of 1865, and were in use since the 1870s to impose racial segregation in the US, mainly in the South. The etymology comes from a blackface character performed by comedian Thomas Dartmouth which mocked African-American citizens through the portrait of the dance of a crippled African man. See: <[http://afroamhistory.about.com/od/jimcrowlaw1/Jim\\_Crow\\_Laws.htm](http://afroamhistory.about.com/od/jimcrowlaw1/Jim_Crow_Laws.htm)>

The year 1965 was a one of self-indulgence when Mary Quant's mini-skirt invaded the streets of London, and songs such as the Rolling Stones's *Satisfaction*, and The Beatles's *Yesterday* were released. On the other hand, it was also the year when the Vietnam War escalated with the bombing of North Vietnam by the USA, with the Marines landing the first deployment of troops which led to a full-scale offensive to start. Meanwhile, in the US, at the University of Michigan, a protest against the Vietnam War proclaims the prelude of a student anti-war movement. Just a few months after Malcolm X's assassination,<sup>62</sup> the three 'Selma to Montgomery' marches took place, between the 7<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> March.<sup>63</sup> Amongst the people organising and leading the third and successful march was Martin Luther King, Jr., the most important leader of the African-American Civil Rights movement. Despite the many arrests made during these demonstrations, the Civil Rights Movement continued to grow stronger in America.

It was clear by 1965 that the events around Latin America, considering that Cuba and Brazil were the more relevant cases, had led the USA into supporting as many countries as possible in their Communist witch-hunt, which in Brazil, almost a year after the overthrow of Goulart, would have yet to see another notable American participation. This time it was not a direct influence from the government, but

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<sup>62</sup> Malcolm X was an African-American Muslim minister (turned member of the Nation of Islam whilst in prison from 1946 to 1956), a human rights activist and a public speaker, assassinated in Audubon Ballroom in Harlem, New York, by members of the Nation of Islam on the 21st February 1965, almost a year after he had left the association. His detractors accused him of exhorting anti-Semitism, violence, black supremacy and racism, although he is recognised as one the greatest and most influential African-Americans in history.

<sup>63</sup> The 'Selma to Montgomery' marches were a series of demonstrations at the peak of the American Civil Rights Movement, and also a direct result of the growing voting rights movement in Selma, Alabama, which led to the National Voting Rights Act of 1965 to be signed into law by Democrat President Lyndon B. Johnson.

instead, an international financing from the *Time-Life* Group when Brazil's most important TV network broadcast, TV Globo Rio [Globo TV Rio de Janeiro], a kingdom of telecommunication, was created, through a Presidential concession in April 1965. This initially small entrepreneurship, owned by journalist Roberto Marinho (1904-2003), would later become Rede Globo de Televisão [Globo Television Network], or popularly known as TV Globo, or even just Globo.

TV Globo has been for some time the most important company of the Organizações Globo [Globo Organisations], and also part of the largest media conglomerate in Latin America, which in 1993 would be subject of a documentary to confirm the thoughts of Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World Revisited* (1958), that the "ownership of the media of mass communication influences the thoughts, the feelings and the actions of virtually everybody... [where] never have so many been manipulated so much by so few." (Huxley, 1994:27) This influence has helped to form what Professor C. Wright Mills<sup>64</sup> called the Power Elite, a claim which TV Globo has carried on its back for generations, insofar as its "modern technology has led to the concentration of economic and political power, and to the development of a society controlled (ruthlessly in the totalitarian states, politely and inconspicuously in the democracies) by Big Business and Big Government" (ibid.), or in the case of Brazil the 'Globo Elite' which, at the time of its creation, had the 'Big Business' as 'Time-Life', and the 'Big Government' as the military dictatorship.

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<sup>64</sup> Professor C. Wright (1916-1962) was an American sociologist who wrote the book *The Power Elite* in 1956, where he argued his concerns in regards to politicians and intellectuals related to public issues after WWII.



The aforementioned documentary is titled *Beyond Citizen Kane* (1993) which shows the powers held by this immense broadcast company, with the interesting and polemic figure of the founder of the Organizações Globo holding extreme resemblance to yet another ‘fictional’ character, Charles Foster Kane, the famous and infamous Citizen Kane of Orson Welles. In *Beyond Citizen Kane*, recognisable public figures such as Leonel Brizola and Chico Buarque de Hollanda, refer to Marinho as the ‘Stalin of Communications’, and more powerful than the character Kane himself. The comments made in the documentary could be justified when taking into consideration the reach of the ‘Globo’ phenomenon, with 99.9% of coverage throughout the country through its 113 own stations or affiliates (analogue or digital);<sup>65</sup> and 95% of the programming of the prime-time held by TV Globo (*Beyond Citizen Kane*, 1993). The broadcast TV became famous for its soap operas<sup>66</sup> and long-lasting Populist programmes such as *Fantástico*<sup>67</sup> (1973-present), and *Domingão do Faustão*<sup>68</sup> (1989-present); amongst others with also long lifespan such as *Jornal Nacional* (1969-present), Xuxa’s many different programmes (1986-present), *Globo Repórter*<sup>69</sup> (1973-present), and *Globo Esporte*<sup>70</sup> (1978-present).

*Beyond Citizen Kane* also guides us through how the Organizações Globo have led, throughout the years, a ‘savage capitalism’ within the country and its media, and the

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<sup>65</sup> See BBC News online (2007)

<sup>66</sup> TV Globo is amongst the biggest producers of soap operas in the world, with more than 250 produced and broadcasted. The success of these soap operas also guarantees the success of yet another branch of the Globo Organisations: Globo Som Livre, which was inaugurated in 1971 with the sole purpose of recording their soap operas’ soundtracks.

<sup>67</sup> *Fantástico* is a variety show exhibited on Sunday nights.

<sup>68</sup> *Domingão do Faustão*, or Big Faust’s Big Sunday, is aired on Sunday afternoons just before *Fantástico*, presented by Fausto Silva.

<sup>69</sup> *Globo Repórter* is an investigation/documentary type of journalistic programme, which varies in its themes, aired on Friday nights.

<sup>70</sup> *Globo Esporte* gives international, national and local coverage to sports events.

use of the ‘machinery’ for profit making. According to Washington Olivetto in *Beyond Citizen Kane*, Globo’s soap operas are the way of supremacy of the company as “You get the feel that Brazil wasn’t discovered, but written. It’s like a fictional country: a mixture of Gabriel García Márquez and Franz Kafka. This fascination with fantasy means Brazilians are obsessed by novellas.” (Simon Hartog, 1993) This statement comes through the acknowledgement of the way the screenwriters portray their characters, who are supposed to represent the Brazilians themselves, but in fact generally portrays them through a smoke-screen perspective, where the realities of the country are masqueraded but not forgotten as Maria Rita Kehl acknowledges in the documentary: “[TV] Globo doesn’t ignore [poverty], if it did, it wouldn’t be so successful. But what it does is distort the reality of poverty and suggest you get on in life by working hard and saving. It’s as if Brazil were a caricature: the image of the self-[made]-man man in another period of capitalism”. (ibid.) This self-perpetrated image of the Brazilian and its life style can be confirmed by its audience numbers with 99.9% of the national households reached by its 113 stations and “unparalleled influence” as reported by BBC News on the occasion of Marinho’s death in August 2003, where he is referred to in the title as the Brazilian media magnate.<sup>71</sup> Roberto Marinho is notorious for the fact that he, personally and through his companies, supported the dictatorship, and that he was rewarded for that. As the BBC News puts it, “Military rulers wanted a telecommunications network that would publicise policy initiatives and inform the cultural and news agenda. Globo became that voice.”

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<sup>71</sup> “Brazilian media magnate dies” (BBC News Online, 2003), see: <<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/americas/3130983.stm>>

(ibid.). Nowadays, the coverage of Marinho's empire reaches the world through TV Globo International.<sup>72</sup>

The end of the 1960s would be leading Brazil into that vicious circle of manipulation of power, and a deterioration of the relationship between politics and arts would still show its stronger side. Our main interest here lies on the realm of popular music and its importance as a collective manifestation to represent the dissatisfaction of individuals, or groups.

## **Protest in Brazil in the 1960s and 1970s**

It was no coincidence that protest music was growing as a trend, and 1968 was a year of protest around the world:

the years of 1965-69 saw the birth of a heavier type of protest music... [where] the intensity of the rhetoric in the songs' lyrics had been anticipated by Bob Dylan's "With God on Our Side", and especially by his "Masters of War." The lines between folk, rock and the hybrid folk-rock would become blurred... [and] changed the overall approach to the mood of protest music on the pop charts. (Perone, 2001:14)

The year of 1968 witnessed a myriad of protests, marches and assassinations in both North and South America, and around the world. Amongst those were the assassination of the Civil Rights Movement leader Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., (4<sup>th</sup> April), and Democrat Senator Robert F. Kennedy (5<sup>th</sup> June). The Poor People's March, inspired by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., took place in Washington, D.C.

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<sup>72</sup> See: <<http://www.globotvinternational.com/aboutus.asp>>

gathering around 50,000 participants (19<sup>th</sup> June). And finally the historical participation of over 800,000 students, teachers and workers in the general strike in Paris (13<sup>th</sup> May), following the arrest of students protesting against the Vietnam War, “during which the ferocity of the police garnered public sympathy for the students” (Payne and Barbera, 1996:494), generating a chain of strikes and public demonstrations against French President Charles de Gaulle, known as May 68.<sup>73</sup>

As if in a mirroring effect to the events in Paris, two major events involving university students happened in Brazil within two months in 1968: the first was the March of the Hundred Thousand (26<sup>th</sup> June), “the biggest popular manifestation against the military government”, which gathered around 100,000 people amongst whom were students, “intellectuals, artists, and workers”;<sup>74</sup> the second was the invasion of the University of Brasília’s campus (29<sup>th</sup> August), when the Federal Police, without the authorisation of the university’s director, “‘pacifically’ entered the site’ to arrest five students, when they were stoned and ‘reacted’ to the students ‘welcome’”. (Pinheiro, 1993:221-26)

The government reacted to these events, according to Luiz Adolfo Pinheiro (1993:221), putting into action one of the most draconian decrees of all the years of

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<sup>73</sup> For more details about events in Europe, see also Klimke and Scharloth (2008).

<sup>74</sup> The March of the Hundred Thousand was some sort of response to the 1964’s coup. Amongst those in the march were Cacá Diegues, film director; Caetano Veloso, singer/songwriter; Gilberto Gil, singer/songwriter; Chico Buarque de Hollanda, singer/songwriter; Buarque’s wife Marieta Severo, actress; Clarice Lispector, writer; amongst others.

the dictatorship,<sup>75</sup> the *Ato Institucional Número Cinco* [Institutional Act Number Five], or AI-5,<sup>76</sup> which established, amongst other rules:

- closure of the National Congress and all the Lower Houses of Brazil (with the exception of São Paulo) for almost a year;
- permission for the federal government, under the pretext of “national security”, to intervene in states and municipalities;
- instant legitimacy of decrees issued by members of the Executive power;
- preliminary censorship of newspapers, magazines, music, films, theatre and television (any written work could be censored if it was understood as subverting the political and moral values);
- illegality of political meetings;
- suspension of habeas corpus for crimes of political motivation.

Those events would start a wave of small protests around the country, and a constant social unrest would rise amongst many of those same students, intellectuals and artists. As a consequence, a movement, which formally lasted for only two years, was about to dramatically change the way Brazilians made and received music and arts. It operating by the influence of artists and a small group of songwriters, singers, and performers interested in finding a way of doing an ‘anti-protest’ protest art in order to make public the way they saw the development of social and political events in their country. This movement was called Tropicália or Tropicalismo, and it changed the history of Brazilian music and arts in the twentieth century.

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<sup>75</sup> There were a total of seventeen Presidential decrees released by the army during the period of the military dictatorship (1964-85).

<sup>76</sup> The AI-5 was the fifth decree, released on the 13<sup>th</sup> December 1968. The decree was only revoked in December 1978 by President Ernesto Beckmann Geisel (1907-96), the fifth President during the dictatorship (1974-79). The revoking of the Act “initiated a slow, but steady political reopening.” <<http://www1.folha.uol.com.br/folha/especial/2002/eleicoes/historia-1974.shtml>>

### Chapter 3 – Tropicália and its Anti-Protest Protest

Stimulated by many different music styles coming from the USA, England and other parts of the world, Tropicália was a “musical melting pot” (McGowan and Pessanha, 1998:9) of rhythms and influences that showed a sense of disquiet towards the warm and nostalgic hits of the time that came mainly from Bossa Nova and *samba-canção*. Its performers were following their instincts in the sense that they knew something different would have to be done in order to call the world’s attention to Brazil. They defended ‘anthropophagy’ as a method of rebellion against the *status quo* in the arts as well as foreign influences, in the sense that Oswald de Andrade would have it.<sup>77</sup>

In 1968, the manifesto album Tropicália: *ou Panis et Circencis* brought together the musicians Caetano Veloso and Gilberto Gil (seen by many as the Brazilian John Lennon and Paul McCartney), Nara Leão (coming from Bossa Nova), Rogério Duprat, Os Mutantes, Tom Zé, Gal Costa, and Torquato Neto. These Tropicalistas were producing music that physically depended on studio tools to survive. They were experimenting, as in a cubist collage, with sounds and effects never experienced in/by Brazil before. As the hippies in the USA, they were exploring alternative states of consciousness in their music. They were concerned with deconstructing the

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<sup>77</sup> As it will be explained below, the Anthropophagite Movement was a modernist movement in Brazil initiated by Oswald de Andrade in 1928 as a reaction to the direct appropriation of foreign (American or European) influences in Brazilian literature and culture. Andrade’s goal, he stated in the manifest, was not to exclude foreign influences from the work of Brazilian artists, but to take into consideration Brazil’s multiculturalism, thus including the legacy of a society created by indigenous populations, Afro-descendants and Europeans in order to promote a unique sense of the country’s creativity. The anthropophagous’ objective is to cannibalize other writings in order to “vomit” them up later in what could be seen as a cathartic creative process of building up something new in Brazilian arts. See Oswald de Andrade (1928).

discourses of both the left and the right, and were using parodies and allegories in order to return to the vanguard of the Brazilian literature of the 1920s and Andrade's Anthropophagite Movement. (Favaretto, 1979) They were against the establishment, the *status quo*, and both social and political orthodoxy. They fought for human rights, peace, and freedom, as most of those involved with protest music at the end of the 1960s. They formed a counterculture using rock, folk, and psychedelic music as their tools.

The Tropicalista eclectic dialogue between the many currents that were acting in the formation of this movement came, according to Ruy Castro, to 'bury Bossa Nova':

[It] seemed at first glance to fly in the face of everything Bossa Nova was about. Voraciously eclectic, the *tropicalistas* threw rural accordion music, outdated torch songs, jingles, Stockhausen, and the howl of machinery into their mix of sounds, often combining them to jarring effects in a single song. Most provocative of all, they even took up the electric guitar of *ye-ye-ye*, despised as imperialist noise by their artistic peers. *Tropicália* was, in short, an affront to the decorum bossa nova had made an art of, and it was booed off more often than one stage by audiences who took it upon themselves to defend Bossa Nova's lingering standards of good taste. (Castro, 2000:xiii)

At the beginning of the 1960s, Bossa Nova was already considered a musical genre from and to the elite (with its pointless contemplation of a beautiful girl passing by, like in Vinícius de Moraes' *Garota de Ipanema*, and little boats floating on Carioca beaches in songs like *O Barquinho* by Roberto Menescal). By then most of those opposed to the socio-economic changes (and the debt) brought by Kubitschek's ideology saw the need for yet another change, and many political and cultural movements linked to the leftists started to promote a different nationalist and popular concept in the arts, looking for a better understanding of the actual reality in the

country. Very effectively Geraldo Vandré was singing in 1961 that “Quem quiser encontrar o amor vai ter que sofrer vai ter que chorar” [Whoever wants to find love will have to suffer, will have to cry], meaning that life is not as easy as the Bossa Nova was painting it to be, and that there was a facet of Brazil that many Brazilians did not know about.

The Tropicalistas were celebrating a “cultural dissonance in all its forms” in a country which “looked its contradictions squarely in the face – [with] its sophistication and its barbarity, its First World dreams and its Third World lives – and made something beautifully arrestingly true out of them.” (Costa, 2000:xiii-xiv) The Tropicalistas were intrinsically following previous trends, and that fact can be directly linked to other artistic insurrections in the country against foreign powers.

It was broadly Oswald de Andrade in his *Manifesto Antropófago* [Anthropophagite Manifesto] that in 1928 started a course of institutionalising the anti-‘status quo’ in the arts by promoting social unrest. One of the paragraphs of his manifesto summarises its ideal: “Só me interessa o que não é meu. Lei do homem. Lei do Antropófago” [I’m only interested in what is not mine. Man’s law. Anthropophagus’ law]. The order is to ban what is not ours, Brazilian, by taking from others and making a new, bettered, version that will replace both. He says that “Só a Antropofagia nos une. Socialmente, Economicamente. Filosoficamente” [Only Anthropophagy unites us. Socially, Economically, Philosophically] and that



“Tupi or not Tupi that is the question”.<sup>78</sup> Andrade is clearly criticising centuries of exploitation, of importation, and praising the national produce, concepts and attitudes. The consumption of the human production, not of the flesh, but its styles, rhythms, and forms is to establish a new ‘participative conscience’ within artists’ consciousness. Much before João Cabral de Melo Neto had written *Morte e Vida Severina* [Death and Life of a Severino]<sup>79</sup> in 1955, Andrade was already envisaging the death and life of hypothesis, the resurgence of the subsistence, of knowledge, of anthropophagy.

Thirty years after the Anthropophagite Manifesto, a group of Brazilian poets wrote the *Plano-Piloto para Poesia Concreta* [Pilot-Plan for Concrete Poetry],<sup>80</sup> suggesting the way poetry should be conceived nationally. Concrete poetry, sometimes referred to as Visual Poetry, regards the arrangement of words as being as important to the text as their rhythm, sound and meaning. The visual impact of the poem has a stronger weight than its rhyme or than any direct meaning produced by it. One of the inspirations for Concret Poetry movement would be the 1961 postscript, where the Russian poet Vladimir Mayakovsky (1893-1930) argues that ‘without revolutionary form there is no revolutionary art’. According to Charles A. Perrone (1996:50), this

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<sup>78</sup> *Tupi* can be understood here as either the original language spoken by the indigenous populations in Brazil before the arrival of the colonisers (Guarani is also another of those languages), or as its people. An interesting description of this people is given by James C. Prichard (1786-1848) as he calls the inhabitants of the country ‘Brasils’, as in a synecdoche, where the part is symbolised by the whole; they are not treated as a nation, but as the country itself. The ideal of re-appropriating this native language was also exercised by Brazilian painter Tarsila do Amaral’s (1886-1973) most famous painting *Abaporu* (1928). Its title comes from a Tupi-Guarani word composed by *aba* plus *poru*, which literally means ‘homem que come’, or cannibal. For further information see: <http://www.base7.com.br/tarsila/>

<sup>79</sup> *Morte e Vida Severina* is a 1955 play which comments on the reversal fate of the life of Brazilian populace.

<sup>80</sup> This Plano-Piloto was created in 1958 as an allusion to the way Brasília, the new capital of the country, was established in the flat centre of the country.

phrase “was adopted to express the Noigandres group’s insistence on aesthetic innovation in socially aware art”,<sup>81</sup> and would symbolise “an attack on convention and the challenging of facile stances, whether political or artistic” (ibid.), which would be perfectly represented by the unprecedentedly irregular, revolutionary format of the work of those Concrete poets. In Brazil, some of its major exponents were Augusto de Campos, Décio Pignatari and Haroldo de Campos.

Some of the famous (and infamous) Concretist works of Augusto de Campos (1956) include the poem *tensão*, where the word that gives its title occupies the middle of the text creating a tension between loose syllables that alone are not invested with much meaning, yet when connected by the reader they carry a more substantial sense. As such, “the combination of many factors makes a thick textual fabric in ‘tensão’, with a historically apt instance of the application of new poetic concepts.” (Perrone, 1996:35)

|            |            |            |
|------------|------------|------------|
| <b>com</b> | <b>can</b> |            |
| <b>som</b> | <b>tem</b> |            |
| <b>con</b> | <b>ten</b> | <b>tam</b> |
| <b>tem</b> | <b>são</b> | <b>bem</b> |
|            | <b>tom</b> | <b>sem</b> |
|            | <b>bem</b> | <b>som</b> |

The ‘tension’ is exposed by the central ‘word’ of the poem *ten-são*, and the sound that all those ‘loose’ syllables are going to evoke from their suggestion of noise or silence, from the first words/sentences *com som* [with sound] and its ending *sem som* [without sound]. Those are followed by the connection of syllables which will form

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<sup>81</sup> Augusto de Campos, Décio Pignatari and Haroldo de Campos, launched in 1953 the literary magazine *Noigandres*. This was the beginning of the *Grupo Noigandres*, which would give inspiration to the followers of Concrete poetry.

significant adverbs, nouns and flexions of verbs such as: *bem* [well], *com* [with], *sem* [without], *também* [also], *contensão*<sup>82</sup> [contention], *som* [sound], *tom* [tone], *tem* [have], *cantam/cantem* [sing], *contentam* [satisfy], *contem* [tell/contain], *tentam/tentem* [try].

Following the geometric, organic and subjective ideas of the Concretists, a group of musicians wrote, in 1963, the *Música Nova Manifesto* [New Music Manifesto], along with the *Manifesto Antropófago*. They stated in their manifesto that this new music should be the “search for a direct speech, using various aspects of reality (physical, physiological, psychological, social, political, cultural) in which the machine is included, extension to the objective world of the creational processes (indetermination, inclusion of “risk” elements, controlled chance).” (Cozella et al, 1963)<sup>83</sup> This was one of the sources of inspiration for Tropicália.

The Tropicalistas would also take full advantage of the anthropophagic use of language, such as in the following example of ‘music salad’ McGowan and Pessanha (1998:9) talk about. According to Christopher Dunn, “along with several other tropicalist compositions, the formal structure of the song “Batmacumba” was indebted to concrete poetry in its use of verbal montage and nondiscursive syntax”, (Dunn, 2001:105) which is more than ever the amalgamation of words and styles, as in a complex and, at the same time, simple, concrete poem, shown in the penultimate track of Tropicália’s manifesto album:

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<sup>82</sup> We could assume a poetic license here between the *contensão* (containment) in the poem, which literally means ‘to contain’, ‘to restrict’, whilst *contenção* (contention) implies rivalry or debate.

<sup>83</sup> My own translation of the Manifesto.

|                             |   |                                |
|-----------------------------|---|--------------------------------|
| Batmacumbayêê batmacumbaobá |   | <i>visual</i>                  |
| Batmacumbayêê batmacumbao   |   |                                |
| Batmacumbayêê batmacumba    |   | <i>atabaque (drums)</i>        |
| Batmacumbayêê batmacum      |   |                                |
| Batmacumbayêê batman        | <i>terreiro</i>                                   | <i>macumba</i>                 |
| Batmacumbayêê bat           |   |                                |
| Batmacumbayêê ba            |   | <i>Batman</i>                  |
| Batmacumbayêê               |   |                                |
| Batmacumbayê                | <i>letter K absent in the Portuguese alphabet</i> |                                |
| Batmacumba                  |   |                                |
| Batmacum                    |   | <i>repetition</i>              |
| Batman                      |   |                                |
| Bat                         | <i>regression x progression = movement</i>        |                                |
| Ba                          |   |                                |
| Bat                         |   | <i>electric guitar</i>         |
| Batman                      |   |                                |
| Batmacum                    | <i>psychedelic</i>                                | <i>chorus</i>                  |
| Batmacumba                  |   |                                |
| Batmacumbayê                | <i>half of the Brazilian flag</i>                 |                                |
| Batmacumbayêê               |   |                                |
| Batmacumbayêê ba            |   | <i>bat's wing</i>              |
| Batmacumbayêê bat           |   |                                |
| Batmacumbayêê batman        | <i>bate = beat</i>                                | <i>"iê iê iê"<sup>84</sup></i> |
| Batmacumbayêê batmacum      |   |                                |
| Batmacumbayêê batmacumba    |   |                                |
| Batmacumbayêê batmacumbao   |   |                                |
| Batmacumbayêê batmacumbaobá |   |                                |

The song *Batmacumba* is extremely symbolic of the movement, having a structure that is both visually and musically appealing. It is considered “perhaps the most hybrid song in the entire tropicalist repertoire... [where] its semantic elements make reference to sacred and secular domains” (Dunn, 2001:105), including references to North-American, British and Afro-Brazilian symbols, thus introducing a jigsaw-puzzle of words and meanings, which at first appear to have no meaning at all.

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<sup>84</sup> The words in italic on the right side of the song-text are my own commentary on the effect of some of the keynotes.

The visual impact brought by the song-texts is immediate for its resemblance with the letter K, formally absent in the Brazilian alphabet until very recently. It also reminds us of one half of the Brazilian flag; or still, the wings of a bat. Referenced in the song, the word bat also sounds like *bate*, a flexion of the verb *bater* [to beat], that would evoke both the rhythm of the sound in the song, and the beating up carried out by the oppressive military system against the opposition at the time. Another reference would be the beat of the *macumba*<sup>85</sup> itself, with its drums and chanting used to accompany its rituals. The words Batman and *iê iê iê*<sup>86</sup> bring a great deal of cross-cultural references that are intrinsically and purposefully ‘thrown’ into the song-texts which can at first seem meaningless and inoffensive. They both refer to the inevitable ‘invasion’ of the very popular American and British cultures; the first one in the form of an American comic book of the 1930s and TV series of the 1960s such as Batman; and the second, from a form of rock, the *iê iê iê*. It is clear here that “by intentionally fusing these diverse elements, ‘Batmacumba’ suggests that products of the multinational culture industry... have been ‘Brazilianized’ and, conversely, that Afro-Brazilian religion is central to Brazilian modernity and not to a folkloric vestige of a premodern past.” (Dunn, 2001:105) This song shows that Tropicália was taking advantage of, and fusing references with, foreign influences in order to create their own yearned ‘universal music’.

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<sup>85</sup> *Macumba* is a religious popular practice in Brazil, proceeding from the *Bantu* belief of African origins.

<sup>86</sup> The Brazilian name for the musical adaptation of the style initially produced by the Beatles, translated and sung by many artists, including the *Jovem Guarda* interpreters, which we discuss in more depth in the Chapter 6.

Through both visual and musical effects, the repetition and digression/progression of the syllable “ba”, from and into longer sequences of words in the song-texts, gives the song a Concretist look and feel of unique ingenuity that not many others have. Still in the realm of phonetics, there is the strong mark of the sound of the letter K in *macumba*; and the strong rhyme with *macumba* given by *Obá*<sup>87</sup> – both Afro-Brazilian religious symbols – in the first and last lines of the song-texts.

Musically we can notice throughout the song the strong presence of the *atabaques* [drums] of *Candomblé* – another reference to an Afro-Brazilian religion –, and the chorus, which resembles the voices that mark the activities in a *terreiro*<sup>88</sup> (temple). This is intertwined with the powerful psychedelic sound of the electric guitar, which at the time caused outrage amongst the devotees to more rooted instruments. It is important to notice that, up until that point, this syncretism of styles and sounds had not been incorporated into Brazilian music.

Although the song-texts of *Batmacumba* does not have any literal meaning, it is undoubtedly a milestone for the future success of the movement, and very different from the ‘old fashioned’, romantic and pleasant tunes of Bossa Nova; or the more Americanised and ‘youthful’ Jovem Guarda. This is the reason why this song was to be branded as an unmistakable piece of work that helped to establish Tropicália as a strong cultural force within Brazilian society for the years to come.

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<sup>87</sup> *Obá* is known as the wife of *Xangô* (God of thunder and lightning) and daughter of *Iemanjá* (Goddess and guardian of the seas) in *Candomblé*, an Afro-Brazilian religion.

<sup>88</sup> *Candomblé*’s rituals involve dancing or trance under powerful percussion sounds. During these rituals some of those involved are possessed by different Orishas (a spirit or deity in the Yoruba religious belief), to whom people make mineral and vegetal offerings, and animal sacrifices. *Terreiro* is the place where the *Candomblé* ceremonies take place. It can be a house, a shed, a clearing, or a warehouse, depending on the ‘nation’ of the Orisha.

The Tropicália movement was born from the aspirations and discontentment of artists that did not want to reproduce a tinned art coming from abroad, or to use old-fashioned national aesthetics of the engaged arts. According to Caetano Veloso, who was accused by Geraldo Vandré of betraying “a cultura nacional” (Veloso 2004:280), for being too much based on foreign trends, it was the development of a social awareness, that became political and economical, combined to existential, aesthetic, and moral demands. In the mid-1960s Veloso felt as if he was “in a country whose homogeneous aspects of inauthenticity – and the versions of rock undoubtedly represented one of them - were the result of social injustice that distributed ignorance, and of its macromanifestation, imperialism, imposing styles and products”. (Veloso, 2004:254)<sup>89</sup> This was considered the case of Jovem Guarda, which was mostly adapting and copying the soft Rock’n’Roll coming from the USA or England, but not creating much of their own music.

Not only music, but different art forms were explored by the movement, like cinema, painting, sculpture, and fashion. In 1965 the anthropophagy of whatever came from the ‘real’ Brazilian world had already started to show its power in the hands and cameras of the artists of Cinema Novo [New Cinema], who were following Italian neo-realism, and would start to change the way Brazilian directors (mostly highly educated and with Marxist and journalistic backgrounds) showed their country to the world. The movement was seeking for a “new, critical, and modernist” way of portraying the nation, as stated by Glauber Rocha in his essay *Uma Estética da Fome*

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<sup>89</sup> My own translation, due to the nonavailability of an English copy.

[An Aesthetics of Hunger].<sup>90</sup> At first criticised for having its success granted on the failure of the country and its people, according to Caetano Veloso, the movement took advantage of a moment when the military government founded *Embrafilm* (a national film company), and sponsored national productions in order to spread the ideals of progress, by using this system for its revolutionary purposes. (Veloso, 2004:258-9) *Macunaíma* (1969), (based on a 1928 novel by Mário de Andrade) is one of the strongest expressions of Tropicalismo in cinema, showing the myths of the three Brazilian races (White, Black and native Indians) through the experiences of the main character, a ‘hero without a character’, who learns some tough lessons about Brazilian life and society. But the film also works as an allegorical representation of the turmoil that the Brazilian military coup d’état had ensued, a strong ‘primitivist’ sample of the modernism Andrade acquired from his European endeavours. Even though there was an affair between Tropicalistas and cinema, the most well-known branch of the movement, the one that would take the message beyond was music.

Having great influence from, and being “Brazil’s answer to” (Shaw and Dennison, 2005a:33) the Beatles’s album *Sgt. Pepper’s Lonely Hearts Club Band*, released the year before, the album *Tropicália: ou Panis et Circencis* brought the new concept of tracks without interruption, through a certain connection between the themes explored in them. The use of studio effects and unusual instruments like the sitar, the violin, an orchestra were also widely explored. Another example of the influence of

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<sup>90</sup> For further information see the essay in: <<http://www.contracampo.com.br/21/esteticadafome.htm>>



anthropophagy in this movement can be taken from *Sugar Cane Fields Forever*, by Caetano Veloso from his album *Araçá Azul* (1972).

- 1 *Verdes mães*  
Green mothers
- 2 *Cavalinho de fleche*  
Knight's little horse
- 3 *Eu quero, eu quero*  
I want, I want
- 4 *Sou um mulato nato*  
I am a native *mulato*
- 5 *No sentido lato*  
In the wider sense
- 6 *Mulato democrático do litoral*  
Democratic coastal *mulato*
- 7 *Vem*  
Come
- 8 *Comigo no trem da Leste*  
With me in the train from the East
- 9 *Peste, vem no trem*  
Pest, come in the train
- 10 *Pra Boranhém*  
To *Boranhém*
- 11 *Verde vênus*  
Green venus
- 12 *Ir, ir indo, ir, ir indo, ir, ir indo*  
To go, to go going, to go, to go going, to go, to go going
- 13 *Pra passar fevereiro em Santo Amaro*  
To spend February in *Santo Amaro*

The title itself is a play on words to make reference to the Beatles's song *Strawberry Fields Forever*, and also to the very profitable monoculture of the impoverished Northeastern Brazil, sugar cane. In these song-texts, Veloso refers to the mix of whites and blacks, the *mulato* (line 4); and to his hometown in the countryside of Bahia, *Santo Amaro* (line 13), in a confirmation of his countryside origins, a parallel to those of the men who work in the sugar cane fields of Brazil. This is one of the many songs that were made impossible to be performed live due to its sonorous intricacy. And when the live performances occurred, they would be filled with

staging, mixing of textures and styles, which would make any previous musical style losing its identity thus creating a brand new one, via the ‘anthropophagy’ of different others.

Tropicalistas were looking for a ‘universal music’, for an evolutionary line of work, a less complicated way of communicating, which would be read with easiness and through different optics, something compared to a photograph, an outdoor, a traffic light, or a comic. According to Capinam (Napolitano, 1997), “they also wanted their music to be less ‘folkloric’, showing ‘roots’ assuming that the roots are tied to history but can develop from it in a critical way”. They were looking for new paradigms of creation and innovation, and in 1967 Veloso and Gil used the III Festival da Música Popular Brasileira [3<sup>rd</sup> Brazilian Popular Music Festival] for that purpose.

These festivals were allowed by the government since 1965, to give the masses the old Roman model of *panis et circenses*<sup>91</sup> as a way of keeping the populace busy and quietly entertained. But the festivals worked exactly the other way round, becoming a channel of expression for those who were protesting against the inequalities and arbitrariness brought by the dictatorship much before Veloso and Gil; and although the government kept the festivals very well controlled and watched, they were still successful in giving voice to artists and public who were willing to sing aloud their discontent.

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<sup>91</sup> It is important to address here the fact that the most common Latin translation of ‘bread and circuses’, *panem et circenses*, is attributed to the Roman poet Juvenal, in his work *Satires*, where *panem* is the accusative singular of *panis*.

In these festivals, the countryside, hinterland of Brazil, the Northeast was a recurrent theme throughout the times of the dictatorship. There was this search for the real Brazil which seemed disconnected and opposed to the capitalist ideals of the Republic. There was an urge, from some of the artists performing at the festivals, to show the rest of the country its hidden roots and forgotten citizens. Good examples of this attempt to bring the rural into the urban can be seen in some of Chico Buarque's songs such as *Pedro Pedreiro* (1965); and *Construção* (1971),<sup>92</sup> with a powerful 'brick work' construction of proparoxytone words. In the case of *Construção*, a worker, who could easily be identified as *Pedro Pedreiro*, is a bricklayer who falls from a construction site and dies on the street on a Saturday, only to upset the traffic and the people shopping and enjoying their ordinary lives. This figure can be easily recognized as one of those many workers who come from the Northeast to live a life of underpaid jobs and struggle in the cities of Brazil. This character could well be any of the many migrants from the Northeast, a man who symbolises the strength and resilience of the rest of the Brazilian people, the same people who build the country's wealth but who do not share it. This character is also portrayed in *Cidadão* (1979), composed by Lúcio Barbosa and immortalised by Zé Ramalho, a song we will analyse below in this chapter. This fact leads us into an attempt to elucidate the reasons for Tropicália's album title: *Tropicália: ou Panis et Circencis*.

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<sup>92</sup> Same title of the 1971 album which meant a change in Buarque's approach and style from Bossa Nova to a more popular/folk music.

## The Case for Panis et Circenses

... iam pridem, ex quo suffragia nulli / uendimus, effudit curas; nam qui dabat  
olim / imperium, fasces, legiones, omnia, nunc se / continet atque duas  
tantum res anxius optat, / panem et circenses.

... Already long ago, from when we sold our vote to no man, the People have  
abdicated our duties; for the People who once upon a time handed out  
military command, high civil office, legions — everything, now restrains  
itself and anxiously hopes for just two things: bread and circuses.

(Juvenal, *Satire* 10.77–81)

As controversial and polemic as Juvenal's *Satire*'s passage can be,<sup>93</sup> his coined expression *panem et circenses*<sup>94</sup> is still one of those statements which have served many generations and societies as an allegory of the decadent late Roman classical period model. By then, "food doles and public entertainment were still the chief means of currying favour with the people", when "Roman people were held in check by two things especially, *annona et spectaculis*",<sup>95</sup> which represented "the decline of popular concern for the ruin of powerful men after the princes ceased to curry favour amongst their subjects." (Sanford, 1951:18) Whichever the meaning one takes into consideration it is always going to lead to the assumption that the more accepted *panem et circenses* suggests a mundane and relaxed approach to life, almost orgiastic and irresponsible, when all one expects from the State is this continuous provision of food and entertainment, in order to comply with the changes and wrong-doings of its rulers. In this mundane case of the cession of rights, what is left behind is the formal

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<sup>93</sup> Juvenal was a Roman poet who around 100 A.D. wrote around sixteen poems entitled *Satires*. On his *Satire X: Wrong Desire is the Source of Suffering* we can find the source of some famous expressions such as *mens sana in corpore sano* (a healthy mind in a healthy body). His writings were based on the fact that at around 140 B.C. Roman politicians conceived a way to win votes from the poor by giving them cheap food and amusement (bread and circuses, i.e. *panem et circenses*) in order to rise to power, thus creating populism.

<sup>94</sup> According to the Merriam-Webster Dictionary "bread and circuses" means the provision of the means of life and recreation by government to appease discontent."

<sup>95</sup> *Annona* is usually related to a yearly produce of grain crop, price of grain, or cost of living, which would still lead to some fundamental type of maintenance provided by the State.

provision of order, social services, education, citizenship, and communal dignity which should be provided by the politicians who make use of this strategy. Another version of bread and circuses, which could have been “written as *pan*, *pana*, or even *pannum* more than as *panem*” (Sanford, 1951:19) suggest a more Godly meaning, as *pan* would relate to the myth of Pan,<sup>96</sup> the Greek God of music or nature, reinforcing the creation of the myth of this ‘happy people’, fulfilled by free entertainment (*circenses*) and free food (*panem*), as a way of control.

According to Aldous Huxley’s 1958 *Brave New World Revisited*,<sup>97</sup> the masses following without thinking or questioning were given one single type of *panem*, and it was called *soma*.<sup>98</sup> This had the power of making its users “give no trouble to their superiors.” (Huxley, 1994:19) This is exemplified by Huxley through the good-nature of one of his characters’ description. This character, Benito, is described by Huxley as being

notoriously good-natured. People said of him that he could have got through life without ever touching *soma*. The malice and bad tempers from which other people had to take holidays never afflicted him. Reality for Benito was always sunny. (Huxley, 1987:57)

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<sup>96</sup> Pan is also the Greek God of shepherds, Fauns, Satyrs. The later ones borrowing their name to the Roman Satire, a type of play of social subversive nature, associated to criticism and opposition to urbanity, decorum and civilisation. Pan is depicted as half man half goat, enchanting with his pipe playing and rustic music.

<sup>97</sup> *Brave New World Revisited* brings one of the first contemporary mentions of bread and circuses in Literature, as Huxley explains to his readers the ideas behind his 1932 *Brave New World*.

<sup>98</sup> In Huxley’s world, soma is a hallucinogenic dream-inducing drug as in many other cultural and artistic and even medical Western works, such as Robert Gordon Wasson’s *Soma: divine mushroom of immortality* (1971). In pharmaceutical terms, Soma is the brand-name for carisoprodol, a muscle relaxant used for musculoskeletal associated pain, working through the alteration of the nervous system and the muscles it controls.

Following the same principle of the Romans' *panem et circenses*, in Huxley's world the common vision of reality was distorted and contrived by the provision of not only *soma*, but also of 'circenses':

[The] non-stop distractions of the most fascinating nature (the feelies, orgy-porgy, centrifugal bumblepuppy)... [which were] deliberately used as instruments of policy, for the purpose of preventing people from paying too much attention to the realities of the social and political situation. (Huxley, 1994:51)

This process repeated time and time again in many dictatorial societies through different types of *soma* (which will be discussed more thoroughly further ahead). The artificial conformism created and fed by the ruling 'invisible' powers over the people in Huxley's writing can be seen as a clear reference to the image Zé Ramalho portrays the Brazilian people, within its social criticism in the 1979 song *Admirável Gado Novo* [Brave New Cattle].

1 *Ooooooooooh! Oooi!*  
2 *Vocês que fazem parte dessa massa*  
Those of you who are part of this mass  
3 *Que passa nos projetos do futuro*  
Who walk through the projects of the future  
4 *É duro tanto ter que caminhar*  
It is hard having to walk so much  
5 *E dar muito mais do que receber*  
And giving much more than receiving

Ramalho addresses these people directly ("those of you") but still as if "they" had to grow recognition of "themselves" as "part of this mass", and sees "them" as part of this future that never comes, because "they" just "walk through the projects" of a future, hence, having none.

6 *E ter que demonstrar sua coragem*  
Having to show their courage  
7 *À margem do que possa parecer*  
On the sidelines of what can be perceived

8 *E ver que toda essa engrenagem*  
Seeing that all this machinery  
9 *Já sente a ferrugem lhe comer*  
Already feels the rust consuming itself

In lines 4 to 7, Ramalho recognises the strength of these people who “give much more than receive”, as an allusion to the Marxist thought of what the Capitalist system does to society in general: keep a proportionate relation between the increase of the profit and the means of production, whilst degrading the lives of its workers. An immediate image of Charles Chaplin’s *Modern Times* (1936) comes to mind, as in the film he criticises industrialisation and its effects on the social and working conditions after the ‘Great Depression’ in the 1930s, by portraying life as a struggle of mankind to adapt and comply with the arrival of such technological advancement and its unreasonable demands. In one scene, he rebels against the system and leaves the plant. Chaplin plays a character who resembles most of the working class around the world: people living, sometimes, on the margins of society but still strong enough to survive what is said to be a ‘rust’ system (the military dictatorship of the time in Brazil is a good example), suffering a ‘corrosion’ (like in Ramalho’s lines 8 to 9), but still, through impunity and corruption, perpetuating social inequality. This, in exchange, generates an internal and slow self-destruction of the system itself, since there is only so much this ‘cattle’ can take before a ‘stampede’.

(Refrain)  
10 *Êeeeeh! Oh! Oh!*  
11 *Vida de gado*  
Cattle’s life  
12 *Povo marcado*  
Marked people  
13 *Êh! Povo feliz*  
Eh! Happy people

The people in the song are portrayed as a “marked people/[but] happy people” (line 12 and 13), which efficiently translates the Brazilian spirit of dealing with the struggles of daily life, by tincturing “them” as a happy and friendly people “marked” by different experiences and “labels” depending on where they come from (geographically speaking), which layer of society they belong to, which level of education they hold, and what opportunities they were given.

14 *Lá fora faz um tempo confortável*  
The weather is comfortable outside  
15 *A vigilância cuida do normal*  
Security takes care of the normal  
16 *Os automóveis ouvem a notícia*  
The cars listen to the news  
17 *Os homens a publicam no jornal*  
Men publish them in the newspapers

Another stirring comment in these song-texts is on the comfortable position (line 14) of the elites outside the “factories” and “jails” (line 26) inhabited by this ‘cattle’ who was still hoping for better days (line 25). Surveillance watches over whatever is considered normal (line 15), and the media takes care of providing wealthy people, travelling in their cars, with the news of the world (line 16); whilst all that the ordinary people get is the “circus”, or the low level entertainment provided by the “educated men” through national broadcast TVs and newspapers (line 17). At the same time, and at the same pace, in which these newspapers are being distributed, at dawn (line 18), the “cattle” reach the only short dawn of age they can, “taking their time at the roadside”.

18 *E correm através da madrugada*  
Running through dawn  
19 *A única velhice que chegou*  
The only old age to reach



20 *Demoram-se na beira da estrada*  
Taking their time at the roadside  
21 *E passam a contar o que sobrou*  
Counting what was left

Without any future perspective or path to follow they just count the little that “was left” (line 21) for them, the leftovers of society, whilst still hoping for a miracle, possibly represented by the end of the dictatorship (lines 27 and 28).

(Refrain)  
22 *Ooooooooooh! Oh! Oh!*  
23 *O povo foge da ignorância*  
The people run from ignorance  
24 *Apesar de viver tão perto dela*  
Although they live so close to it  
25 *E sonham com melhores tempos idos*  
And they dream of better times gone  
26 *Contemplam essa vida numa cela*  
Contemplate this life from a cell  
  
27 *Esperam nova possibilidade*  
Waiting for a new possibility  
28 *De verem esse mundo se acabar*  
Of seeing this world ending  
29 *A Arca de Noé, o dirigível*  
The Noah’s Ark, the airship  
30 *Não voam nem se pode flutuar*  
Don’t fly nor can they float

It is worth noticing that the sounds of the refrain remind us of the chanting of a *vaqueiro* (herdsman) when herding the cattle, which sends us back to the end of the song when Ramalho mentions the Noah’s Ark (with its animals and few humans) and the airship, with no animals but only humans (line 29). The first was made by direct instructions of God (according to the Bible), and the second created by man, but Ramalho puts both of them together as cumbersome, having no wings to fly, an allusion to the fact that it does not matter how these aircrafts were conceived, they are both unmanageable (line 30) hence they cannot solve the problem of escaping from this failed system.

As described by Euclides da Cunha in chapter III of *Os Sertões* (1902), these people can be seen as an extension, as part of nature itself without any detachment, as if they were one, the positive side which allows them to survive the harsh environment of the Northeast of the country and its challenges.

O sertanejo<sup>99</sup> é, antes de tudo, um forte...  
A sua aparência, entretanto, ao primeiro lance de vista, revela o contrário. Falta-lhe a plástica impecável, o desempenho, a estrutura corretíssima das organizações atléticas...  
É o homem permanentemente fatigado...  
Entretanto, toda esta aparência de cansaço ilude...  
Não há contê-lo, então, no ímpeto... nada lhe impede encalçar o garrote desgarrado, porque *por onde passa o boi passa o vaqueiro com o seu cavalo*...  
Colado ao dorso deste, confundindo-se com ele... realiza a criação bizarra de um centauro bronco: emergindo inopinadamente nas clareiras... (da Cunha, undated:90-91)

The *sertanejo*, or man of the backlands, is above all else a strong individual...  
His appearance, it is true, at first glance, would lead to think that this was not the case. He does not have the flawless features, the graceful bearing, the correct build of the athlete...  
He is the man who is always tired...  
Yet, all this apparent weariness is an illusion...  
Nothing can stop him in his onward rush... nothing can halt his pursuit of the straying steer, for *wherever the cow goes, there the cowboy and his horse goes too*... glued to his horse's back, with his knees dug into its flanks until horse and rider appear to be one, he gives the bizarre impression of a crude sort of centaur: emerging unexpectedly into a clearing... (da Cunha, 1964:89-90)

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It is striking to note here that the often suspiciously translated passage, by Samuel Putnam, takes an extra thirty-six words to explain who this *sertanejo* is, and yet he does not do the character in question the justice that da Cunha does in his own account. Whilst da Cunha does not need to give, to the national reader, any

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<sup>99</sup> *Sertanejo* is the name given to people born in the *sertão*. *Sertão* is the name given to the dry land, or backland in the Northeast of Brazil, "also used to refer to the sparsely populated wilderness beyond areas of permanent settlement and may be equated with the Canadian 'bush', the U.S. 'backwoods', or the Australian Outback." See: <<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/535895/sertao>>

<sup>100</sup> Reference to Euclides da Cunha's *Os Sertões*. For *Os Sertões*, both the original Portuguese and the English translation of Samuel Putman are given, only revised when necessary.

explanation of who this *sertanejo* is, Putnam describes him as an ‘individual’ so as to reassure the foreign reader that he is talking about a man, a human being. The choice of words made by Putnam also gives the impression that he has to apologise for the character’s existence, as we can see from the observation “is it true” instead of the simple adverb “however”; and for his own careless wording when adding “sort of” between “crude” and “centaur”, da Cunha’s original words. Putnam’s change of verb tense also makes an interesting point when he replaces “revela” (present tense of the verb “to reveal”) for “would lead to think”, thus demonstrating the incredulousness of the translator and possibly anticipating his readers’ own. Another explanatory excess is made in the description of this “cowboy” through the passage such as, “with his knees dug into its flanks until horse and rider appear to be one”, which sounds patronising and unnecessary; whilst “in his onward rush” sounds more like a struggle and clumsiness than the impetuosity suggested by da Cunha, taking away the character’s braveness, courage and momentum. Taking this argument into consideration, Putnam’s choices would lead us to see his translation through an imperialist lens, where the weaknesses of those new and strange entities had to be explained or even justified.

Nonetheless, the animalisation of men can be useful in another level, and possibly even necessary to explain some cultural aspects when it comes to either the men of the *sertão*, or the lower layers of Brazilian society, as seen through *Gadismo*.<sup>101</sup> This concept which explains or portrays a certain attitude of society, and implies that the people of a certain cultural background is perceived, treated or behave like *gado*

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<sup>101</sup> *Gadismo* is a neologism developed as a cultural concept by Ana Lessa throughout her teaching of Brazilian Cultural Studies at the University of Nottingham since 2005.

(cattle). Those people are cowed (either by choice or lack of it), obeying a leader (be it a farmer or a political leader); following the crowd without questioning, with their heads down, enduring the harshness of the environment, being used by other men from birth (milk) to death (meat) for a defined purpose without any right of choice, thus generating a perpetual chain of manipulation, alienation, conformism, exploitation, and lack of social commitment.

This issue can be compared to the idea of *Gadismo* portrayed in the song by Zé Ramalho, from its title to its song-texts and original arrangements, which immediately takes us into the heart of Brazil and its dwellers through Ramalho's Northeastern accent and typically Northeastern instruments played throughout the song. The *Gadismo* we are talking about in the case of *Brave New Cattle* is one where the cattle is not made of real animals, but of human beings.<sup>102</sup> These people are expected to keep obediently quiet and to follow their leader; docilely serving and waiting for the “food” (*panem*) and “entertainment” (*circenses*) which should be provided by the “farmer” (the dictators and/or politicians of any sort). Having said this, and considering that this concept of *Gadismo* is appropriate to describe a certain way of conformism and ignorance during the period of the dictatorship, it is important to note that some people have tried to break from the “herd”, meaning the *status quo* and the rules established by the powerful. This is one of the main purposes

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<sup>102</sup> Another example of ‘human cattle’ can be seen in *Fazenda Modelo*, “*nova pecuária*”, a 1974 dystopian novel by Chico Buarque de Hollanda written after his return from a self-imposed exile in Europe (1969-70), is a social critique on the molds of George Orwell’s *Animal Farm* (1945), where Chico denounces the dominating and censorial nature of Brazilian politics through the ‘model farm’ where humans are portrayed as cows and bulls following a ‘progressive’, totalitarian and functional regime, such as the one in Aldous Huxley’s *Brave New World*. Nineteen seventy-four was also the same year when, tired after years of censorship and prosecution, Chico creates his short-lived pseudonym, Julinho da Adelaide, in order to dribble the censorship.

of the Tropicália and of its members, some of whom had to pay with exile or prison for their courage in refusing to follow the silent “herd”.

Vastly portrayed in Brazilian literature and music, the *sertanejo* or *nordestino* generally represents the plight of the Brazilian people as a whole. They are seen as those who either fight the difficulties of the *sertão* and its *caatinga*,<sup>103</sup> or leave the region behind looking for a better life in the big cities, sometimes without much success.

In the song *Cidadão*, by Lúcio Barbosa (1976), one can encounter a representation of one of these men and women who left their homeland in the countryside; and also the acknowledgment of the differences between classes and distribution of wealth which most of them experience when trying to make a living for themselves and their families (which are many times still living in the countryside) in the South. The man in question is a fairly skilled builder, as he helps building different edifications in his own words. Here Barbosa illustrates, through a stroll taken by this man on a Sunday morning, three long-term social issues in Brazil, amongst many others, closely related to the lives of someone from a lower social background: housing (line 1 to 16), schooling (line 17 to 32), and religion (line 33 to 49). From the start, with its title, the song-texts can drive us into questioning who this song relates to; who is this “citizen” Barbosa is talking about. The answer is quite clear after a few lines and the

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<sup>103</sup> The *caatinga* (scrubby upland forests) is a region of the Northeast of Brazil which possesses two main seasons: winter (with rain) and summer (with droughts), its name deriving from the Tupi-Guarani language meaning white (*tinga*) forest (*kaa*).

difference between classes can be traced immediately. For a better flow of discussion we are going to analyse each stanza of *Cidadão* separately.

- 1 *Tá vendo aquele edifício moço?*  
Can you see that building young man?
- 2 *Ajudei a levantar*  
I helped to raise it
- 3 *Foi um tempo de aflição*  
It was a time of affliction
- 4 *Eram quatro condução*  
It was four buses
- 5 *Duas pra ir, duas pra voltar*  
Two to go, two to come back
- 6 *Hoje depois dele pronto*  
Now, after it's ready
- 7 *Olho pra cima e fico tonto*  
I look up and get dizzy
- 8 *Mas me chega um cidadão*  
But then comes a citizen
- 9 *E me diz desconfiado, tu tá aí admirado*  
And tells me with suspicion, are you there mesmerised
- 10 *Ou tá querendo roubar?*  
Or are you thinking of stealing?
- 11 *Meu domingo tá perdido*  
My Sunday is spoilt
- 12 *Vou pra casa entristecido*  
I go home saddened
- 13 *Dá vontade de beber*  
I feel like drinking
- 14 *E pra aumentar o meu tédio*  
And to make my boredom greater
- 15 *Eu nem posso olhar pro prédio*  
I can't even look at the building
- 16 *Que eu ajudei a fazer*  
I helped to make

As it is the case at the beginning of each long stanza, in the first one another man is addressed directly by the omnipresent voice of this worker, who seems to see himself as an older and tired man compared to his listener, who he calls “young man”. This citizen’s tiredness becomes more explicit when he describes how troublesome it was to build this building (lines 3 to 5), which, because of its size, could either be a house or an office building. The man would have to travel long distances (lines 4 to 5),

which means that the building might be in the heart of the city whilst his home is in the farthest suburbs, where it is cheaper and there is a certain degree of race segregation, through the confinement of the working class who cannot afford to live in the city centre. Then, after the building is ready and inhabited, he is not allowed to get in, as he does not have the social status to do so; and just by standing in front of it he is seen by another “citizen”<sup>104</sup> to be either astonished (perhaps because of the grandeur of the building he helped construct), or considering robbing it. These two assumptions lead us to conclude that the “citizen” is considered either lacking the experience of the city (thus being from the countryside and ignorant of the rules of the metropolis, uneducated for that matter), or having bad intentions (probably because of his social condition as poor) as he could be observing the building and the movement of its inhabitants so as to plot a robbery. The recognition of his condition as a lower class man saddens and bores him and on his way home the only thing he thinks of is to numb himself with alcohol so he can forget. The second stanza could represent one of the reasons why this citizen is so degraded and considered inferior for being uneducated.

17 *Tá vendo aquele colégio moço?*  
Can you see that school young man?  
18 *Eu também trabalhei lá*  
I also worked there  
19 *Lá eu quase me arbento*  
There I almost killed myself  
20 *Pus a massa fiz cimento*  
I put in the dough I made cement

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<sup>104</sup> In Portuguese *cidadão* can be used as a pejorative word by the police, in an ironic way, in order to refer to any citizen who is suspicious and thought to be ‘up to no good’. In this case the citizen questioning our ‘citizen’ could either be someone like him, from the countryside (easy to recognise by his looks, posture and dress code), living in the suburbs, who thinks of himself as having climbed a step upwards in the social order through his job at the building; or a ‘real’ citizen of the ‘city’ who regards himself as superior for belonging to the upper-class, hence the suspicion in the song.

21 *Ajudei a rebocar*  
     I helped to plaster  
 22 *Minha filha inocente*  
     My innocent daughter  
 23 *Vem pra mim toda contente*  
     Comes to me all happy  
 24 *Pai vou me matricular*  
     Dad I'm going to register  
 25 *Mas me diz um cidadão*  
     But then a citizen tells me  
 26 *Criança de pé no chão*  
     Bare foot children  
 27 *Aqui não pode estudar*  
     Can't study here  
 28 *Esta dor doeu mais forte*  
     This pain was even stronger  
 29 *Por que que eu deixei o norte*  
     Why did I leave the North  
 30 *Eu me pus a me dizer*  
     I started telling myself  
 31 *Lá a seca castigava mas o pouco que eu plantava*  
     There the drought was severe but the little I planted  
 32 *Tinha direito a comer*  
     I had the right to eat

As if following a pattern, the citizen's daughter is likely to have inherited the fate of her father: when he tries to register her at the school, he discovers she cannot be granted a right to education, because she is a poor child (lines 26 and 27), in this way creating a perpetuation of the social status they are stuck in. The citizen, who takes it quite lightly in the previous stanza, feels a stronger pain (line 28) when he acknowledges that his daughter is doomed to have no chance, like him before. This fact brings him to question the reason to have left the countryside, the Northeast<sup>105</sup> (lines 29 and 30), if there he could enjoy the fruits of his work even when the drought hit the land (lines 31 and 32), whilst in the city he is denied a possibility to

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<sup>105</sup> The notion of *norte* (North) here is used as a counterpoint to the poorness of the North and Northeastern regions to the South or Southeastern more developed areas.



succeed in life. However, so as to redeem his suffering and his almost cursed life, he finds a church.

- 33 *Tá vendo aquela igreja moço?*  
Can you see that church young man?  
34 *Onde o padre diz amém*  
Where the priest says Amen  
35 *Pus o sino e o badalo*  
I put the bell and the clapper  
36 *Enchi minha mão de calo*  
I filled my hands with calluses  
37 *Lá eu trabalhei também*  
There I also worked  
38 *Lá sim valeu a pena*  
There it was worthwhile  
39 *Tem quermesse, tem novena*  
There is kirmess, and novena  
40 *E o padre me deixa entrar*  
And the priest let me in  
41 *Foi lá que cristo me disse*  
And it was there that Christ told me  
42 *Rapaz deixe de tolice*  
Boy stop being foolish  
43 *Não se deixe amedrontar*  
Don't let yourself be frightened

The church works as a symbol of salvation, of redemption, as he is not only accepted and granted entry, but can be also part of certain religious activities (line 39) and thus part of the community. There, amidst his people (and the priest) he encounters Jesus (lines 40 and 41), who comforts him about the way human beings behave towards others.

- (Refrain)  
44 *Fui eu quem criou a terra*  
It was Me who created the Earth  
45 *Enchi o rio fiz a serra*  
I filled the rivers and made the hills  
46 *Não deixei nada faltar*  
I didn't forget about anything  
47 *Hoje o homem criou asas*  
And today man's got wings

48 *E na maioria das casas*  
And in the majority of the households  
49 *Eu também não posso entrar*  
I also can't get in

A strong assertion is made by Jesus in the sense that religion (hence His own value as a leader) is slowly losing space to the anthropocentric vortex of capitalism, where men value more their material belongings than their religious and more humanistic beliefs. In the original version, the song ends with the bells of the church ringing as a way of calling these “fallen” humans back onto track, back into the Christian way.

*Cidadão* discusses the awareness of the lack of chances that those people who are part of the ‘cattle’ have to face when trying to earn a life in the big cities where they are not much more than cheap labour who make the ‘herd’. Another aspect to underline in this commentary of *Cidadão* is the fact that, when trying to find his way into the city, this citizen is denied housing projects, his daughter is denied education, and the only institution accepting them is the church. The message coming from Jesus is clear: like the peasants, He is nowadays also denied entry into the houses of the wealthy, who do not need Him anymore, since they think they can supply their own needs, in capitalist terms, without having to rely on the Church or on religion.

At this point we could say that the wealthier layer of society will try to compensate their lack of care and love for the other by complying with what could be seen as yet another strand of the *panem et circenses*, which is *caritas*.<sup>106</sup> As used by the Catholic Church in many countries, it implies the provision of free food and clothing so as to

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<sup>106</sup> Latin word for charity meaning ‘love for the other’, generally symbolised by a heart in flames and children holding gathered fruits.

express the ideal of giving away comfort for the heart, for the soul, despite failing to provide more practical, ‘mundane’, and social uplifting possibilities such as fairly paid jobs, affordable and comfortable housing, and widespread education that could contribute to a fairer and more balanced society.

In Latin, the Christian theological virtues are faith, hope and charity which according to Pope Benedict XVI are within “the Church’s deepest nature [as to express] her three-fold responsibility: of proclaiming the word of God (*kerygma-martyria*) [faith], celebrating the sacraments (*leitourgia*) [hope], and exercising the ministry of charity (*diakonia*) [*caritas*]”: as such, *caritas-agape* should extend “beyond the frontiers of the Church” into society as a whole. (Pope Benedict XVI, 2006:60) The absence of these three milestone qualities would lead to contrasting unacceptable vices of incredulity and apostasy; despair and cynicism; and hatred and indifference, bringing with them the disbelief and lack of faith towards the creed. In most Catholic societies, some versions of the Bible use *caritas* as Christian love, as in *Deus caritas est* (God is love). In Brazil, a country with a large Catholic population, *caritas* became a way of life where the poor receive literal charity from the rich, without earning it, just because they need it, a concept which, according to Pope Benedict XVI, has faced “an objection [...] subsequently developed with particular insistence by Marxism: the poor, it is claimed, do not need charity but justice”; and where charity is “in effect a way for the rich to shirk their obligation to work for justice and a means of soothing their consciences, while preserving their own status and robbing the poor of their rights” (Pope Benedict XVI, 2006:61), as just seen in *Cidadão*.

## Chapter 4 – The emergence & consequences of an Ethics of *caritas* in Brazil

The corruption and hardship many Brazilians witnessed in the 1960s, still strongly in place nowadays, were but the remains of many centuries of political, social and financial exploitation and disregard in a country where colonisation created clienteles and corruption. Such understanding can be considered accurate and fair when taking into account even the far-gone model with which Portugal (and Europe in general) approached the use of natural resources and native workforce in the countries they ‘discovered’ and colonised from the 16<sup>th</sup> century onwards in most parts of the world.

This polarisation of Brazilian society can be explained through the works of anthropologists like Roberto DaMatta, Gilberto Freyre and Darcy Ribeiro, and of historians such as Sérgio Buarque de Hollanda and Caio Prado Júnior. To the purpose of the argument of this thesis, we will be focusing on Alberto Carlos Almeida in order to understand from where this mentality arises.

In his book *A Cabeça do Brasileiro* [The Mind of the Brazilian] (2007),<sup>107</sup> Almeida shows the results of the PESB (Pesquisa Social Brasileira) [Brazilian Social Research].<sup>108</sup> Almeida discusses the differences and similarities in Brazilian society and other societal models, such as the North-American, and claims that, because of

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<sup>107</sup> All the English quotes from this book are my own translation, as the book has not been translated from its Portuguese original version.

<sup>108</sup> Research conducted between July and October 2002, where 2,363 people were interviewed through twenty-six estates and the Federal District.

the low level of formal education in Brazil, one can affirm that Brazilian society is archaic (2007:26), as in primitive or outmoded, and that the majority of the population will comply with certain characteristics as Brazilians:

- supports the “Brazilian knack”,<sup>109</sup>
  - is hierarchical;
  - is patrimonial;
  - is fatalistic;
  - does not trust friends;
  - has no public spirit;
  - advocates the “law of talion”,<sup>110</sup>
  - is against sexual liberation;
  - is in favour of more state intervention in the economy;
  - is in favour of censorship.
- (Almeida, 2007:26)

Using one of DaMatta’s main titles (*Carnavais, Malandros e Heróis* and *A Casa & A Rua*), Almeida points out, in the first two items of his list, how hierarchy-based Brazilian society determines that one’s social origin and positioning is going to define what one can or cannot achieve, and how much above the law one is comfortably situated. According to both authors this is due to the inheritance of an enslaved mentality, where a distorted notion of equality and of governmental authority is historically widely recognised through considering the question: “do you know who you are talking to?” as an iconic representation of the generalised

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<sup>109</sup> The ‘Brazilian knack’, or ‘jeitinho brasileiro’, can also be related to yet another national construct in Brazil, which is Gérson’s law, an aphorism of the 1970s. Gérson was one of the footballers of the 1970 World Cup victorious Brazilian team who appeared in a cigarette commercial, endorsing the product as both good and cheap. Gérson states at the end of the commercial: “I like to take advantage of everything, right?”, becoming associated with a lack of ethics and moral principles which would lead to a culture of ‘string pulling’ in the country. This “easy way” of getting things done leads us into yet another related character in Brazilian culture: the *malandro* (scoundrel). Made into a folk hero through music, literature and cinema, with certain characteristics, such as: he is lazy, but intelligent, and does not like to work; he is prone to petty crimes and illicit ventures; he is charismatic, enjoying a bohemian life surrounded by women, cheating and deceiving for personal gain.

<sup>110</sup> Talion Law is a “principle developed in early Babylonian law and present in both biblical and early Roman law that criminals should receive as punishment precisely those injuries and damages they had inflicted upon their victims. Many early societies applied this ‘eye-for-an-eye’ principle literally.”  
<<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/581485/talion>>

nepotism or authoritarianism which surrounds Brazilian society. This question is, in return, is a direct representative of the unequal treatment given to different people according to their social background, social status, or networks. Within this concept individuals must accept and respect their pre-determined social role, and stop aspiring to change it or have it changed. As a consequence of the indiscriminate use of the above question, laws and rules are more likely to be broken for different reasons, due to a strong sense of righteousness, either because the individual knows someone important or influential; or because the person in question has a special way of persuading others to believe that he must be treated as an exception to the rule, the *jeitinho brasileiro*. (Almeida, 2006:15-17)

Generally speaking, the *jeitinho brasileiro* demands that the person taking advantage of it “chore miséria” [pleads poverty] (Almeida, 2006:17), presenting facts and examples of his life which prove his difficulties, as a way of getting things done by bypassing rules and social conventions for his own benefit. This can be considered as a strong trait of Brazilian social and political navigation, and can be associated with the use of other methods such as family ties, blackmailing, material or financial rewards, personal favours, and promises which can or cannot be fulfilled.

It is noticeable that the political democracy exercised in Brazil (or in any society facing these characteristics) loses quality because of the hierarchical social relations, where the socio-economic development can suffer as a consequence of the unfair distribution of wealth, illiteracy, and great power of the government and its members, making it much easier for autocratic hegemonies to arise.

This autocratic power can be better used by politicians when its people have developed a paternalistic way of thinking, which is the belief that there is a ‘Father-state’ to solve all society’s problems, and their individual needs. (Almeida, 2007:35)

The populace would statically rely on this belief with the confidence that the state will provide as much as they believe that God must provide, which reminds us of the myth of Messianism (and even Fatalism, according to Almeida), in which people’s future lies in the hands of God. According to this belief, one cannot change his own fate, which has been predetermined; which keeps them quiet and settled in their social positions without questioning them, whilst waiting for a final reward: heaven.

This individual believes that someone will help him (a saviour, a messiah, or a politician), therefore there is no need to worry, because eventually the government, the authorities, or the church will fulfil the material absence of God and make their lives more liveable, more bearable, with the government ruling the economy in order to make their own lives better, which obviously, in that case, will never happen.

In regard to this messianic, or fatalistic, society, Roberto DaMatta asks the following intriguing question:

How could the tropical society that invented *Carnaval* and instituted roguery (*malandragem*) as a way of life; a culture that discusses issues at the beach, which abhors extreme measures, which deals with modern dilemmas with apparent ease; how could that culture ever be associated with such an extreme and uncompromising social movement as millenarian Messianism? (1996:1)

The answer is given throughout the text when the author makes it clear that it can be understood that Messianism refers “to the coming of God, to the presence of a very special and unusual person – the messiah – and to a consequent re-ordering of the

social system manifested with many masks and ideologies, for the simple reason that all that is human can be elevated and acquire sacred state and status”. (DaMatta, 1996:4-5)

It is important to take into consideration the immense contradictions any social system is pervaded with, and the one that interests us more is on the moral level, as presented by DaMatta (1996:4), where a conflicting collective obedience is taught along with individual freedom. It is important to notice the individualistic scope of these beliefs, where a Familist<sup>111</sup> way of thinking comes into play, making individuals give more importance to family than to community values, and of course making collective concerns less important than what is immediate to their inner family circle, whilst still being bound to social principles and paradigms. That can generate a dissolution of the social fabric, and can be associated with another way Brazilians think Patrimonialism, which in Brazilian Portuguese would be called *Coronelismo* [Colonelism].<sup>112</sup> (Almeida, 2006:35) This mindset is very common in absolutist governments, and can be defined as the confusion between the public and the personal spaces, still observed in many parts of Brazil, such as the Northeast.

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<sup>111</sup> As discussed by Almeida, 84% of the people interviewed trust members of the family whilst 85% do not trust the majority ‘other’. Not even friends escape the suspicion of 70% of the people, whilst neighbours deserve only 23% of their trust, which puts work colleagues (with 30%) above neighbours and members of the public (15%) in the research. (Almeida, 2007:115)

<sup>112</sup> *Coronelismo*, or the ‘rule of the colonels’ was a common practice of the political machine of Brazilian Old Republic (1889-1930) in which individuals would be granted patronage, generally in the form of land and/or political power, in exchange of their political loyalty amidst an enclave, hence creating this type of oligarch. One of the most discussed characteristics of *coronelismo* is the private use of public space, for personal gain. A good example could be the appropriation of land which belongs to the State and is used for private farming or speculation.



The centralisation of power in the hands of a few, the oligarchs, would have generated an anti-liberal society which follows “personalistic, intimist, affective and sentimentalist ethics”, according to Sérgio Buarque de Hollanda, where the house is a private space, and the street, understood as part of the house, will be used as private property. (Almeida, 2007:98) Urban, and more modern examples of that are the personalisation of pavements, sometimes separated by short walls, where one builds the way one wants even if it implies that members of the public are prevented from using it as a safe area to walk; thus abusing public space.

Finally, Almeida moderately criticises DaMatta’s theory when he (Almeida) associates these traits of Brazilian social behaviour with a general lack of education. Almeida emphasises that the general model of ‘the less education the more archaic and backward society is’, is not only related to the Brazilian case, but happens in any country. Whilst DaMatta associates the *jeitinho brasileiro* with an Iberian inheritance (which Almeida acknowledges as a form of DNA), for Almeida, any culture can be said to have this *jeitinho* when the schooling level of that society is low, which would prove to be “an anthropology of low schooling *vis-à-vis* an anthropology of high schooling.” (Almeida, 2007:276) Almeida associates an increase on the schooling levels as having a direct impact on the respect for the law, bringing “very deep alterations of consequences for any societies”, and amongst them the “consolidation of democracy”. (Almeida, 2007:276-7)

According to DaMatta, Messianism is seen as “a movement that rejects the world as it is and proposes a radical transformation of society”. As such, it should be “a direct

connection with God”, a possibility of denouncing “the injustices and miseries generated by the very fabric of society”, denying, in that way, “a basic part of our ideological legacy”. This establishes a contrast to the norm, or rationalism, which is the rejection of “ambiguity and axiomatically defines the world as a manageable, meaningful place”. (DaMatta, 1996:1)

Taking DaMatta’s description of Messianism into account, one ought to agree that in Brazil there are plenty of opportunities for messianic institutions or individuals to establish themselves within communities that are indeed suffering from injustice and social hardship. One of the strongest, and most notorious, cases of the resurgence and fall of a messianic movement is the case of Canudos.<sup>113</sup> As in a Brazilian version of Sebastianism,<sup>114</sup> the dead king is replaced by a ‘living messiah’, Antônio Conselheiro,<sup>115</sup> whilst still waiting for the promised king to return: “In truth I say unto you, when nation falls out with nation, Brazil with Brazil, England with England, Prussia with Prussia, then shall Dom Sebastião with all his army arise from the waves of the sea”. (da Cunha, 1964:136) The invocation of the important character of Dom Sebastião in Conselheiro’s speech is a strong feature here, a symbol of an imminent war coming their way, where Brazil would fight heretically

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<sup>113</sup> *Canudos War* was a conflict between the Brazilian State and the community of Canudos in the countryside of Bahia, between 1893 and 1897. The conflict was generated due to dissatisfaction towards the establishment and ruling of the Republican Regime.

<sup>114</sup> *Sebastianismo* was a secular-mystic movement, created in the second half of the sixteenth century in Portugal, as a direct response to the death of the king Sebastião at the battle of Alcacer-Quibir (1578). It was created as a reaction to the political situation of the time in Portugal (then ruled by king Filipe II from Spain), and it can be explained as a contemplation of the salvation coming from the ‘resurrection’ of the dead king through the collective belief that he would eventually come back to save the country from the hands of the Spaniards.

<sup>115</sup> Antônio Conselheiro “(a name derived from the backland way of addressing lay missionaries), a religious mystic and penitent” (Levine, 1995:2), was born Antônio Vicente Mendes Maciel, and “wandered the rural Brazilian Northeast for twenty years.” (ibid.)

against Brazil itself, and brother would kill brother. This enunciation brings hope, through the imagery of the noble king appearing from the sea, whilst still not promising the victory, reassuring instead those monarchists that “breaking through the teachings of the religious messiah, came those of the racial messiah, preaching insurrection against the republican form of government” in Euclides da Cunha’s own words. (ibid.) An important argument has to be made at this point about the significance and power of the figure of this insurrectionary and riotous messiah which would appear in Brazil’s countryside, which would reflect and influence Brazilian culture and politics for centuries.

## Canudos and the search for a messianic governance

Following the Abolition of Slavery in 1888, signed by Princess Imperial of Brazil Dona Isabel as regent, Brazil witnessed, in 1889, an ultimatum given to the her father, Emperor of Brazil Dom Pedro II<sup>116</sup> for abdicating the throne, which only happened in 1891 after his return from Portugal to find the country succumbing to the “rising tide of liberal republicans” and positivists. (Camacho, 1973:96-97) Dom Pedro II’s loss of support of the *fazendeiros* [farmers], which had been “most decisive in the maintenance of the Empire”, and his debilitated relationship with the army “precipitated the end of the empire” (ibid.) thus giving space for the proclamation of the First Brazilian Republic (1889-1930). For some people, these were days of rejoicing and victory, whilst for most of those already depleted people of poor communities around the country, it was a time of changes for worse. With the establishment of high taxes, most of the times calculated by individuals who were not professional accountants, and who would judge case by case not in a fair and legal procedure, but based on their own judgement (depending on how they were treated by the tax payer in question, for instance, and depending on the social and political status of that citizen).

Moved by his extreme discontentment towards the treatment given by the Republic to the people of the *sertão*, whilst also holding strong religious beliefs, Antônio

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<sup>116</sup> Dom Pedro I, Isabel’s grandfather, was the ruler who proclaimed the Independence of Brazil on the 7<sup>th</sup> September 1822, becoming Emperor of Brazil until his abdication in 1831 which favoured his son Dom Pedro II.

Vicente Mendes Maciel, O Conselheiro,<sup>117</sup> founded in 1893 the community of Bello Monte, better known as Canudos. It was a community with no police force,<sup>118</sup> no taxation, and no masters; where the land was equally shared by its dwellers. The population of the village was composed of peasants escaping from the ‘devil’ of the recently formed Republic and its positivist and civilised modern world. This new world brought by the Republic was one of heavy taxation, civil marriage, dissolution of marriage (divorce), and the extinction of the monarchic powers, considered against the Church by Conselheiro’s extremist followers, who believed in the Godly right of the monarchy. Most of the inhabitants of the village were ex-slaves and workers from surrounding farms who could not enjoy the motto in the minds of the Republicans of “Ordem e Progresso” of the newly-created flag, as they were set apart from the progress that would have been brought by that order, which only deepened the social problems already existing in the country.

With its promises of a better and Godlier life, Canudos went “from a moribund hamlet of a few families... in 1895” to be considered, in its apogee in 1896, one of the largest cities of Bahia with “at least fifteen thousand” people living in the community (Levine, 1992:212), and possibly around twenty-five thousand at the peak of the war, whilst the capital of the state, Salvador, had around two hundred

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<sup>117</sup> According to Robert M. Levine, Conselheiro being so-called by ‘his’ people “signified that he was considered not merely a *beato* but a wise counsellor, a nineteenth-century title that few religious men in the backlands attained” (Levine, 1992:124), which is an endorsement as to his importance leading the events that happened in Canudos. Conselheiro was strictly against the breakage of the religious institution of marriage through the legalisation of civil marriage and divorce established by Republican laws. This was possibly due to the fiasco of his own marriage ending because his wife’s adultery in 1860 (ibid.:123).

<sup>118</sup> Even though Conselheiro had a personal security force formed by some 600 men called *Guarda Católica* ou *Companhia de Jesus*, and the small offenses committed were sentenced by Conselheiro himself, whilst the more serious ones were sent to the judicial district to be dealt with.

tousand inhabitants. The growing interest for the community made farm workers abandon their jobs and flee to Canudos along with ex-slaves, who could not find settlement after their liberation, and some dislodged native Brazilians and mestizos. With the depletion on the workforce, the already weakened local economy was intensely threatened and the farmers took action in their hands by articulating a reaction. According to Euclides da Cunha's own account in *Os Sertões*, there were other reasons behind the order of attacking Canudos, as a

disturbance in the caatingas... [where] backlands lawlessness were written was precipitately making its entrance into history; and the Canudos revolt, when all is said, was little more than symptomatic of a malady which, by no means confined to a corner of Baía, was spreading to the capitals of the seaboard. The man of the backlands, that rude, leather-clad figure, had partners in crime who were, possibly, even more dangerous. (da Cunha, 1964:279)

Euclides da Cunha questions the validity of such savagery against those backlanders said to be on their way to destroy the Republic. With the excuse of a fear of a monarchist insurrection, the army was called into action in order to protect the 'nation and its citizens', as if those same backlanders were not considered so.

According to different accounts of the real character, and also shown in the filmic version of the events,<sup>119</sup> Conselheiro had predicted that there would be many different 'waves' of attack to Canudos, and treated them as fires, burning their lives apart:

I said: there will be four fires. The first three are mine. The forth I put in the hands of Good Jesus! [...] First comes the deluge, and then the seed. When the soldiers of the Anti-Christ<sup>[120]</sup> arrive the

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<sup>119</sup> *Guerra de Canudos*, directed by Sérgio Rezende (1997).

<sup>120</sup> The soldiers of the Republican army were symbols of the enemy of God and the Catholic Church.

waters of the rivers will be like milk to us, and blood to them!  
The dust of this ground will turn into flour to us and into thorns  
to them! The sertão will become sea, the sea will become sertão”

At many levels, Conselheiro’s predictions were right in the sense that in November 1896, the first of four military expeditions coming from the coast arrived in the *sertão* in order to defeat the *conselheiristas*. This expedition was commissioned to Lieutenant Manuel da Silva Pires Ferreira, and according to the historian Hernâni Donato, was composed of a mere one hundred and nine soldiers, three officers, two guides, and a doctor. They left from Salvador to Uauá to an unsuccessful campaign lasting for no more than four hours and carried a death toll of one hundred and fifty *sertanejos* and ten soldiers. (Donato, 1996:556)

Discontent with the failure of that campaign to control the insurgents, the army arranged a second and a third attempt to destroy Canudos, and still failed. We could assert that one of the main reasons for those defeats was their physical inaptitude and little knowledge of the region’s environment, which linked to a lack of adaptation to the elements and the climate, and their underestimation of the spiritual and physical strength of the *sertanejos*.

After each defeat, the number of the military force was raised, whilst the number of *conselheiristas* was obviously decreasing, until the point that during the fourth attack, in April 1897, almost six thousand men (and one Withworth cannon, which would become known as the ‘matadeira’) (Donato, 1996:183) were sent into action under the command of General Artur Oscar de Andrade Guimarães. At the end of what is considered the biggest guerrilla war – mobilising more than 12,000 soldiers

(more than half of the national contingent) –, and after almost a year of onslaught, more than 15,000 dwellers and 5,000 soldiers were killed (ibid.:242), and a few survived to tell the tale of the community and its war against the anti-Christ Republic – amongst them “an old man, two other full-grown men, and a child.” (da Cunha, 1964:475)

Notwithstanding the army neither arrested nor killed Antônio Conselheiro, whose corpse was found and dug out of a shallow grave “wrapped in a sorry shroud – a filthy sheet – over which pious hands had strewn a few withered flowers” (da Cunha, 1964:476), had died of wounds caused by fragments of a garnet, and finally stricken by dysentery, or “the strops.”(ibid.:469) His body was exhumed from the *Santuário*, or Igreja Nova, by a group of military doctors, photographed, and his head taken to Salvador for examination, which would finally prove Conselheiro’s insanity, though it was more likely to serve as a trophy and a warning to the possible next insurgents. (ibid.:476)<sup>121</sup>

Nevertheless it was not only the dwellers of Canudos, and the *sertão* as a whole, who suffered the consequences of the war. The return of many of those soldiers to a reality that they did not expect, was the starting point for one of Brazil’s biggest environmental and social problems in modern times: the *favelas*.<sup>122</sup>

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<sup>121</sup> In 1905, Conselheiro’s head, which was on display since the end of the war, was destroyed in a fire at the old Faculty of Medicine in Salvador.

<sup>122</sup> *Favela* is the Brazilian common term for slums, shantytowns or poor areas of any city or town.



## Social polarization and the case of the *favelas*

The official abolition of slavery in Brazil, in 1888,<sup>123</sup> created a problem perhaps not envisaged by the republicans: many former slaves “swarmed into the cities where there was neither work nor shelter for them” (Camacho 1973:103), and started to gather in ghettos in the big cities and in the well-established capital of the country (since 1763), Rio de Janeiro.

*Morro da Providência* [Providence Hill]<sup>124</sup> is, arguably, the first *favela* of Rio de Janeiro, marking a history of social changes in the landscape of the country. According to the website *Favela Tem Memória* [*Favela Got Memory*]<sup>125</sup> the first name of the settlement was *Morro da Favela* [*Favela Hill*],<sup>126</sup> which is a direct reference to Euclides da Cunha’s description of that landscape feature of the region surrounding Canudos, “for Mount Favella, like the other hills, does not have even the barbarious vegetation of the caatingas to cover it but is wholly barren and rugged-appearing.” (da Cunha, 1964:306) Interestingly, both *favela* and *providência* recall the landscape and memories of the region where the bloody war of Canudos was fought and won by those same soldiers who were promised houses by the

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<sup>123</sup> The abolition was preceded by different stages since 1871, a major one being the law of *ventre livre* (free womb), also signed by Princess Isabel, which established that thereupon all children born from slaves would be free.

<sup>124</sup> It is interesting to notice here that one of the types of settlement which would set a future standard of dwelling for the working-class in Rio de Janeiro, and others cities in Brazil, is called Providence, a direct reference to the theological expression “divine providence” as God’s superior power to decide and interfere with man’s future, which again brings that notion of the Messianic character of God, or His “messengers”, politicians in this case, who know what is best for the people.

<sup>125</sup> *Favela Tem Memória* is part of *Portal Viva Favela*, an initiative of *Viva Rio*, a NGO directed by Rubem César Fernandes. See: <<http://www.favelatemmemoria.com.br/>>

<sup>126</sup> Interestingly, *morro* can also be translated as slum in English, which would give a double-negative meaning to that kind of settlement, as in ‘Slum of Slum’.

government, in the federal capital, Rio de Janeiro, and finally left to fend for themselves at the end of their service in the *sertão*. According to *Favela Tem Memória*, because of political and bureaucratic problems those promises were not fulfilled and those soldiers provisionally occupied the hillsides, a settlement which became permanent with time. In those hills, the same kind of underbush vegetation (*favela*), very similar to the one in the area of the caatinga, was found, and that is why the settlement was named *Morro da Favela*. At around the 1920s or 1930s, when many of those settlements were spreading across other hills of Rio de Janeiro, people would refer to them as *favelas* as a direct reference to their archetype *Morro da Favela*. Because of this stereotypical use of the name, the original settlement was changed to Morro da Providência, yet another direct allusion to da Cunha's description of Canudos's surroundings. As in a prediction of what these *favelas* would become in the collective imaginary, da Cunha gives his readers an explanation of what *favela*, the vegetation, is like:

The *favellas*, nameless still to science – unknown to the learned, although the unlearned are well acquainted with them ... possess leaves which, consisting of cells elongated in the form of villousities, are a remarkable means of condensation, absorption, and defense. On the one hand, their surfaces, cooling at night, to a degree far below the temperature of the air, despite the aridity of the atmosphere, provoke brief precipitation of dew. On the other hand, whoever touches them touches an incandescent plate heated to an unnatural degree. (da Cunha, 1964:32-3)

It is interesting to notice here how da Cunha refers to this *favela* (vegetation) as being still anonymous and ignored by scholars, as if in ironic coincidence with the difficulties felt by authorities in accessing these mysterious places in Brazilian society, or their total lack of interest into reaching out for those communities. The *favelas* (dwellings) had always been a common preoccupation and topic touched

upon by writers and songwriters of all segments of cultural and social backgrounds, a rich source of material due to its atmosphere of oppression and disregard towards the population, who initially did not have a choice other than to live in those areas. One of the first accounts of these types of settlements is Aluizio Azevedo's *O Cortiço* [The Slum] (1890), where the author manages to congregate not a layer of society, as the *favelas* do, but instead, different races and backgrounds, such as the Portuguese and European immigrants, former black slaves and mulattos, as in a micro-version of the well-adapted oppressed population.

Paulo Freire, a Brazilian educator famous for his influential theories on Critical Pedagogy, said in his *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, first published in 1970, that “freedom is acquired by conquest, not by gift. It must be pursued constantly and responsibly. Freedom is not an ideal located outside of man; nor is it an idea which becomes myth. It is rather the indispensable condition for the quest for human completion.” (Freire, 1993:29) The freedom necessary to the fulfilment of mankind mentioned by Freire was far from being granted to the majority of the population in the 1960s and 1970s Latin America, and also in many parts of the world. For that reason many artists decided to take matters into their own hands, denouncing and protesting against oppression and injustice.

Through the need of representing the quiet voice of those oppressed people, various music trends and movements appeared between the 1960s and 1980s, not only in Brazil, but also around the world, and strongly in Latin America. That happened out of the non-conformist thinking regarding the social instability of their countries

which were under dictatorships (military or not), and swarmed with poverty, violence, unequal distribution of wealth and land, lack of education and health care, amongst so many other problems faced by *el pueblo*, the masses, *o povo*. In music, some of these movements were the Cuban *Nueva Trova* (1967/1968-)<sup>127</sup> or the Chilean *Nueva Canción* (1960s to 1980s).<sup>128</sup> In Brazil, mostly because of the dictatorship and censorship of that period, that kind of movement was not developed, and instead, Brazilian Popular Music (Música Popular Brasileira – MPB) became a sort of *Nueva Canción* in Brazil. There were cultural and linguistic reasons for the de-engagement of Brazil with other Latin American movements. For example, whilst *Nueva Canción*, *Nueva Trova*, and other Latin American genres were grounded on Andean and Spanish music, MPB was mixing and creating something different from those folk rooted genres.

### **Brazilian Music of Protest: the case of Chico Buarque**

It is undeniable that in the 1960s and 1970s, following an international revival of the folk music, artists were expressing their visions across Latin America, and it was with those shared feelings of unrest that names like Chico Buarque, one of the icons of protest song in Brazil, “flirted” with *Nueva Trova*, from 1978, after his first visit to Cuba, when he also recorded a version of Pablo Milanés’s *Canción Por La Unidad*

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<sup>127</sup> The movement *Nueva Trova* was a follow-up of the Cuban Revolution (1959) and basically touched upon the abuses perpetrated by the USA against Cuba and its citizens.

<sup>128</sup> *Nueva Canción* was popularised by Violeta Parra (1917-1967) and Joan Baez (b. 1941-)’s versions of Parra’s own *Gracias a La Vida*; the movement was, as much as *Nueva Trova*, socially inspired and committed.

*Latinoamericana* and *Yolanda*.<sup>129</sup> Along with Buarque, Milton Nascimento was possibly the strongest disseminator of the *Nueva Canción* style in Brazil.

Nascimento's close artistic relationship with Mercedes Sosa,<sup>130</sup> and other Argentinean artists, from the early-1970s, brought up a fruitful musical partnership. Sosa and Nascimento successfully performed together Parra's *Volver a los Diecisiete* (1976); and then, ten years later (and just one year after the re-democratisation of the country in 1985), Sosa and Nascimento performed it again. This time they had Chico Buarque, Caetano Veloso and Gal Costa accompanying them, bringing a stronger feeling of the celebratory retake of the defying spirit that *Nueva Canción* had brought to the rest of Latin America.

Sosa and Nascimento also recorded, in 1984, the iconic song *Coração de Estudante*<sup>131</sup> (written by Nascimento) for their joint album *Corazón Americano*, named after the song-texts beginning words from yet another Nascimento's song in the album, *San Vicente*.<sup>132</sup> The sixth song of the same album, *Cio da Terra* is one of the strongest attempts of drawing into the folkloric inspiration of the Chilean

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<sup>129</sup> Pablo Milanés (1943-) is considered one of the founders of Cuban *Nueva Trova*, along with Silvio Rodríguez and Noel Nicola.

<sup>130</sup> Mercedes Sosa (1939-2009) was an Argentine female singer who also became famous for her interpretation of Violeta Parra's *Gracias a La Vida*, regarded as the best-known Latin American song of all times.

<sup>131</sup> *Coração de Estudante* would become, in the same year, the anthem of the movement "Diretas Já" [Direct Elections Now]. It is important to recognise here that 1985 was the definitive year of change for the regime, from the dictatorial to the democratic system, as it officially happened as a consequence of the "Diretas Já", a series of collective action events which took place between June 1983 and April 1984, which culminated with the indirect Presidential election of Tancredo Neves by a electoral collegiate on the 15<sup>th</sup> January 1985. (Giugni *et al.*, 1998:182) Despite having been elected, Neves never took the oath, as he died on the 21<sup>st</sup> April 1985, having his Vice-President, José Sarney inaugurated as the official first civilian President since 1961. The opening of the regime brought a new Constitution in 1988, and the first direct elections in 1989 electing Fernando Collor de Mello.

<sup>132</sup> Sosa had previously recorded *San Vicente* as one of the tracks in a 1977 single album, with the song *Cio da Terra* by Nascimento and Chico Buarque

agrarian movements of *Nueva Canción*. Nascimento can be said to have incorporated those melodies of *Nueva Canción* into his national inspirations from the cotton fields in Brazil, after visiting agrarian communities in the South of the country.

In the case of Chico Buarque, he was much more inspired by photos of Cuba than by extended and fruitful experiences in the country, when he wrote *O Que Será*, one of his most famous songs, in 1976, where he seeks for something between the Brazilian *baião* and the Caribbean rhythms, which he calls *cubaião*.<sup>133</sup>

Another strong dissimilarity between the Chilean and Cuban protest songs and the Brazilian ones, is that Brazilian music had a more urban and anthropophagic<sup>134</sup> tone, although still conserving a more ‘rural’ voice in terms of its characters and topics, as to legitimise the missing voice of the minorities those artists were aiming to represent. If we take some examples of those ‘urban’ characters, workers and exiles from Chico Buarque’s songs such as *Pedro Pedreiro* (1965), *Construção* (1972), and *Meu Caro Amigo* (1976), we can see that a strong sense of classical and orchestral music, Samba, Bossa Nova, filled with refrain, in which all these genres mixed together, generate an attempt to break the rules of melody and ultimately of an imposed order. Another difference is that whilst most of the *Nueva Canción* songs have an explicit criticism in their song-texts, in the Brazilian case, on the contrary, artists were composing song-texts with double meaning and hidden criticism, such as

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<sup>133</sup> For this reference see Humberto Werneck in Chico Buarque *Letra e Música* (Cia da Letras, 1989), see: <[http://www.chicobuarque.com.br/construcao/mestre.asp?pg=oquesera\\_76.htm](http://www.chicobuarque.com.br/construcao/mestre.asp?pg=oquesera_76.htm)>

<sup>134</sup> An anthropophagy which resonates Andrade’s notion of ‘consuming’ many different musical styles in order to create a new hybrid and universal music which would become the new way of doing music, finally represented by the *tropicalista* movement of the end of the 1960s in Brazil.

*Roda Viva* (1967), and *Cálice* (1973), both by Chico Buarque, in order to avoid censorship.

*Roda Viva* can be considered a mark in song-writing at the end of the 1960s,<sup>135</sup> with its powerful message of discontent in its song-texts, which makes us understand why this was such a controversial song.

Throughout the song there is a notion of the power of the wheel, the round form that does not stop, the cycle or circle we are involved in. The use of this ‘mandala’<sup>136</sup> by Chico Buarque could represent the hope that this moving destructive wheel, like the one in Chaplin’s *Modern Times*, could slowly and progressively become a deeper form of access to different levels of selfconsciousness, reinforced by the song’s almost hypnotic circular tune. As such, through the song, the individual could gain understanding of the situation around him or her, and a perspective of being part of the universe itself, part of the bigger picture, and in that case would become able to make a change, to make his or her existence worthwhile.

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<sup>135</sup> *Roda Viva*, the song, only became known and praised for its value as a powerful message after Buarque’s first incursion into theatre, with the homonymous play with its shocking and provoking performances throughout 1968. However, those performances had to be stopped due to the reactions from right-wing groups, such as *Comando de Caça aos Comunistas* [Communists Hunting Command] (CCC). *Roda Viva* would become, in 1986, “when democracy was crawling after the military regime”, the name of a TV Cultura programme dedicated to bring a space for dialogue and “ideas, concepts and analysis of themes of public interest in a rare space in Brazilian television”. This programme reflects the dissatisfaction which Chico Buarque expresses in the song, and gives back that lost voice to presenters and interviewees who debate opinions and perspectives on national and international topics through a “democratic and reflexive debate”. The formula proved (and still does) the fact that Brazilian society needed (at the time of the dictatorship, at the time of return to democracy, and still nowadays), the possibility of speaking up and let its voice be heard. See: <<http://www.tvcultura.com.br/rodaviva/o-programa>>

<sup>136</sup> A ‘mandala’ is “a geometric or pictorial design usually enclosed in a circle, representing the entire universe... in Jungian psychology, a symbol representing the self and harmony within the individual.” (Encarta Dictionary, 1999:1144)

- 1 *Tem dias que a gente se sente*  
There are days we feel
- 2 *Como quem partiu ou morreu*  
Like who left or died
- 3 *A gente estancou de repente*  
We suddenly stanch<sup>137</sup>
- 4 *Ou foi o mundo então que cresceu...*  
Or it was the world which expanded...

The song starts with a gloomy melody which gives the idea of what this moving wheel is going to represent, a monotonous and cyclic musical arrangement which symbolises the frustrated feelings of those who would try to defeat it. Chico Buarque's discontent and desolation before the social, artistic and political stagnation of the country could not be clearer here (lines 1 and 2). He admits not to belong to this situation, as if he had already "left or died", possibly because the promised progress is hindered by this wheel of power and (mis)fortune, when people are silenced and obliged to stop thinking (and for that matter, singing), where their blood does not flow along the same rhythm anymore (line 3), where this huge body, the world, grew too chaotic for us to understand our surroundings in a time when so many countries were under dictatorial regimes (line 4).

- 5 *A gente quer ter voz ativa*  
We wanted to have a voice
- 6 *No nosso destino mandar*  
And rule our destiny
- 7 *Mas eis que chega a roda viva*  
But then there comes the live wheel
- 8 *E carrega o destino prá lá...*  
And takes destiny away...

At the same time, it is not as if people are not aware, not interested in the changes and in making their voices heard (line 5) and decide what they want to do or to have

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<sup>137</sup> The verb 'to stanch' (*estancar*) gains yet another dimension in this translation due to its similarity to the word 'stench', "a really disgusting smell, especially a strong lingering one" (Encarta Dictionary, 1999:1834), a 'rotten' smell which would have been the smell of this wheel.



(line 6). There is an important word in line 7 – *but* – which gives this sense of change of direction when the “moving wheel” of censorship comes to silence them, to take away the lives they were supposed to live, as if a storm had passed and dragged their lives with it (lines 7 and 8). A picture of powerlessness is extreme when these people’s fate, and even their choice, is taken “away” from them, showing no possibility of recovering it since they do not know where it was taken to.

[Refrain]

9 *Roda mundo, roda gigante*

World revolving, big wheel

10 *Roda moinho, roda pião*

Mill revolving, whipping-top revolving

11 *O tempo rodou num instante*

Time revolved in an instant

12 *Nas voltas do meu coração...*

In the twirls of my heart...

Another circular figure is shown here (line 12), when Chico Buarque refers to his heart as if it was a clock, with its engine that should be running round, twirling, but is instead out of tune, out of time (line 11), because the “moving wheel” gains a spinning rhythm which curls up and vanishes into the next stanza, creating a vortex. Through the other round figures of the Earth and the big wheel (line 9), the mill and whipping-top (line 10), a mix of adult and child references, Buarque creates a confusion of stages as unnatural as the presence of the dictatorship itself.

13 *A gente vai contra a corrente*

We go against the flow

14 *Até não poder resistir*

Until we can’t stand anymore

15 *Na volta do barco é que sente*

When the boat returns we feel

16 *O quanto deixou de cumprir*

How much we haven’t accomplished

The use of the first person plural (we) at the beginning of the first line (but 21, 29 and 33) of each stanza, represents those who, like Buarque, are against the system and try to protest and resist, but they end up navigating against the tide of time and history, the dictatorship itself (line 14); and they end up with their “boat” of ideologies and opinions being pushed back by the waves to where the journey had started (line 15), not being able of achieving their dreams (line 16). Again, there is a sense of frustration, of powerlessness and lack of direction. These feelings could possibly exist due to a lack of organisation, as these artists were not inserted in a movement with strong ideals and connections as such.

17 *Faz tempo que a gente cultiva*  
It's been long time we cultivate  
18 *A mais linda roseira que há*  
The most beautiful rosebush there is  
19 *Mas eis que chega a roda viva*  
But then comes the live wheel  
20 *E carrega a roseira prá lá...*  
And takes the rosebush away...

Those dreams of freedom and democracy are lost in the revolving wheel when the long “cultivated” rosebush (lines 17 and 18), which in fact is a reflexion of the country where democracy and people’s rights have disappeared with that beautiful rosebush being taken away (lines 19 and 20). It is important to notice here the strong symbolism of the rosebush when related to ideologies and discourses of democracy and human rights, in the sense that a rosebush is a beautiful plant where roses blossom but also can hurt with its thorns those who nurtured and cared for it for so long – a parallel to what happened to democracy during this dictatorship.<sup>138</sup>

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<sup>138</sup> Interesting to notice that Chico Buarque uses (in 1967) a flower, the rose, as a symbol of freedom and democracy, which would later (in 1975) also represent the end of another dictatorship, the Portuguese, with the carnation flower.

21 *A roda da saia mulata*  
The twirls of the *mulata*'s skirt  
22 *Não quer mais rodar não senhor*  
Doesn't want to twirl anymore  
23 *Não posso fazer serenata*  
I can't serenade  
24 *A roda de samba acabou...*  
There is no more round of samba...

As in most dictatorships, one of the ways power has to threaten people's rights is by taking away their voice, not only in the literal sense but also through censorship in the media and in the arts. In this stanza, Chico Buarque acknowledges this feature of the censorship established by the military through two iconic symbols of Brazilian culture: the *mulata*, which reminds us of the *baianas* with their twirled white skirts (line 21 and 22); and the *roda de samba* (line 24), a common gathering of artists in order to sing their views. With those two cultural icons, and the impossibility of serenading in order to express his romantic views, the artist loses his power and his space, ceasing to operate as a representative of his cultural legacy.

25 *A gente toma a iniciativa*  
We take initiative  
26 *Viola na rua a cantar*  
The guitar singing on the streets  
27 *Mas eis que chega a roda viva*  
But then there comes the live wheel  
28 *E carrega a viola prá lá...*  
And takes the guitar away...

Even though those same artists (we) kept trying to sing their concerns in the public sphere (line 25 and 26), they were yet again stopped by the "moving wheel" of the dictatorship and its censors when having their guitars taken from them, which works well as a symbol of the castrating effect of the censorship (lines 27 and 28).

29 *O samba, a viola, a roseira*  
     The samba, the guitar, the rosebush  
 30 *Que um dia a fogueira queimou*  
     That the bonfire burnt one day  
 31 *Foi tudo ilusão passageira*  
     Everything a passing illusion  
 32 *Que a brisa primeira levou...*  
     That the first breeze took away

The songwriter tells us though, that all those cultural elements which seemed to have been initially burnt (lines 29 and 30) by a delusional system (line 31), the dictatorship itself, is not going to last. It will be defeated by a “first breeze”, or first insurrection.

33 *No peito a saudade*<sup>139</sup> *cativa*  
     In one's chest longing enthralls<sup>140</sup>  
 34 *Faz força pro tempo parar*  
     Makes an effort to stop time  
 35 *Mas eis que chega a roda viva*  
     But then there comes the live wheel  
 36 *E carrega a saudade prá lá...*  
     And takes the longing away...

As in a reversal of fortune, and because of the fragility of time, the “moving wheel” which was once in the hands of the dictators, is now in the hands of those artists and people who listened to their message, through the power of longing in their hearts (line 33), made them nurture strong feelings for their lost freedom, thus trying to stop time and give them the chance to regain their freedom (line 34). However, longing is not enough, and the “moving wheel” takes their dreams away once again (lines 35 and 36). This reversal of fortune, alternated with their frustration, for keeping on fighting whilst the “moving wheel” kept betraying their dreams and hopes, can be a

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<sup>139</sup> Notice here that the word *saudade* in Portuguese has a more extended meaning than *longing*, as in *saudade* the longing is related to the absence of someone or something but as in a celebratory nostalgia of that absence.

<sup>140</sup> I have chosen the verb ‘to enthrall’ instead of ‘captivate’, because of its stronger meaning as to put or hold in slavery, to subjugate.

reflection on Chico Buarque's own need for going into exile in January of 1969, not returning to the country until March 1970.

Another, and one of the most prominent, representatives of this "voice" in the 1960s and 1970s' Brazil is Geraldo Vandré, referred to by Luís Nassif as the "Antônio Conselheiro of the electronic era" (Nassif, 2001:140), because of his famous 1968 *Pra Não Dizer Que Não Falei das Flores* (or *Caminhando e Cantando* as it would become famous after winning the 3<sup>rd</sup> prize in the 1968 Festival Internacional da Canção). *Caminhando* can be said to be an open protest song, with song-texts making a direct appeal for action in its refrain: "Come, let's go/cause waiting is not going to help/those who know what to do/ don't wait for things to happen". However, differently from most of his previous songs, *Caminhando* shows a strong resemblance to the *Nueva Canción* movement, with its acoustic guitar and chanting.

### ***Gadismo* in Geraldo Vandré and Caetano Veloso**

Geraldo Vandré would leave his influence in Brazilian music through another of his songs, *Disparada*. With music by Théó Barros, interpreted by Jair Rodrigues during the 1966 Brazilian Popular Music Festival broadcasted by TV Record, *Disparada* managed to incite the public to take the journey following the life and changes of a *Nordestino* (Northeastern dweller) who hypothetically climbed the hierarchy of the farm to raise above other workers as a herdsman, and to find himself blind by his own power, and then aware of his own people's plight. This is a perfect commentary

on the exploitation of the working class through its characterisation as ‘cattle’. But then, on a second reading of the song, one could see the represented image of a soldier who finds himself powerful enough to arrest and torture people (exactly like the military during the dictatorship). This soldier turns against the army in order to denounce the bad treatment of Brazilian citizens, and to acknowledge his disillusion towards the suffering of his own people coming from the same social background, at the hands of officers, such as himself.

Even though it provoked protests in the audience – who considered *Disparada* of superior quality – when it reached a tie for 1<sup>st</sup> place with Chico Buarque’s song *A Banda* during the festival, the two songs can be said to be very similar in the sense that they evoke “the rhetoric of protest song [which] frequently operated on a ‘mythological level’ that thwarted human agency by constantly deferring action in the here and now for an imaginary day of redemption” (Dunn, 2001:63), which would only arrive almost two decades later.

The title itself, *Disparada* (“estouro da boiada, dispersão”, or stampede), resonates a loaded meaning in the song, which is a subtle approach to the domination of men upon men and their hypothetical release from that situation. Consequently, this song fits in with the concept of *Gadismo* for bringing an inversion of roles by twisting its own interpretation as it beckons “an epiphany of social and political consciousness” (ibid.), which is probably the reason why it is one of the most famous songs from the dictatorial period in Brazil. Moreover, one must consider its great popular appeal

through its folkloric rhythms and the frisson it provokes throughout its changes of tone and mood.

- 1 *Prepare o seu coração prás coisas que eu vou contar*  
Prepare your heart for the things I'm going to tell
- 2 *Eu venho lá do sertão, eu venho lá do sertão*  
I come from the backlands, from the backlands I come
- 3 *Eu venho lá do sertão e posso não lhe agradar*  
I come from the backlands and you may not like me
- 4 *Aprendi a dizer não, ver a morte sem chorar*  
I've learnt to say no and face death without a tear
- 5 *E a morte, o destino, tudo, a morte e o destino, tudo*  
Death and destiny, everything, death and destiny, all
- 6 *Estava fora do lugar, eu vivo prá consertar*  
Was misplaced, and I live to put it right

In both readings, from a herdsman or a soldier, the listeners are introduced to a strong statement, a warning and an announcement, to “Prepare your heart for the things I’m going to tell you.”, as if the message they are about to listen to is too heavy to bear.

The song starts with a melancholic and slow introduction within the, at the time, unpopular genre of *sertanejo*<sup>141</sup> music, with its acoustic guitar present throughout the song as if to make sure we have not changed places or sources, only circumstances, positions. In lines 2 and 3, the songwriter acknowledges, with plenty of repetition, that being from the *sertão* can be a burden. From the perspective of the herdsman this could be the countryside, from the young soldier’s, it could be a *favela*, the place where poor people from the countryside itself, the *sertão*, inevitably end up when they move to the big cities seeking a better life. Coming from either a social or a

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<sup>141</sup> *Sertanejo* genre is a ‘country’ music from the North of the country which is derived from *música caipira* (folk-type of music) from the 1920s. Considered peasant and tacky, the *sertanejo* genre only became popular in the country from the 1990s (McGowan & Pessanha, 1998:203), and “receives hardly any attention from visitors to Brazil.” (Schreiner, 1993:212)

spatial background it could be seen by some people as unpleasant, either because they are prejudiced or because they lack interest or knowledge about the populace of either dwelling (line 3). By being from those rough backgrounds, the main character of the song had to learn how to say “no” to himself (and to others), regarding many things in life such as death, a common thing happening around him for what he cannot waste any time crying for (line 4). In spite of his sombre condition, he is certain that he can change fate and fix things around him (line 5 and 6).

7 *Na boiada já fui boi, mas um dia me montei*  
In the herd I was one more beast, but one day I rose up  
8 *Não por um motivo meu, ou de quem comigo houvesse*  
Not because I wanted to, nor ‘cos anyone else  
9 *Que qualquer querer tivesse, porém por necessidade*  
With me could have wanted it either, but out of need  
10 *Do dono de uma boiada cujo vaqueiro morreu*  
For the owner of the herd had lost his foreman

At the beginning of this stanza (lines 7 to 10), unison of voices, as in a choir gives the impression that this man is not alone; he could be multiplied by many like him, one amongst the crowd, the herd or the battalion (line 7). In the original footage of the performance at the music festival, we can notice a crowd of very excited public audience, and amidst them officers in their uniforms watching out for any disturbance. But that uprising never comes because the crowd is more interested in the message which is not being said, one of rebellion and self-awareness when the herdsman or the soldier finds his way out of subjugation, when this man’s fate changes as he rises up getting promoted (line 7), taming the bull rather than subjugating to it. It is not the case that he, or any of the others, had the will to change his fate, but chance gave him the opportunity to become a *patrão* [boss] (the foreman or an officer) by the order of the “owner of the herd”, or his superior in order to



replace the previous one. Here we contemplate inertia, the impossibility of change, through the fact that although he has achieved success for having tamed the bull (going from bull to horse to human, which brings back the imagery of the centaur suggested by da Cunha),<sup>142</sup> he did not achieve it through his own efforts (lines 8 to 10).

It is clear, though, that his lack of will did not stop the character from enjoying his new post, since from one stanza to the next (lines 10 to 11) we experience a change in tone, forced by the instrumentation, when an ass's jaw<sup>143</sup> is used to imitate the sound of a whip, which is extremely efficient to mark the ascendancy and power of our "hero".

- 11 *Boiadeiro muito tempo, laço firme e braço forte*  
 Herdsman for ages, firm lasso and a strong arm  
 12 *Muito gado, muita gente, pela vida segurei*  
 A lot of cattle, and a lot of people, I drove through life  
 13 *Seguia como num sonho, e boiadeiro era um rei*  
 It was like a dream, and as herdsman I was king  
 14 *Mas o mundo foi rodando nas patas do meu cavalo*  
 But the world got caught up in my horse's hooves  
 15 *E nos sonhos que fui sonhando, as visões se clareando*  
 And in the dreams I dreamt, things got clearer  
 16 *As visões se clareando, até que um dia acordei*  
 Things got clearer, then one day I woke up

The whipping sound works as a reminder of the depth of the pain caused by his new mentality and demeanour, as he tells us that for a long time his situation was one of control through his "firm lasso" and his "strong arm" (line 11) as if with the whip of

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<sup>142</sup> See da Cunha, 1964:89-90.

<sup>143</sup> According to the authors Jairo Severiano and Zuza Homem de Mello, the ass's jaw also gave the song a "bigger rusticity" by evoking "a strong vision of the drought" through its sharp sound. (2001:9 Vol. 2) Another important connotation for the ass's jaw, which comes from the Bible, is one of the incredible powers it holds when in the "right" hands, where "...Samson said, With the jawbone of an ass, heaps upon heaps, with the jaw of an ass have I slain a thousand men" (See passage of Judges 15:16). This reference, even if unconsciously, invokes that the power was in the hands of the people now.

a torturer, dominating as much his people as he had dominated the cattle, who carries a strong likeness to each other (line 12). One could argue here that being young and naïve about the deepest effects of a dictatorship, this soldier,<sup>144</sup> who was at first obliged to serve in the army, and now enjoys the power given to him. He describes the feeling of being in control as the dream of becoming the most powerful of all men, a king (line 13). Even though these strong feelings are enjoyable, after many “moving wheels” in power (line 14), this man starts to realise the real world around him, as if the blindfold of a dream had been taken away from his eyes (lines 14 to 16) and woken him up.

17 *Então não pude seguir valente em lugar tenente*  
 So, I couldn't go on just braving it out  
 18 *E dono de gado e gente, porque gado a gente marca*  
 Bossing cattle and people around, 'cos cattle we mark  
 19 *Tange, ferra, engorda e mata, mas com gente é diferente*  
 Corral, brand, fatten and kill, but with people it's different

With his eyes now open, there are no more excuses to continue his wrongdoings. It is noticeable here the use of the word “tenente” (line 17) which brings to light the presence of military jargon, but still in the voice of a civilian, since “tenente” could refer not exclusively to the rank of this man (now in command replacing someone else), but also to “*tenência*”, from the Brazilian popular use of the word, meaning to be careful, to act with prudence, to observe with caution, as he realises that his people should not be treated like cattle (lines 18 and 19). This people should not be marked, branded, tortured, and killed as if they were animals.

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<sup>144</sup> A reminder here that the military service in Brazil is conscriptional from the age of 18, and voluntary from the age of 17. The “Lei Nº 4.375, de 17 de Agosto de 1964” is still contained in the current 1988 Federal Constitution, which could mean that this character is a young soldier.

20 *Se você não concordar não posso me desculpar*  
     If you don't agree, I won't apologise  
 21 *Não canto prá enganar, vou pegar minha viola*  
     I don't sing to deceive, I'm going to get my guitar  
 22 *Vou deixar você de lado, vou cantar noutro lugar*  
     I'm going to leave you behind, I'm going elsewhere to sing

The message is clear when this man tells us that he is not trying to deceive anybody with his testimonial words. However, if we do not agree with him, that is not going to change his mind, since he is not going to stop spreading the word about what is happening to this “kingdom” or its people. His message of redemption is too precious to be wasted on those of little faith; hence he is just going to go on sing it to another crowd, therefore leaving behind those of his listeners who do not want to comply with his message (lines 20 to 22).

23 *Na boiada já fui boi, boiadeiro já fui rei*  
     In the herd I was one more beast, and as a herdsman king  
 24 *Não por mim nem por ninguém, que junto comigo houvesse*  
     Not for me nor for anybody else with me  
 25 *Que quisesse ou que pudesse, por qualquer coisa de seu*  
     Who wanted or could, for reasons of their own,  
 26 *Por qualquer coisa de seu querer ir mais longe do que eu*  
     For reasons of their own want to go further than me  
 27 *Mas o mundo foi rodando nas patas do meu cavalo*  
     But the world got caught up in my horse's hooves  
 28 *Já que um dia me montei agora sou cavaleiro*  
     Since one day I rose up and now I'm a knight  
 29 *Laço firme e braço forte num reino que não tem rei*  
     Firm lasso and a strong arm in a kingdom without a king

This man goes from being one amongst the crowd to become the ruler of his kingdom (line 23), even though he recognises that this was the result of mere chance, as it was not him, or any of his “people”, who did something purposeful in order to change things around them (lines 24 to 26). The acknowledged truth (lines 17 to 19) had freed him, making him an independent rider (line 28), and also enabling him to

finally recognise the existence of a kingdom, even if there is no king who could control him anymore as he has become his own master (line 29). The rebellious tone of this song made it into the “most vigorous protest song arisen so far, a true revolutionary canticle” (Severiano and Homem de Mello, 2001:9) in Brazilian popular music.

In *Disparada*, a ‘disparate’ or anomalous circumstance occurs when a man rises above his own condition and understands his role so as to give others the recognition of their situation and break through a vicious circle of domination and control. Following the analysis proposed by Josh Kun, *Disparada* could be seen as one strong example of an *audiotopia*, in which

... music’s ability to ... point us to the possible, to help us remap the world we live in now – and because of its uncanny ability to absorb and meld heterogeneous national, cultural, and historical styles and traditions across space and within place, the possibility of the audiotopia makes sense: sonic spaces of effective utopian longings where several sites normally deemed incompatible are brought together, not only in the space of a particular piece of music itself, but in the *production of social space* and *the mapping of geographical space* that music makes possible as well. (Kun, 2005:23)<sup>145</sup>

As such, music serves the purpose of creating a collective community not only within the imaginary of political protest or concern for social issues, but also by effectively drawing that geographical (*public*) space that puts ideologies, hopes and dreams in one specific place (*country*), thus attributing a sense of utopia to music, i.e., *audiotopia*. Kun continues his argument underlining the “dual function” of reading and listening for *audiotopias*, that is, through an analysis of music through songs and their song-texts:

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<sup>145</sup> Italics are my own.

to focus on the space of music itself and the different spaces and identities it juxtaposes within itself, and to focus on the social spaces, geographies, and identities that music can enable, reflect, and prophecy. In both cases, the audiotopia is a musical space of difference, where contradictions and conflicts do not cancel each other out but coexist and live through each other. Thus, in a sense, audiotopias can also be understood as identificatory “contact zones,” in that they are both sonic and social spaces where disparate identity-formations, cultures, and geographies historically kept and mapped separately are allowed to interact with each other as well as enter into relationships whose consequences for cultural identification are never predetermined. (Kun, 2005:23)

*Disparada*, as an example of this audiotopia, can be seen as a space, or place, where the two worlds of herdsman and soldier meet, coexist, without excluding each other; where cattle and people become one in order to symbolise the misconduct of a society dominated by a dictatorship. This undemocratic system leads its artists into the intricate world of double-meaning, where the “lyrics had to be free of political content or heavily coded... metaphoric verses to voice their discontent” (McGowan and Pessanha, 1998:185), to avoid censorship, and try to guarantee a certain degree of citizenship and belonging for those deprived of it – even to those who do not commit and who believe that ‘ignorance is bliss’.

In that sense, the use of the metaphor of cattle as the representational character for the follower, i.e. ignorant or blind (by choice or condition), can be appropriate in this context. The creation of this *audiotopian* world was necessary mostly due to the censorship, when songwriters would have to disguise their song-texts punctuating them with second (double) meanings in order to escape the military censors. A good example of that McCarthyan ‘witch hunt’ suffered by these artists is Julinho da Adelaide, Chico Buarque’s alter ego, who bypassed the censors even when writing

naive songs such as *Jorge Maravilha* (1974),<sup>146</sup> a direct ironic attack on those in power, with its refrain “você não gosta de mim, mas sua filha gosta” [you don’t like me, but your daughter does]. However, at first they did not hold anything against Julinho da Adelaide (the song was released and played without problems), until an article at *Jornal do Brasil* disclosed that Julinho da Adelaide was in fact Chico Buarque.<sup>147</sup> One can only but imagine how the censors might have had their mouths open when they found out that they had passed some of this ‘dangerous’ songwriter’s work.

Another example of *Gadismo* in popular music in Brazil and a case of playing with words throughout the dictatorial period (even as late as 1984) was Caetano Veloso’s song *Vaca Profana* (Unholy Cow). In this song, Veloso uses *cattle* as yet another figure of speech; he urges this unholy figure to raise its head above, like in *Disparada*, but this time to share the good things not only with those who deserve its “milk”, but also those who were unworthy of it. The *audiotopian* world of Kun is transcended by Veloso who, in a democratic way, adds a sense of inclusiveness to those unworthy people who are ignorant of the others’ condition:

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<sup>146</sup> Because of its refrain, *Jorge Maravilha* was said to have been written to challenge the President, General Geisel, whose daughter, Amália Lucy, had publically stated being Buarque’s fan. Buarque does not confirm this version and says that he had the police in mind, because they sometimes asked him for autographs for their ‘daughters’, see:

<[http://www.chicobuarque.com.br/construcao/mestre.asp?pg=jorge\\_74.htm](http://www.chicobuarque.com.br/construcao/mestre.asp?pg=jorge_74.htm)>

<sup>147</sup> According to Buarque’s homepage, this fact generated a new regulation by the Federal Police: from then onwards, all song-text presented to censors would have to be accompanied by a picture of its songwriter. As such, they would no longer approve songs from authors such as Julinho/Chico Buarque. This shows how personal the persecution was towards those composing against the social order. For further information, see:

<[http://www.chicobuarque.com.br/construcao/mestre.asp?pg=acorda\\_74.htm](http://www.chicobuarque.com.br/construcao/mestre.asp?pg=acorda_74.htm)>

- 1 *Respeito muito minhas lágrimas*  
I very much respect my tears
- 2 *Mas ainda mais minha risada*  
But my laughter even more
- 3 *Inscrevo assim minhas palavras*  
That's how I inscribe my words
- 4 *Na voz de uma mulher sagrada*  
Through a sacred woman's voice
- 5 *Vaca profana, põe teus cornos*  
Profane cow, stick out your horns
- 6 *Pra fora e acima da manada*  
Outside and above the herd
- 7 *Ê*
- 8 *Êê dona das divinas tetas*  
Êê proprietress of divine tits
- 9 *Derrama o leite bom na minha cara*  
Drop the good milk over my face
- 10 *E o leite mau na cara dos caretas*  
And the sour milk over the stuffy

*Careta* is an expression from the 1960s and it is extremely hard to translate into English, since it holds several connotations that are related to people who are, among other things: old-fashioned, obsolete, backwarded, archaic, or dated. I have thus decided to translate *careta* as “stuffy”, because in the song the word can also be related to those people who cannot think “out of the box”, cannot acknowledge the constriction of the dictatorship, thus silently and arrogantly supporting the regime and its modus operandi, following the conventional “herd”. They do not want to be on the side of the marginal, rebellious youth since they believe that the regime brings along benefits, and youth (and certainly artists too) does not understand or respect them.

In this first stanza, Veloso makes it clear that there are times you have to bear suffering and even feeling sorry for yourself, but then you should respect yourself and look forward to better times, in this case giving a gifted (thus sacred) woman the

power to spread your word through her singing (lines 1 to 4). The sacredness of this woman has further relevance in the song as the word “cow” can also be an offensive and derogatory way of referring to a woman of doubtful reputation.

In order to follow its dreams, this unholy creature has to break up with the “rules of the herd”, reaching higher, above the average “cattle” heads almost heavenly (lines 5 to 6). Although a cow does not have horns, in the song they could be an allusion to any apparatus fixed to the head, as an antenna in tune with what is going on in the world. But this antenna could also mean the awareness of being different and thus more powerful than any other within the herd. Veloso finishes this stanza with a sexualised (or “maternalised” vision, depending on the point of view), by asking this “divine” cow/woman to drop the “good milk [only] over [his] face” as an adorer, and to give the “sour milk” to the undeserving, the ones who do not follow, worship or understand the cow/woman, the “stuffy” (lines 7 to 10).

11 *Segue a movida Madrileña*<sup>148</sup>

There goes the Madrilenian groove scene

12 *Também te mata Barcelona*

Barcelona also kills you

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<sup>148</sup> The Movida Madrileña was a countercultural movement which happened in 1980 with echoes in some other Spanish cities. It was characterised by the break with certain taboos emphasised during Franco’s regime, such as drugs and homosexuality, bringing with it a newly gained freedom brought to the streets. Expressions such as “Madrid nunca duerme” [Madrid never sleeps], “Esta noche todo el mundo a la calle” [Tonight everybody to the street], and “Madrid me mata” [Madrid kills me] arise from this period.



- 13 *Napoli, Pino*<sup>149</sup>, *Pi*<sup>150</sup>, *Pau*<sup>151</sup>, *Punks*  
 Naples, Pino, Pi, Pau, Punks  
 14 *Picassos movem-se por Londres*  
 Picassos move through London  
 15 *Bahia onipresentemente*  
 Bahia omnipresently  
 16 *Rio e belíssimo horizonte*  
 Rio and stunning horizon  
 17 *Ê*  
 18 *Êê vaca de divinas tetas*  
 Êê proprietress of divine tits  
 19 *La leche buena toda en mi garganta*  
 All the good milk on my throat  
 20 *La mala leche para los puretas*  
 The sour milk to the stuffy

As a way of profaning his *audiotopia* even more, Veloso incorporates elements of different symbols and nationalities, from line 11 onwards, when either giving an order with the imperative ‘segue’ [follow] or acknowledging the continuity of the Madrilénian subversive lifestyle and moving it to Barcelona (line 12). Veloso then exercises his concretist skills playing with his ability to circulate between different worlds and words (line 13), from Napoli near where Pino was born to Pi and Pau and Punks, making an extremely harmonious cacophony with the sound ‘p’, which will end at the beginning of the next line (14) with Picasso providing an image of the Punks of London as in a Cubist composition. His own birthplace, Bahia is

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<sup>149</sup> Pino could be a reference to Pino Daeni (born Giuseppe Dangelico) and have to do with the fact that his paintings are extremely sensual, portraying young women with a magnificent aura of light; but also be an allusion to the fact that Pino established himself, ironically, in Naples – not in Italy but in Florida, USA – when seeking for artistic freedom in 1979, something Veloso also had to do ten years before him. See: <<http://www.pino-artist.com/index.html>> and also <<http://www.pcart.com/pino/index.html>>

<sup>150</sup> Pi ( $\pi$ ) could have been used here for its reductive sound (as having only one syllable), as a symbol of the irrationality and transcendentalism related to this number, and to Veloso’s own jigsaw of ideas and places.

<sup>151</sup> Written in capital letters, Pau could be a direct reference to the Catalan for Paul (a common name in Spain and most countries of Catholic roots because of the apostle), or to a Biblical city in the Genesis (36:39) which was the capital of Edom (Southern Jordan) and home to Edomites, people who were hostile to Israelites in Old Testament times. See: <<http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/Edomite>> It could also be a reference to cities in modern France, Spain, and Italy. It is yet another word with sexual connotation, since ‘pau’ is slang for penis in Brazilian Portuguese.

everywhere he goes; as much as Rio de Janeiro and Belo Horizonte (lines 15 and 16), as the centres where the military dictatorship came from, possibly an allusion to the time he was in exile in London (line 14).<sup>152</sup> On lines 18 to 20 Veloso evokes the erotic lines of the previous stanza, again (although now in Spanish), by asking the unholy cow to throw the good milk down his throat, but still to give the bad milk to those who do not understand them.

- 21 *Quero que pinte um amor Bethânia*  
I want a Bethania's love  
22 *Steve Wonder, andaluz*  
Steve Wonder, andaluz  
23 *Como o que tive em Tel Aviv*  
Like the one I had in Tel Aviv  
24 *Perto do mar, longe da cruz*  
Close to the sea, far from the cross  
25 *Mas em composição cubista*  
But as in a cubist composition  
26 *Meu mundo Thelonus Monk's blues*  
My Thelonius Monk's blues' world  
27 *Ê*  
28 *Êê vaca de divinas tetas*  
Êê proprietress of divine tits  
29 *Teu bom só para o oco, minha falta*  
Your good one only for the hollow, my absence  
30 *E o resto inunde as almas dos caretas*  
And the rest floods the souls of the stuffy

In line 21, Veloso evokes his younger sister, Maria Bethânia, perhaps as a way of addressing her as one of the main figures of Tropicália movement, as a reference, such as the references (in lines 22 and 26) to Steve Wonder and Thelonius Monk. Andaluz is used as a rhyme for “cruz” (cross), although Veloso refers to Andalucia, a province of Spain where Picasso comes from (line 22). Veloso describes his love for Tel Aviv, a city in Israel with a majority of Jewish population near the sea but far from the cross he is so used to see in a Catholic country such as Brazil (lines 23 and

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<sup>152</sup> Caetano Veloso lived in London in exile from 1969 to 1972.

24). Yet, it seems that this entire religious theme is interrupted by the vision of a cubist world, as in a kaleidoscope of a troubled mind such as the one of Thelonius Monk, who was at a certain point, despite his brilliancy, thought to have either manic depression or schizophrenia because of his bizarre and unpredictable behaviour. These visions could be the effect of drugs and an erratic life of lines 11 and 12, affecting our songwriter to the extent that he cannot make much sense of his own existence (line 29), where only his own absence counts when the holy cow is giving her milk to the hollow.

31 *Sou tímido e espalhafatoso*  
                   I'm shy and gaudy  
 32 *Torre traçada por Gaudi*  
                   Tower designed by Gaudi  
 33 *São Paulo é como o mundo todo*  
                   São Paulo is like the whole world  
 34 *No mundo um grande amor perdi*  
                   In the world I've lost a great love  
 35 *Caretas de Paris, New York*  
                   Stuffy from Paris, New York  
 36 *Sem mágoas estamos aí*  
                   There are no hard feelings

37 *Ê*  
 38 *Êê dona das divinas tetas*  
                   Êê proprietress of divine tits  
 39 *Quero teu leite todo em minha alma*  
                   I want all your milk in my soul  
 40 *Nada de leite mau para os caretas*  
                   No bad milk for the stuffy

Spain is undoubtedly an obsession for Veloso in this song as he goes back to it yet again to compare his compositions to a work by Gaudi, from Barcelona (lines 31 and 32).<sup>153</sup> Nevertheless Veloso eventually leaves Spain to return to São Paulo, the city

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<sup>153</sup> As in Gaudi's own words: "Gothic art is imperfect, it means to solve; it is the style of the compass, the formula of industrial repetition. Its stability is based on the permanent propping of abutments: it is a defective body that holds with support... gothic works produce maximum emotion when they are mutilated, covered with ivy and illuminated by the moon." (Carlos Flores, 2002: 89)

where he started his professional career (lines 33 and 35). Despite his wanderings, Veloso carries no “hard feelings” for the “caretas” and asks the unholy cow to give him all her milk, but no bad milk to the “caretas” anymore. This might represent a change of judgement when he finally ‘absolves’ those who were against him and his work in the past (lines 39 and 40), possibly because he could become quite “careta” too (lines 41 and 42).

41 *Mas eu também sei ser careta*  
But I can also be stuffy  
42 *De perto ninguém é normal*  
Up close nobody is normal  
43 *Às vezes segue em linha reta*  
Sometimes it goes straight  
44 *A vida, que é meu bem, meu mal*  
The life, which is my dear, my evil  
45 *No mais as ramblas do planeta*  
In the end the ‘ramblas’ of the planet  
46 *Orchata de chufa si us plau*  
Orchata de chufa please  
47 *Ê*  
48 *Êê deusa de assombrosas tetas*  
Êê goddess of astonishing tits  
49 *Gota de leite bom na minha cara*  
Drop of the good milk on my face  
50 *Chuva do mesmo bom sobre os caretas*  
Rainfall of the same good one over the stuffy

Veloso acknowledges life’s instability in lines 43 and 44, where even the outcome of following a straight line can be unpredictable. He then “travels” again to Barcelona, to revisit one of the busiest “straight lines” in the world, Las Ramblas, (which connects the Plaça Catalunya to the port) where he might have a drink,<sup>154</sup> and he orders in Catalan (lines 45 and 46). At this stage, Veloso is marvelled by the goddess’ tits, and gets only a drop of the good milk on his face whilst giving a

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<sup>154</sup> Orxata or horxata is a beverage made of ground grains such as almond or rice, in the case of the one mentioned in the song, which resembles milk, it is made of chufa (xufa), also known as tigernuts (*cyperus esculentus*).

“rainfall of the same good milk” over all of those who do not understand him. This could well be a reflection on the time of the writing this song (1984), when the country was on the verge of returning to a democracy, and a sense of victory could already be exemplified by that “rain” of milk (or prosperity and hope) by those, like Veloso himself, who suffered the oppression of the military dictatorship. Veloso’s is here fulfilled with a vision of everybody sharing the same milk, without any regrets about the past, a happy ending that resonates the fact that even in today’s Brazil people are “sharing the milk” but not actually talking about their memories or the hardships endured during the dictatorship.

Still working with Caetano Veloso’s musical production, we can surely enough say that most of these songwriters and artists of the 1960s, who had to endure a period of censorship, would agree with Veloso’s 1968 provocation. Inspired by the Paris students’ uprising in the same year, *É Proibido Proibir* [It’s Forbidden to Forbid] is a song in which Veloso says “no, I say no to no; I say yes! It’s forbidden to forbid”. This psychedelic Rock’n’Roll song was disqualified by the jury of the III International Music Festival in São Paulo and motivated part of the audience to scorn to Veloso and his band, Os Mutantes. Veloso’s response was a powerful speech, in the middle of his performance, against the hypocrisy of those people who could not understand his message (the *caretas*), thinking that he and his music partner, Gilberto Gil, were pro-USA:

Mas é isso que é a juventude que diz que quer tomar o poder?  
Vocês têm coragem de aplaudir este ano uma música que vocês  
não teriam coragem de aplaudir no ano passado! São a mesma  
juventude que vai sempre, sempre, matar amanhã o velhote  
inimigo que morreu ontem... *Vocês não estão entendendo nada,*

*nada, nada. Absolutamente nada!* O problema é o seguinte: estão querendo policiar a música brasileira. Mas eu e o Gil já abrimos caminho. Não fingimos aqui que desconhecemos o que seja festival, não. Ninguém nunca me ouviu falar assim, entendeu? Só queria dizer isso, baby, sabe como é? Nós, eu e ele, tivemos coragem de enfrentar todas as estruturas e sair de todas. E vocês? E vocês? Se vocês em política forem como em estética, estamos feitos!<sup>155</sup>

So this is the youth who says they want to take power? You have the courage to applaud this year a song that you would not have dared to applaud last year! You are the same youth that will always, always, kill tomorrow the enemy old man who died yesterday... You do not understand anything, anything, anything. Absolutely anything! This is the problem: they are trying to police Brazilian music. But Gil and I have already opened the path. We do not pretend here that we do not know what the festival is about, no. Nobody ever heard me talking like this, get it? Just wanted to say this, baby, you know? We, him and I had the courage to face all the structures and leave all of them. And you? And you? If you are in politics as you are in aesthetics, we're done!

It is true that many did not understand the message, as we can imagine by my emphasis in italics in Veloso's speech. Although Veloso draws attention to the fact that amidst the 'tropical iconoclasm', it was more important to make things sound right than to be right, as it is the case for the 'mistaken' *i* for *e* and the *c* for *s*, in *circensis* in title of the album, *Tropicália ou Panis et Circensis*, a 'historic' charm for being considered by Décio Pignatari as a "delicious *avant-garde* provincialism". (Veloso, 1997: 279) Nevertheless Veloso and Gil were still using the *baião* and the *marchinha* in order to conform to the 'norms' of the festivals. *Domingo no Parque* (*Sunday in the Park*), a *baião* (a Northeastern rhythm), tells the tale of two ordinary Brazilian men that kill each other because of a woman. What could sound as an ordinary love-story questions the idealized harmony within Brazilian society, with its

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<sup>155</sup> Italics are my own in order to emphasise when Veloso is literally shouting at his audience. For the whole speech, see: <<http://tropicalia.com.br/identifisignificados/e-proibido-proibir/discurso-de-caetano>>

growing tensions leading to a tragic ending, suggesting an artificial apotheosis, almost a parody. (Napolitano, 1997)

In *Alegria, alegria* [Happiness, happiness], a *marchinha*, Veloso brings the novelty of an unstructured mosaic of words, alien to the dialectic totality of the leftist students of the time. (Napolitano, 1997) In “the sun splits in crimes, spaceships, guerrillas, in beautiful Cardinales, I’m going...”, he plays ‘irresponsibly’ and utterly ‘uncommittedly’ regarding the reality of the engaged songwriters.

Veloso’s use of English words to criticise the economic and cultural imperialism exercised by the USA, and also the fascination Brazilians had, and still have, for the ‘American way of life’, was well explored in songs such as *Baby* by Veloso, where he emphasizes the modern need for learning this already global language without rejecting the Portuguese. (Paiva, 2005:47-65) When he writes “you need to learn English, you need to learn what I know, and what I don’t know anymore... I don’t know, read on my t-shirt, baby, I love you”, he was ignoring the national prejudice against all-things American, and was heavily criticised by the nationalists ‘on duty’.

If it was not for the courage of those artists to do so, even though they were being arrested, prosecuted, and sometimes tortured, the value and the power of representing and showing, in this case through singing, the daily realities and routines that otherwise would not have been shared, the social and political memory of the times would not have survived. Many of those artists had to go into exile, which was also the case of Veloso and Gil (who lived in exile in England from 1969 to 1972), where

they were still composing and producing under the umbrella of the movement, although the movement itself officially dissolved when both musicians departed. Nowadays they keep producing music and are two of the most successful Brazilian singers and songwriters of all times. What really matters, however, is the number of artists influenced by their music, and the fact that forty years on, most of them are still active and productive within their careers and ideals.

The Tropicália movement is still much alive today, as one can see by re-editions of albums and the fourteen-week exhibition at the Barbican in London in 2006, where visitors could experience the forms, colours and sounds of this cultural revolution, which shared impressive resonances with the hippie movement of the 1960s in the USA. Although the movement did not put an actual end to the dictatorship, it started a new era in Brazilian music, one that showed that an artist does not need to drop his viola in order to play his electric guitar and those styles could survive together and complement each other, in an anthropophagic way, making Brazilian culture and music richer than ever before the Tropicália.

What Tropicália was ‘fighting’ for from 1968 is extremely visible in 1970, when the World Cup takes place. The “Copa do Mundo”, as Brazilians call it, is an obvious example of the rethoric of *panem et circenses* which was strengthened in the context of the military dictatorship and the relationship between hegemonic power, repression tools, and the people’s representation through culture. We shall explore that facet of Brazilian music in the next chapter.



## Chapter 5 – The 1970 World Cup: The Affair between Politics and Music in Brazil

Possibly because of the debt and social inequalities generated by the unequal distribution of wealth (emphasised by the general reduction of ordinary income), but also due to the *obras faraônicas* or megalomaniac projects of the time,<sup>156</sup> we can now acknowledge a feature of the dictatorship in Brazil: the gigantism.

As in Pathology, Gigantism here is meant an “abnormally great development in size or stature of the whole body or parts of the body, most often due to dysfunction of the pituitary gland”.<sup>157</sup> The way of representing nationalism proposed, or emphasized, by the military government in Brazil was precisely an overgrowth of this living organism: society. In this, the military government played the part of the pituitary gland, the size of a pea “structure attached by stalk to the base of the brain and constituting the master endocrine gland [...] associated with various hormones which directly or indirectly affect most basic bodily functions and include substances exerting a controlling and regulating influence on other endocrine organs, controlling

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<sup>156</sup> Some examples could be projects such as Maracanã stadium (1950); the creation from scratch of the new capital of the country, Brasília-DF, inaugurated in 1960 by President Juscelino Kubitschek; the bridge Rio-Niterói in Rio de Janeiro (inaugurated in 1974, and symbolically started in 1968 during a visit of Queen Elizabeth II, under the military ruling of President Costa e Silva, to whom the bridge was officially named after); the Transamazônica road or BR-230, which officially runs from Cabedelo (Paraíba, in the Northeast) to Lábrea (in the Brazilian Amazon, in the North). This project was idealised as part of the military President Emílio Garrastazu Médici's *Plano de Integração Nacional* (PIN), who used mottos such as “the land without men to men without land”, or “integrate not to hand over”, when referring to it. Its construction started in 1969 and it was officially opened in 1974 to fulfill the dream of conquering the Amazon *Eldorado*, although it is still unfinished today in most of its 4,000 km extension.

<sup>157</sup> See: <<http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/pituitary+gland>>

growth and development, or modifying the contraction of smooth muscle, renal function, and reproduction”. A metaphorical reading of gigantism in society, the army, as a small portion of society, overgrew in power, destabilising the other functions of the whole body as in an attempt to re-regulate, creating a new system for its functions, based on the previous malfunctioning, or misreading of the gland, causing the whole body to grow bigger, through its gigantic projects and more economic debt.

Despite all the ‘positive’ hype caused by those gigantic changes and projects, and the government’s promises of progress for the country even before the actual dictatorship began, its “broad hopes of improvement that had flowered...were running head-on into the hard wall of Brazil’s bleak class structure, leading precipitously toward open confrontation between reformist and conservative political groups”. (Castro, 2000:xii-xiii) This inevitably culminated with the military coup d’état in 1964. Challenged by the mistrust and dissatisfaction of those opposed to the ruling and to the effects of the dictatorship, the government had to reinvent itself, attracting the people for its cause, and gaining respect and confidence in order to keep its ruling alive and strong. The way those rulers found to do so was creating a sense of *Ufanismo*,<sup>158</sup> of the grandeur of the country, promoting a great nationalist spirit

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<sup>158</sup> “Ufanism, from the Portuguese *ufanismo*, is a form of jingoism, jactancy, an excessive pride, a sense of boasting or self-vangloriation of a country, an excessive exaltation of its qualities, most of times because of misinformed patriotism. Ufanists generally exceed their compliments to the point of creating a distant view of reality. In the case of Brazil... ufanism is the attitude of the general population, or of certain groups, highlighting, in an exaggerated form the potential and achievements of the country, its beauty and natural wealth, and the hospitality or qualities of its people - minimizing or ignoring the problems, the poverty and the technological backwardness. The common use in Portuguese comes from the book *Porque Me Ufano do Meu País* (Why I Am Proud of My Country), by Count Afonso Celso. The adjective *ufano* comes from Spanish and means “a group boasting

(followed by a great majority of the population) through political slogans or propaganda such as the well-known *Brasil, ame-o ou deixe-o* (1973), created by President Médici as a response to the world Oil Crisis, but as a veiled reference to those who had fled the country because of the repressive regime.<sup>159</sup>

As in many other dictatorships of the 1960s and 1970s, such as Chile and Argentina,<sup>160</sup> many people were taken away from their homes and disappeared. Many were tortured and killed in the name of “national security”. The country was then facing its toughest period in terms of violation of human rights. The military government was strongly criticised by many national and international bodies for its handling of economics, politics and human rights issues. So, in order to lift its national and international profile, it needed a smoke-curtain to hide or disguise the outcomes of its own “war on terror”.

There was also a preoccupation, on the part of the military government, in creating a technically trained workforce prepared to cope with the demands of the market-driven economy, hence the need of fostering “a citizen, lover of the country and

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arrogantly to (its) extraordinary merits”. See:

<<http://www.urbandictionary.com/define.php?term=Ufanism&defid=5485442>>

An unavoidable play on words is necessary here when relating *ufanismo* to euphemism, necessarily an idea used by those military *ufanistas* when turning their acts of violence and misconduct, such as torture, into something justifiable, leading the public to an aporia (as in “the expression of a simulated or real doubt, as about where to begin or what to do or say”, and through this disorientation turning the masses more prone to be coerced, convinced of the myth of the ‘happy country’, through music, football and carnival, entertainment, bread and circuses (*Panis et circenses*). See: <<http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/aporia>>

<sup>159</sup> See *Folha Online*, Eleições 2002, see:

<<http://www1.folha.uol.com.br/foha/especial/2002/eleicoes/>>

<sup>160</sup> The Chilean dictatorship run from 1973 to as late as 1990, under Augusto Pinochet’s regime; the Argentine Dirty War from 1976 to 1983, ended with the Falklands War, fought against the United Kingdom. These dictatorships were immediately connected to Operation Condor, a political repression cooperation, mainly between Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Paraguay, Uruguay. For more information on Operation Condor, see Menjívar and Rodríguez, Néstor, 2005.

defender of moralising principles”. (Martins, 2003b:159) Those principles would bring with them a civic collectiveness where the “desirable relationship between the individual and the group is passivity, obedience, the fulfilment of its own professional and social duties, the faith and the hope that all the problems are solved by those whose social function is to make politics”. (Cerri 2003:112-14) These ‘collective individuals’ were relying on the government and working for it, which becomes clear through the results of contemporary studies such as Carlos Alberto Almeida’s (2007). According to Maria das Mercês Sampaio, the military model of education “tried to align the education system to the economic and political objectives of the government and to the search for the modernisation and rationalisation of resources” (Sampaio, 1997:204), which brought a massification of the educational system with the universal right to schooling. Through this massification, education could be sometimes used to represent and intensify the spread of political convictions of the existing system and its ufanist ideals. The military government created educational campaigns and programmes, always addressed to the youth, to the future generation, such as *Educação Moral e Cívica* [Moral and Civic Education] (EMC), and its cohort, the *Organização Social e Política Brasileira* [Social and Political Brazilian Organization] (OSPB), made compulsory in Brazilian schools in 1969. The decree declares the finality of the subjects in its second article: “To defend the democratic principle, through the preservation of the religious spirit of human dignity and the love of freedom with responsibility, under the inspiration of God.”<sup>161</sup> It is ironic to notice here the use of

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<sup>161</sup> Through the Decreto-Lei no. 869, de 12 de Setembro de 1969, which was revoked by the Lei no. 8.663, de 14 de Junho de 1993. See: <<http://www.jusbrasil.com.br/noticias>>

“human dignity and the love of freedom” in this law, when the same government had ceased all civil rights the year before with the AI-5 law. Some of the topics touched upon through different chapters in different versions and levels of OSPB were:

- Sociedade e Povo (Society and People);
- Homem e a Organização Social e Política (The Man and the Socio-Political Organisation);
- Sociedade, Grupos Sociais, Comunidade (Society, Social Groups, Community);
- Estado, suas Funções (The State and its Functions);
- A Direção da Sociedade Política: Regimes, Formas de Governo (The Direction of Political Society: Regimes, Government Forms);
- Dinâmica da Sociedade Política: Vida, Partidos, Democracia (Political Society Dynamics: Life, Parties, Democracy);
- Estatutos e Normas da Sociedade Política: Constituições, a Lei (Statutes and Norms of Political Society: Constitutions, the Law);
- A Organização das Nações Unidas (United Nations Organisation);
- A Doutrina Social da Igreja Católica (Social Doctrine of the Catholic Church)
- Brasil Social e Político: Organização Inicial (Social and Political Brazil: Initial Organisation);
- O Sistema de Capitânias (the Capitánias System);
- O Governo Geral (the General Government);
- A Colonização e o Latifúndio (Colonisation and Latifundium);
- Sociedade Colonial (Colonial Society);
- A Evolução Social e Política (Social and Political Evolution);
- Estruturação da República (Republic’s Structure);
- Brasil Contemporâneo: Constituição de 1967 (Contemporary Brazil: 1967 Constitution). (Mussumeci, 1969)

As if an extension of this Educational plan, the government founded the first public broadcast television channel in the country, TV Cultura [Culture TV],<sup>162</sup> and later on TV Educativa [Educative TV] (TVE),<sup>163</sup> which would broadcast, amongst other programmes and advertisements, “short stories” such as *Sujismundo* (a play on words which could be translated as “the dirtier one”), a character who would teach children, on national TV and cinemas, about how to keep their school, house and neighbourhood clean; how to become a proper citizen of the country, undergoing so

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<sup>162</sup> *TV Cultura* 40 Anos. See: <<http://www.tvcultura.com.br/40anos/institucional>>

<sup>163</sup> Founded in 1975, and extinct in 2007, giving place to the TV Brasil.

much development and modernisation. The *motto* of this campaign was “Povo desenvolvido é povo limpo” [Developed people are clean], a patronising way of educating the population.<sup>164</sup>

Another example of these nationalistic campaigns entitled *Este é um país que vai pra frente* [This is a country which goes forward] by *Os Incríveis*,<sup>165</sup> which shows a monkey and young children from different age, gender, and ethnic backgrounds, playing and singing of their pride for their people and their country, in a short but extremely ufanist anthem.

- 1 *Este é um país que vai pra frente*  
This is a country which goes forwards
- 2 *Uô uô uô uô uô*
- 3 *De uma gente amiga e tão contente*  
Made of friendly and happy people
- 4 *Uô uô uô uô uô*
- 5 *Este é um país que vai pra frente*  
This is a country which goes forwards
- 6 *De um povo unido, de grande valor*  
Made of united people, of great value
- 7 *É um país que canta, trabalha e se agiganta*  
It's a country which sings, works, and makes itself bigger
- 8 *É o Brasil de nosso amor!*  
It's the Brazil that we love!

Yet again, here is a preoccupation about looking forward, into the future which is still to be unfold (line 1), bringing a possibility of not thinking about its recent past, and its immediate present. It proposes a united nation, with its people living happily together, singing and enjoying their jobs and careers (lines 3 to 7) as if there were no problems in this beloved country (line 8).

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<sup>164</sup> For a vídeo of this programme, see: *Sujismundo: Povo desenvolvido é povo limpo*  
<<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-XCa1C7RB9E&feature=related>>

<sup>165</sup> For a vídeo of this programme, see: *Brasil um país que vai pra frente*  
<<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MX6zjrCwwac>>

Another example is the clearly chauvinistic tune, *Eu Te Amo, Meu Brasil* by Dom and Ravel.<sup>166</sup> With a strongly marked tune, which immediately reminds us of a military march, and its ostentatious appraisal of the nation and its natural beauties (such as its beaches, sun, women, carnival and land), it either creates or perpetuates the mythical visions that *gringos*<sup>167</sup> have of Brazil in order to justify the country's ufanism of the time.

- 1 *As praias do Brasil ensolaradas*  
Brazil's sunny beaches
- 2 *O chão onde o país se elevou*  
The land where the country raised
- 3 *A mão de Deus abençoou*  
God's hands blessed it
- 4 *Mulher que nasce aqui tem muito mais amor*  
Women who are born here are more loving
- 5 *O céu do meu Brasil tem mais estrelas*  
Brazil's sky has got more stars
- 6 *O sol do meu país, mais esplendor*  
The sun in my country, has got more radiance
- 7 *A mão de Deus abençoou*  
God's hands blessed it
- 8 *Em terras brasileiras vou plantar amor*  
In Brazilian lands I'll crop love
- 9 *Eu te amo, meu Brasil, eu te amo!*  
I love you, my Brazil, I love you!
- 10 *Meu coração é verde, amarelo, branco, azul anil*  
My heart is green, yellow, white, and blue
- 11 *Eu te amo, meu Brasil, eu te amo!*  
I love you, my Brazil, I love you!
- 12 *Ninguém segura a juventude do Brasil!*  
Nobody can stop the youth of Brazil!<sup>168</sup>

The instrumentalisation of television by the regime is exercised in yet another good example of the '(rein)forced patriotism' during the 1970's World Cup, when the Brazilian government used music and poetry in order to magnify the achievements

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<sup>166</sup> For a video, see: *Eu Te Amo Meu Brasil* <<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gW9fTy22dFY>>

<sup>167</sup> *Gringo* is well-known term in Spanish and Portuguese-speaking countries to refer to foreigners in general; although in some of those countries it refers to Americans.

<sup>168</sup> I am only using half of the song-text here as an exemplification of the message of the song.

and the aspirations of the country, portraying Brazil as a gigantic and united nation, optimistically led into the future by the military government. In order to take advantage of the nationalistic wave created by the previous sequential Brazilian victories in the World Cup of 1958 and 1962,<sup>169</sup> the regime cleverly used football, the “opium of the people”,<sup>170</sup> to become the redeemer of the government; to a great effect, it should be added.

The 1970s were marked by strong changes and a divided feeling on different fields of society, and in the case of Brazil, depending on one’s social background or family history (or both), one is going to have more lively memories of the military dictatorship or the most celebrated World Cups, the one of 1970.

After getting a traumatising second place in 1950, during the only championship held in the home turf, Rio de Janeiro (it was also the first World Cup to take place after WWII), followed by the failure in the 1954 World Cup, a sense of defeat took over the nation. In that sense, winning the 1958 World Cup in Sweden would be what the country needed to resurrect its pride. With the song *A Taça do Mundo é Nossa* [The World Cup Is Ours], the authors Wagner Maugeri, Lauro Müller, Maugeri Sobrinho and Victor Dagô created an anthem which was a national celebration of the quality of the champion, Brazilian football but also its people. It was recorded and widely sang after the return of the team to Brazil and throughout the period of the next two World Cups, in 1962 (which Brazil also won), and in 1966, won by England.

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<sup>169</sup> In Sweden and Chile, respectively.

<sup>170</sup> “Opium of the people” as an allusion to religion in Marx.



[Refrain]

1 *A taça do mundo é nossa*

The World Cup is ours

2 *Com Brasileiro não há quem possa*

With Brazilians, no one can handle

3 *Êh eta esquadrão de ouro*

Oh gold squadron!

4 *É bom no samba, é bom no couro*

Good with samba, good with leather

5 *O brasileiro lá no estrangeiro*

The Brazilian in foreign lands

6 *Mostrou o futebol como é que é*

Showed football the way it is

7 *Ganhou a taça do mundo*

Won the World Cup

8 *Sambando com a bola no pé*

Dancing the samba with the ball on the feet

9 *Goool!*

Goal!

This is an early example of how Brazilian people have so much pride of the country's great achievements in football, in which they are so great at that they do not have to make much effort to win, they just score as if they were "dancing". The use of music to exult certain sports and certain cultural qualities (lines 4 to 8) is used here to perpetuate the image of a country which dedicates its own existence to enjoyment and leisure, even though there was a military dictatorship 'knocking at their door'.

As it was the case later in Argentina, the military in Brazil would capitalise on this reborn national sentiment and its dictatorial powers to release a stronger campaign based on the 1970 World Cup. The world would see Brazil as the first third-time champion, this time in Mexico, with Italy as second best. It is still agreed by many Brazilians and foreigners that "the greatest soccer team of all time was the Brazil

team that won the 1970 World Cup, led by Pelé.” (Szymanski and Zimbalist, 2007:72) President Médici made “one of his first acts on taking power [...] to remove the national team’s coach, João Saldanha, who had failed to include the President’s favorite player on the team.” (ibid.) When he was questioned about the circumstances of his objection to the player, Saldanha replied: ““I don’t choose the President’s ministry, and he can’t choose my front line.”” (ibid.) That was definitely the wrong answer to the President, as he then, on the verge of the “Copa”, replaced the national coach by Mário Jorge Lobo ‘Zagallo’ (the same who would lead Brazil during the 1998 World Cup in France). Following the successful campaign of the 1970 national team, with or without Saldanha, *Pra Frente Brasil* [Forward Brazil], by Miguel Gustavo, would become one of the most well-known anthems in the country – and also the title of a 1982 film, censored by the then declining dictators. This anthem alludes to the unification of a country which was already on a process of re-democratisation, as possibly the last shot of the military in order to give the nation a notion of togetherness and citizenship which no longer existed.<sup>171</sup>

- 1 *Noventa milhões em ação*  
Ninety millions in action
- 2 *Pra frente Brasil*  
Forward Brazil
- 3 *Do meu coração*  
My great love
- 4 *Todos juntos vamos*  
All together
- 5 *Pra frente Brasil*  
Forward Brazil
- 5 *Salve a Seleção*  
Hail the national team

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<sup>171</sup> We have to emphasise here that 1970 was the year that Caetano Veloso and Gilberto Gil went into exile, and also the year Chico Buarque, a football fan, returned to the country.

6 *De repente é aquela corrente pra frente*  
Suddenly is that forward tide  
7 *Parece que todo o Brasil deu a mão*  
Seems like all Brazil gave hands  
8 *Todos ligados na mesma emoção*  
All connected to the same emotion  
9 *Tudo é um só coração!*  
It's all a single heart  
  
10 *Todos juntos vamos*  
All together  
11 *Pra frente Brasil, Brasil!*  
Forward Brazil, Brazil!  
12 *Salve a Seleção*  
Hail the national team

Recorded for TV Globo's broadcasting of the games, it would start an era of advertisement and promotion for the most popular sports event in the country. We shall call this new era TVGlobo(lisation), in a reference to the exclusivity and monopoly of broadcasting the games held by TV Globo, the biggest media conglomerate in Brazil, which would start to exercise an unprecedented and limitless power in the media in Brazil. Although the tune is less militaristic than previous ones, there is still this sense of a band playing in the square of every city of the country, as if in a parade.

In the same manner of the manipulating nationalism through football that happened in 1970 in Brazil, in 1978, and still within the dictatorship, Argentina won the World Cup on national turf and boosted the popularity of its military government through it. But in 1982, with an already weakened leadership, the government appealed to nationalism, started the Falkland War (April-June), and saw the national team losing to Brazil (in July of that year).

In Brazil, the end of the 1970s was still marked by this strong ‘militaristic’ music and the national ‘footballistic’ anthems, even with the next two World Cup consecutive defeats (1974 and 1978). The beginning of the 1980s was not different in terms of the scores, but in 1982 yet another song would bring a different spirit to the competition: *Voa Canarinho* [Fly Little Canary], by Katinguelê, which was sang by Flamengo’s fullback, and Brazilian team defender, Júnior. It brought images of the flag and its four colours, and also a more cheerful tune than the previous songs. *Canarinho* (or Little Canary) was the nickname given to the Brazilian team during the 1950 World Cup because of the colours of their shirts (and it’s still the name the Brazilian team is known by).

Although the military dictatorship ended after almost twenty-one years, and democracy was reestablished in 1985, the same nationalistic and patriotic engagement attached to the World Cup was still to be found in the anthems of the post-dictatorship time, such as *Mexe Coração* [Get Going Brazil] by Michael Sullivan and Paulo Massadas, recorded for the 1986 World Cup in Mexico by the Brazilian Team (for TV Globo broadcasting again). In the country where football is a religion, the songwriters of *Papa Essa Brasil* [Eat that Brazil] – same who wrote *Mexe Coração* –, played around with the fact that the 1990 championship was held in Italy and used the word *papa* with a clever double meaning, both the Pope, *o Papa*; and a football slang, *papar* (to eat), meaning to win.

*Coração Verde-Amarelo* (1994), by Tavito and Paulo Sérgio Valle, a Hollywoodian symphony – for its orchestra playing at the beginning –, composed for the World

Cup held in the USA, is still the official tune for World Cup games. In the country which claims that “the English invented football, the Brazilians perfected it”, the first winning of this redemocratised country is the one which marks the new generation, the ones that were not celebrating their country’s victories in the World Cups during the dictatorial regime. Some of its song-texts were adapted to the subsequent championships, but its core stayed the same:

- 1 *Na torcida são milhões de treinadores*  
In the crowd there are millions of coaches
- 2 *Cada um já escalou a seleção*  
Each already selected the team
- 3 *O verde e o amarelo são as cores*  
Green and yellow are the colours
- 4 *Que a gente vibra no coração*  
That we have in our hearts
- 5 *A galera vibra, canta, se agita*  
The crowd vibrates, sings, stirs
- 6 *E unida grita: é [tetra, penta, hexa, hepta] “campeão”!*  
And united shouts: it’s [tetra, penta, hexa, hepta] “champion”!<sup>172</sup>
- 7 *O toque de bola*  
The touch of the ball
- 8 *É nossa escola*  
Is our school
- 9 *Nossa maior tradição*  
Our greatest tradition
- 10 *Eu sei que vou*  
I know I will go
- 11 *Vou do jeito que eu sei*  
I’ll go the way I know
- 12 *De gol em gol*  
Goal by goal
- 13 *Com direito a “replay”*  
With the right to replay
- 14 *Eu sei que vou*  
I know I will go
- 15 *Com o coração batendo a mil*  
With the heart beating at a thousand rate
- 16 *É taça na raça, Brasil!!!*  
It’s the cup from our strength, Brazil!

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<sup>172</sup> Italics are my own, in order to expose the versatility and longevity of the song-text.

Although Rede Globo, one of the strongest ‘dictatorial’ powers of globalisation and consumerism in Brazil, is still using its old 1994 *Coração Verde-Amarelo* theme song, there could be a twist in the campaign for the use of a theme song, now that Brazil will witness for the first time in sixty years the return of the World Cup to the home turf in 2014 – and also the Olympic Games in 2016. A comparison between the instrumentalisation of music for the World Cups in order to boost national pride within current times can be an interesting feature of the politics of sports to be looked at since nowadays Brazil is becoming that long-sought-for giant of the Americas which is finally waking up. This could prove that the affair between politics and music goes on in democratic times as well, and what the dictatorship tried to do for the World Cups in the 1970s, is not in any way different from what could still happen in Brazil in 2014.

This affair, between politics and music, can be seen in yet another sphere in Brazil, in the realms of Rock’n’Roll. If Buarque, Vandr , Veloso and Gil were the precursors who gave the next generation a path to pursue, it was time, in the 1980s when democracy was re-established, for those who were born and grew up under the regime to speak up and question the direction the country was taking. The way this next generation found was to create their own language, which would become known as BRock.

## Chapter 6 - Is this BRock?

Born from the influence of a diversity of strands of Rock'n'Roll, Brazilian Rock'n'Roll, or BRock,<sup>173</sup> made an initially shy arrival, and according to Arthur Dapieve,<sup>174</sup> for being a “foreigner in a foreign nation, rock struggled for almost three decades until it got, *de facto* and *de jure*, a Brazilian citizenship.” (Dapieve, 2005:11) This ‘foreign’ rhythm which would be given a non-expiring Brazilian passport and a long-life status has its origins all the way back in the 1950s. However, in this chapter I am going to focus on the decade of the 1980s previewing our case study, the Brazilian band Legião Urbana.

For Arthur Dapieve, Brazilian Rock'n'Roll comes in waves, with the first one starting in 1955, when Nora Ney<sup>175</sup> recorded her cover of the world-famous song “Rock Around the Clock” (*No Balanço das Horas*), by Bill Haley and His Comets, originally recorded for the soundtrack of the movie *The Blackboard Jungle* (*Sementes da Violência*) (dir. Richard Brooks, 1955). Nora Ney’s successful version was later followed by the first Brazilian-born Rock'n'Roll version interpreted by Cauby Peixoto and composed by Miguel Gustavo,<sup>176</sup> *Rock and Roll em Copacabana* (1957). (Dapieve, 2005:11-13)

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<sup>173</sup> BRock is the way Brazilian Rock (from the 1980s) is known since Arthur Dapieve’s first edition of his *BRock: O Rock Brasileiro dos Anos 80* (1995).

<sup>174</sup> Arthur Dapieve (b.1963) is the main writer used in this and the next chapters due to his insightful contribution in ‘retelling’ the history of Rock'n'Roll in Brazil.

<sup>175</sup> Nora Ney would personally suffer the consequences of the censorship of the coming dictatorship in the 1960s when her husband, the singer Jorge Goulart, was forced into exile because of his divergence to the government.

<sup>176</sup> Miguel Gustavo is also the songwriter of the famous *Pra Frente Brasil*, anthem of the World Cup 1970.

Throughout the 1950s, although the place for the real Brazilian ‘king of Rock’n’Roll’ or the ‘Elvis Brasileiro’ was occupied by Sérgio Murillo,<sup>177</sup> the next wave of Brazilian Rock’n’Roll was swung by Tony (originally Sérgio) and Celly (originally Célia) Campello, siblings from the city of Taubaté (São Paulo) who at first recorded (unsuccessfully) in English, and then in Portuguese. Some of Celly’s famous songs were versions of American and Italian songs, such as the timeless *Estúpido Cupido* [Stupid Cupid];<sup>178</sup> and *Banho de Lua* [Tintarella Di Luna].<sup>179</sup> The song-texts were all quite simple and naïve, as in Celly’s 1959 *Lacinhos Cor-de-Rosa*, a version of *Pink Shoelaces*,<sup>180</sup> in which she sings about a boy she wants to win over, and how she is going to achieve that because of her pink shoe laces:

|   | <u>Original Version</u>                   |
|---|---|
| 1 <i>Um sapatinho eu vou</i><br>My little shoes I will                                | (He wears tan shoes with pink shoelaces)  |
| 2 <i>Com laço cor-de-rosa enfeitar</i><br>With a pink bow decorate                    | (A polka dot vest and man, oh, man)       |
| 3 <i>E perto dele eu vou</i><br>And by him I will                                     | (Tan shoes with pink shoelaces)           |
| 4 <i>Andar devagarinho e o broto conquistar</i><br>Walk very slowly and win his heart | (And a big Panama with a purple hat band) |

<sup>177</sup> Chosen by *Revista do Rock* in 1961, considered one of the strongest representatives of the *Juventude Transviada* (based on the movie *Rebel Without a Cause* with James Dean) which was ultimately the very well-behaved *Broto Legal* (1960) and *Marcianita* (1959).

<sup>178</sup> The original was written in 1958 by Howard Greenfield and Neil Sedaka, and was made famous by singer Connie Francis. In Brazil, *Estúpido Cupido* also became the title of a 1976-77 very famous soap opera (by Mário Prata and directed by Régis Cardoso) re-launching Celly Campello’s short career, which she had abandoned in order to get married at the age of 20, when she was already known as the Queen of Brazilian Rock. The soap opera was set during the *Anos Dourados* [Golden Age] of the 1950s and 1960s. This Golden Age is said to have been the mark of the ‘loss of innocence’ which followed WWII. An era of global economic growth between 1950 and 1973, which some critics consider to have been ended by the Arab Oil Embargo energy crisis, and its worldwide economic consequences.

<sup>179</sup> Written in 1959 by Franco Migliacci and Bruno de Filippi, and famously interpreted by Italian singer Mina.

<sup>180</sup> It was originally recorded by Dodie Stevens in the same year.



It is interesting to note that whilst in the original version the female voice sings about a man she loves (Doodley), who is good looking and wears crazy clothes such as shoes with pink shoelaces and a polka dot vest, in the Brazilian version, on the contrary, she sings about the way *she* is going to dress (lines 1 and 2) in order to ‘conquer’ the man of her dreams (lines 3 and 4). A little reversal of playroles when the female figure is made into the seductive character, much as a Brazilian woman would be portrayed and be expected to act.

Another example of this juvenile discourse, but this time on a very chauvinistic male voice, can be found in Tony Campello’s *Lobo Mau* (Bad Wolf, as in *Little Red Riding Hood*), a version of the 1961 *The Wanderer*,<sup>181</sup> as he talks about girls, cars and parties, which would perpetuate the image of the macho, and serve perfectly the Brazilian stereotype of both men and women in their respective roles.

- 1 *Eu sou do tipo que não gosta de casamento*  
[I’m the type who doesn’t like marriage]  
Oh well I’m the type of guy who will never settle down
- 2 *Tudo que eu faço ou falo, é fingimento*  
[Everything I do or say, is fake]  
Where pretty girls are well, you know that I’m around
- 3 *Pego o meu carro e começo a rodar*  
[I take my car and go around]  
I kiss ‘em and I love ‘em ‘cause to me they’re all the same
- 4 *Tenho mil garotas uma em cada lugar*  
[I have a thousand girls, one in each place]  
I hug ‘em and I squeeze ‘em they don’t even know my name
- 5 *Me chamam “O Lobo Mau”*  
[They call me “The Bad Wolf”]  
They call me the wanderer yeah the wanderer

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<sup>181</sup> Written by Ernie Maresca and originally recorded by ‘Dion’ Francis DiMucci in 1961. The original version is in Portuguese for a comparison between both versions in order to make my argument stronger.

6 *Me chamam “O Lobo Mau”*  
 [They call me “The Bad Wolf”]  
 They call me the wanderer yeah the wanderer  
 7 *Eu sou o tal, o tal, o tal, o tal...*  
 [I am the one, the one, the one...]  
 I roam around, around, around...

Another hit, which did not come from the Campello siblings, was *Biquini de Bolinha Amarelinha*,<sup>182</sup> the Brazilian version of *Itsy Bitsy Teenie Weenie Yellow Polka Dot Bikini* was recorded by Ronnie Cord (Ronaldo Cordovil) in 1965, and it is pretty faithful to the original version, which in Portuguese brought an even spicier appeal (line 2) to the imagery of – together with the miniskirt – one of the most controversial and desirable item of female-wear of all times: the bikini.<sup>183</sup>

1 *Era um biquini de bolinha amarelinha tão pequenininho*  
 [It was a tinny yellow dotted bikini]  
 It was an itsy, bitsy, teenie, weenie yellow polka-dot bikini  
 2 *Mal cabia na Ana Maria*  
 [It barely fit Ana Maria]  
 That she wore for the first time today  
 3 *Biquini de bolinha amarelinha tão pequenininho*  
 [Tinny yellow dotted bikini]  
 An itsy, bitsy, teentie, weenie yellow polka-dot bikini  
 4 *Que na palma da mão se escondia*  
 [In the palm of the hand it hid]  
 You could hide it in the palm of your hand

On the tail of the Campellos and Cord’s success, some less expressive (but not less important) groups were created in this period, such as The Fevers, Renato & Seus Blue Caps, The Clevers (later named Os Incríveis), The Pops, The Sputniks,<sup>184</sup> all using names, song titles and song-texts in English (Dapieve, 2005:13), as a way of

<sup>182</sup> Written by Paul Vance and Lee Pockriss, and first released in 1960 by Brian Hyland.

<sup>183</sup> The bikini ‘arrived’ in the Brazilian beaches in the 1950s, and was immortalised in the 1970s by Angela Diniz wearing hers whilst pregnant. *Biquini de Bolinha Amarelinha* was an ideal song for Brazil, a country stereotyped as tropical, with the appeal of the female body at the beaches, and their miniscule bikinis (line 2), which does not appear in the original version following the Portuguese here.

<sup>184</sup> The Sputniks would become the seed group for two very important songwriters and interpreters for years to come: Erasmo (Carlos) Esteves, Roberto Carlos’s major artistic partner; and Sebastião (Tim) Maia. (Dapieve, 2006:13)

establishing their position in a very American-dominated music market addressing the youth who were consuming the songs and movies made in the USA, and by Hollywood in particular.

The next wave of Brazilian Rock'n'Roll was to be represented by Jovem Guarda [Young Guard],<sup>185</sup> one of the first music movements in Brazil to be inspired by British (mostly The Beatles) rather than American Rock'n'Roll, on account of its more powerful electric guitar playing. The Jovem Guarda was also bringing with it other changes to the language of Brazilian Rock'n'Roll, and although it had a "lack of intellectual commitment" it was full of a "creative energy"<sup>186</sup> which was 'contaminated' by the Rock'n'Roll of The Beatles and its *iê iê iê*. The Jovem Guarda had its beginning set by young Roberto Carlos's recording of Bobby Darin's "Splish Splash" in 1962. Turned into a TV show in 1965, the troop formed by Roberto, Erasmo, Wanderléa, Martinha, Renato & Seus Blue Caps, Golden Boys, and guests lived a short sort of "infant disease of our music" (Dapieve, 2005:14), but important life until 1968, when the pressures between Jovem Guarda, protest music, MPB and Bossa Nova struck the country struggling for its own identity and culture.

This identity, as a dynamic entity and still in formation nowadays, was the main issue for most of Rock'n'Rollers who followed from the 1970s. A good example being the band Os Mutantes formed at the end of the decade by Rita Lee Jones and

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<sup>185</sup> A term used to contrast with the new trend of the *Velha Guarda* of *samba*. The *Velha Guarda* is a group of senior *samba* songwriters and singers (*sambistas*), almost always old and experienced, many times founders of the samba schools, who do not occupy official positions within the schools, but who still constitute a branch of it. During the Carnival parade, these elements gain positions of honour, wearing gala clothing, always within the colours of the school and Panamá hats, which is typical of *sambistas*.

<sup>186</sup> See: Caetano Veloso (2005) <<http://www.jovemguarda.com.br/entrevista-caetano-veloso02.php>>

the Baptista brothers, Arnaldo and Sérgio. Os Mutantes were following and developing the steps of the Tropicália movement, and according to Dapieve, “they had recorded their first LP [*Os Mutantes*] in the same hectic 1968... proving that a rock band passionate for the Beatles post-‘Revolver’ could assimilate the evolutionary line of MPB... while still being rockers.” (Dapieve, 1995:14-16) The first song in the album *Os Mutantes*, was also the title-song of the Tropicália album, *Panis et Circences* (by Caetano Veloso and Gilberto Gil).<sup>187</sup> This song became famous for its reminiscence of Beatles music, “which was no coincidence” (Dunn, 2001:93), and for its song-texts “which satirized the conventions of a traditional bourgeois family... [with] a first-person poetic voice unsuccessfully attempt[ing] to rouse the family from its state of immobility and mediocrity.” (ibid.) They made very good use of the “formula rock + MPB = backbiting” through hits such as their 1969 songs *2001* and *Caminhante Noturno* [Night Walker]. The band would still record three other albums<sup>188</sup> as “the first Brazilian rock band in the right sense of the expression.” (Dapieve, 1995:14-16) In 1972, Rita Lee (b.1947) left the band and pursued a solo career diverging from her ‘rocky’ roots, which according to Dapieve made her lose “the chance to become the matriarch of the 1980s generation”. (ibid.) On the other hand, *Os Mutantes*, with different formations, went on to become a band whose “extemporaneous sound... would become *cult* even abroad, fascinating people such as Jello Biafra, leader of the American Punk band Dead Kennedys.” (ibid.)

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<sup>187</sup> In the cover of *Tropicália: ou Panis et Circencis*, there is a photo of the Tropicalistas posing in “a visual allusion to the title track of the album.” (Dunn, 2001:93)

<sup>188</sup> Those three albums were *A divina comédia ou Ando meio desligado* (1970), *Jardim elétrico* (1971), and *Mutantes e seus comets no país do Baurets* (1972).

It looked as if Rock'n'Roll in Brazil had a space for all sorts of sub-genres (Punk, ska, new wave, pop), and because of this diversity many songwriters/interpreters/bands were able to create commercial hits. The 'I-don't-care-what's-going-on-around-me' attitude would also produce song-texts without profound messages of unification or uprising against a dictatorship which was already in decline. That was the case of bands such as Kid Abelha e Os Abóboras Selvagens in their 1984 album *Seu Espião* [Your Spy], or João Penca e Seus Miquinhos Amestrados with their song *Lágrimas de Crocodilo* [Crocodile Tears], both containing song-texts which talked about love and the hardship of being a teenager. An interesting variation to the 'love story' would be the sexist song-texts of Leo Jaime's rockabilly adaptation of Bobby Hebb's 1963 naive *Sunny* in exchange to a much more sexually and descriptive *Sônia* in 1984. This variation brought a strong sense of the disillusionment felt by those young artists in terms of the musical production of the time, and portrays their need to create an illusion, or a smoke-curtain, in order to deal with what they did not want, or cared, to face: the dictatorial hardships in their country.

In any case, whilst some of the musicians of the 1980s did not even acknowledge themselves as Rock'n'Roll bands, Dapieve still includes most of those in the hall of fame of BRock, either as "first or second division", in football terms. (2005:149-91) Some of those bands were making music which was indeed revolutionising the Brazilian scene, including new arrangements, and asserting a discourse which was engaging with a national agenda whilst using, mixing, and creating styles and notions which were innovative, even if they felt far from the original idea of Rock'n'Roll,

thus defining the existence of a ‘non-movement’. According to Arnaldo Antunes,<sup>189</sup> “there were many different things happening... [but] I’ve never seen national rock as a movement. I’ve always seen it as a possibility of different things manifesting in the area we call Rock’n’Roll”. (Dapieve, 2005:89) From Antunes words we can infer that there was not a collective and thought-through campaign of (and for) Brazilian Rock’n’Roll. But if that was the case, how did the contemporary, urban, closest-to-Rock’n’Roll-as-we-know-it phenomenon of BRock came to be in the first place?

## **Hollywood Rock, Rock In Rio and Circo Voador**

BRock had a strong seed for its formation: singers/songwriters Lobão, Lulu Santos, and Ritchie, who grew in the shadow of Os Mutantes’s ‘tree’, and would become the leaders of the ‘movement’ throughout the 1970s and 1980s. Lulu Santos (b.1953) formed, in 1974, Vímana,<sup>190</sup> a progressive rock band which mixed Rolling Stones with Black Sabbath influences. Vímana was initially formed by Lulu Santos (guitar/vocal), Fernando Gama (bass), Luís Paulo Simas (keyboard), and Candinho (drums); but then re-formed with Ritchie and Lobão, in 1975, when Candinho left the band. Although having a short lived history (1974-1978) and producing ordinary music, Vímana would gather some of the best representatives of the BRock in

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<sup>189</sup> Arnaldo Antunes (b.1960) is a very successful songwriter/singer who circulates in many different spheres of Brazilian music since the 1970s. Antunes became even more famous after his collaborations with songwriters/singers Marisa Monte (b.1967) and Carlinhos Brown (b.1962) in their 2002 album *Os Tribalistas*.

<sup>190</sup> The word Vimana, and not Vímana as the band, comes from the Sanskrit and has different meanings, the one intentionally linked to the band is esoteric, the travelling or fallen from a celestial car; the other meanings are more earthly, and more related to the way Rock’n’Roll was seen: dejected, downcast, devoid of honour, disgraced. (both from the Cologne Digital Sanskrit Lexicon Dictionary)

formation, namely Lulu Santos and Lobão.<sup>191</sup> Vímana would be amongst the bands that performed in one of the first and defining rock festivals in Brazil.

The music scene in Brazil was definitely being transformed at the beginning of the 1980s and two main events helped shape this new generation's dreams and ambitions: *Hollywood Rock* and *Rock In Rio*. One can say that the phenomenon of Rock festivals drew its inspiration from the Brazilian Popular Music Festivals and International Music Festivals of the 1960s and 1970s, and was definitely initiated by Hollywood Rock, in Botafogo (Rio de Janeiro) soccer field in 1975, when Nelson Motta, sponsored by Souza Cruz tobacco company, organised the first (almost unofficial) edition of eight festivals (the last one held as late as 1996).

It its first edition, in the summer of 1975, only Brazilian artists played at *Hollywood Rock Festival*. Rita Lee & Tutti-Frutti,<sup>192</sup> Os Mutantes, O Peso, O Terço and Vímana, with Celly Campello, Erasmo Carlos<sup>193</sup> and Raul Seixas<sup>194</sup> closing the festival. The festival attracted around ten thousand people, and became a successful catalyst for many other major Rock'n'Roll events in Brazil.

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<sup>191</sup> Born João Luiz Woerdenbag Filho (b.1957) in Rio de Janeiro, Lobão is a singer, songwriter, and a drums/guitar player. Lulu Santos was born Maurício Pragana dos Santos (b.1953), also in Rio, and is a singer, songwriter and a guitar player. They can be considered two of the main 'old school' of this embryonic BRock of the 1970s.

<sup>192</sup> Tutti-Frutti was the first band of this singer/songwriter after she left Os Mutantes.

<sup>193</sup> Born Erasmo Esteves (b.1953), Erasmo Carlos was one of the main members of *Jovem Guarda* with his collaborator Roberto Carlos (b.1941), who is popularly known as the "King of Brazilian Music", mostly until shortly after his apogee at the end of the 1980s.

<sup>194</sup> Raul (Santos) Seixas (1945-1989) was born in Bahia and, because of his eccentric and esoteric career, became the inspiration for many artists of his generation. Some of his most famous and recorded songs are *Maluco Beleza*, *Sociedade Alternativa*, and *Metamorfose Ambulante*. Seixas was classified as a finalist in the VII International Music Festival (1972) for his *baião*-rock *Let me Sing, Let me Sing*. For more information about this extremely interesting character of BRock, see: <<http://raulseixas.wordpress.com/biografia-raul-seixas/>>

In the summer of 1982, seven years after the first Hollywood Rock, a group of artists mostly from a theatre background, feeling the lack of available space to reach the greater – and possibly less wealthy – public, decided to ‘pitch their tent’ at the Arpoador beach in Ipanema to become *Circo Voador* [Flying Circus]. The importance of this enterprise is sometimes forgotten by the wider public, but for people such as Dapieve it can be considered an event which would start changing the face of Rock’n’Roll as Brazilians knew it. Dapieve describes the different mood and looks of that night in comparison with the internationally known Rock’n’Roll style, saying that inside of the ‘big top’ in January 1982, “a rock band is performing, yes, it might be it, a rock band, although there are no hairy men masturbating with guitars.” (Dapieve, 2005:9) One of the bands to perform, and manage to ‘break the anti-rock blockade’ that night was Blitz,<sup>195</sup> a band which instead of singing about the devil and its almighty powers, sang about chips and love, in Portuguese of course. (ibid.)

The set up of the ‘big top’ of *Circo Voador*, which was supposed to be used for only a month, was at the beach for three months. That arrangement was later transferred to another area of Rio de Janeiro, Arcos da Lapa, in October 1982, until its closure in 1996 by decree of the governor of the State of Rio de Janeiro. It reopened in 2004, and it has always been a place which gave a space and an opportunity to artists and social projects to operate. Another ally for the success of *Circo Voador* was the radio station Fluminense FM,<sup>196</sup> which used the project *Rock Voador* [Flying Rock] to give

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<sup>195</sup> Blitz is the name of one of the most successful Brazilian bands of the new wave time. With no clear connection to *Blitzkrieg Bop* by The Ramones, the name of the Brazilian band was chosen due to the military police repression of the time of the creation of the band. (Dapieve, 2005:53)

<sup>196</sup> Although originally founded in 1972, it was ‘revamped’ by the journalists Luiz Antônio Mello and Samuel Wainer Filho, and re-aired from the 1<sup>st</sup> March 1982; the radio had the intention of promoting



a stage to the groups the radio station was helping to release, and promote, through its waves. One of the highlights of this partnership was the release of their first album, *Rock Voador*, in January 1983, which according to Dapieve (1995:31) was the “son of a marriage without mother-in-law or boredom”, i.e. pure fun, a collection of different styles and genres producing a genuine Rock’n’Roll ‘made in Brazil’, which Dapieve acknowledges could have had the slogan “the rock is ours” (ibid.), as an allusion to the old military slogan, ‘Brazil is ours’.

BRock was ‘showing its claws’, and other media started to be more participative in promoting these artists, such as *O Globo* newspaper, *Pipoca Moderna* magazine through articles from journalist like Ana Maria Bahiana, *Jornal do Brasil*’s Jamari França, and *Som Três* magazine and *Rádio Excelsior* through Maurício Kubrusly’s news. (Dapieve, 2005:31-2)

At the beginning of 1985 it already felt as if that decade was bringing a new light into the country, for different reasons. Ten years after the first *Hollywood Rock*, the first edition of *Rock In Rio* appeared and it was meant to be some kind of Brazilian Woodstock, thus becoming the biggest rock festival in the world at the time.<sup>197</sup> *Rock*

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new bands through the broadcasting of demo tapes, but also to present ‘everything Rock’n’Roll’ coming from abroad (Dapieve, 2005:31), to share and inspire a new generation of fresh BRockers. For more details on the importance of this radio for Brazilian music, see also: *A Onda Maldita* (1992), by Luiz Antonio Mello; and *Rádio Fluminense FM: a porta de entrada do rock brasileiro nos anos 80* (2006), by Maria Estrella. Nowadays (2011) the radio is called BandNews Fluminense FM. See: <[http://bandnewsfm.band.com.br/quem\\_somos.asp](http://bandnewsfm.band.com.br/quem_somos.asp)>

<sup>197</sup> *Rock In Rio* was held at the *Cidade do Rock* [City of Rock], in Jacarepaguá, Rio de Janeiro. The 250,000-square metre site (2.7 million square foot, and a little bigger than Woodstock farm) was the ideal space for a gigantic 5,000-square metre stage; two fast food venues; two shopping centres accommodating 50 shops; two first-aid centres. It attracted more than 1.4 million people (almost three times the amount of Woodstock), and broke many records, such as: 1,600,000 litres of beverages were served in 4 million plastic cups, 33,000 pizzas were sold, and 1.2 million sandwiches were consumed. See: <<http://forum.retrobits.com.br/viewtopic.php?f=38&t=1705>>

*In Rio*, produced by Roberto Medina,<sup>198</sup> took place during ten days (11<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> January 1985) and was a very important venue for Brazilian rock bands to either start or consolidate their careers, playing before or after renowned names in international music. The music festival would also consolidate not only itself,<sup>199</sup> but also the country, as a regular route for events of international calibre, having in its first edition in Rio de Janeiro names such as:

| <i>International</i> | <i>National</i>             |
|----------------------|-----------------------------|
| AC/DC                | Alceu Valença               |
| Al Jarreau           | Baby Consuelo & Pepeu Gomes |
| The B-52's           | Barão Vermelho              |
| George Benson        | Blitz                       |
| The Go-Go's          | Eduardo Dusek               |
| Iron Maiden          | Elba Ramalho                |
| James Taylor         | Erasmio Carlos              |
| Nina Hagen           | Gilberto Gil                |
| Ozzy Osbourne        | Ivan Lins                   |
| Queen                | Kid Abelha                  |
| Rod Stewart          | Lulu Santos                 |
| Scorpions            | Moraes Moreira              |
| Whitesnake           | Ney Matogrosso              |
| Yes                  | Paralamas do Sucesso        |
|                      | Rita Lee                    |

Although this new generation of the regained democracy was still uncertain towards theirs and their country's future, some of the bands producing and recording music were quite aware of the problems of the country throughout its change of systems. According to Dapieve,

it was a new Brazilian rock, cured from the psychedelic-progressive purple-haze of the 1970s, free from metaphorical lyrics and state-of-the-art instruments, talking in clear Portuguese

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<sup>198</sup> Roberto Medina (b.1947) is a Brazilian advertising entrepreneur, President of Artplan, an advertisement conglomerate. (Abreu, 2007:159-60)

<sup>199</sup> In 1988, it was time for *Hollywood Rock* to have its second edition, this time with international participation. Succeeded by *Rock In Rio II* in 1991 and *III* in 2001 to be held in Rio de Janeiro. Those editions were followed by a proper international life of the festival, leading it to Lisbon in 2004, 2006, 2008 and 2010; and Madrid in 2008 and 2010. The fourth edition of *Rock In Rio*, in Rio de Janeiro, is going to happen between 23<sup>rd</sup> October and 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2011, taking Rock'n'Roll back home. See: <<http://www.rockinrio.com.br/>>

about things common to the people of its own generation: love, ethics, sex, politics... the pain of growing and maturing – messages delivered through the gaps of the redemocratisation process. (Dapieve, 2005:195)

Some of those bands used their ironic criticism on the inability of Brazilians to achieve certain standards, both cultural and social. One of them, *Ultraje a Rigor* (1980-), a BRock band from São Paulo, was extremely successful during the 1980s, and is still active nowadays (2011). Initially formed by Roger, Leôspa, Sílvia and Edgard, the acid and rebellious tone of their Rock'n'Roll is incorporated in the band's name through a play on words with the expression '*traje a rigor*', which in Portuguese applies to 'full formal dress' (for men and women), usually in an invitation card. The shift from *traje* to *ultraje* involves the word outrage. The band therefore exploits the formal invitation to perform outrageously. *Ultraje a Rigor* makes use of that ironic criticism since their 1983 first single *Inútil* [Useless]

- 1 *A gente não sabemos*  
We doesn't know<sup>200</sup>
- 2 *Escolher Presidente*  
To choose President
- 3 *A gente não sabemos*  
We doesn't know
- 4 *Tomar conta da gente*  
To take care of ourselves
- 5 *A gente não sabemos*  
We doesn't even know
- 6 *Nem escovar os dente*  
How to brush our tooth
- 7 *Tem gringo pensando*  
There are 'gringo' thinking
- 8 *Que nós é indigente*  
That we is indigent

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<sup>200</sup> The underlining is mine to point out the purposely wrong use of language inflexions.

[Refrain]

9 *Inútil!*

Useless

10 *A gente somos inútil!*

We is useless!

11 *A gente faz carro*

We make car

12 *E não sabe guiar*

And can't drive

13 *A gente faz trilho*

We make track

14 *E não tem trem prá botar*

And don't have train to put

15 *A gente faz filho*

We make child

16 *E não consegue criar*

And can't raise

17 *A gente pede grana*

We ask for money

18 *E não consegue pagar*

And can't pay back

19 *A gente faz música*

We make music

20 *E não consegue gravar*

And can't record

21 *A gente escreve livro*

We write book

22 *E não consegue publicar*

And can't publish

23 *A gente escreve peça*

We write play

24 *E não consegue encenar*

And can't perform

25 *A gente joga bola*

We play ball

26 *E não consegue ganhar*

And we can't win

Notice that in *Inútil* the lack of rigor in the use of the language, which I tried to keep as close to the original as possible in the translation, is obsessively regular and colloquial (lines 1 to 10), suggesting the inability of this 'we', the Brazilian people, of even speaking their own language properly, let alone achieving the right and logical choice of a President (line 1) – at the time of the song it was impossible to elect a

President because of the military dictatorship; and possibly useless in 1985 as the President who was elected by an Electoral Collegiate (Tancredo Neves), actually died before being sworn in. However, *Ultraje a Rigor* raised some initial social and political concerns here, such as the contradiction of a country which, although being industrialised, cannot enjoy its own production (line 11 to 14, and 17 to 18), or a country with such a rich cultural background which cannot fulfil its potential in different fields (line 19 to 26).

Some of *Ultraje a Rigor*'s later works deserved some criticism because of the 'low quality' of its song-texts, some through the use of swearing words in its title, such as in *Filha da Puta* [Son of a Bitch], which became a polemic and defining piece in their career for its content and argument. First released in their third album, *Crescendo* [Growing Up] (1989), it was still recorded in their 'acoustic' album in 2005, proving, in a certain way, its topicality:

- 1 *Morar nesse país*  
To live in this country
- 2 *É como ter a mãe na zona*  
Is like having a mother in the red light district
- 3 *Você sabe que ela não presta*  
You know that she is worthless
- 4 *E ainda assim adora essa gatona*  
And even then you like the hot chick
- 5 *Não que eu tenha nada contra*  
Not that I am against
- 6 *Profissionais da cama*  
Professionals of sex
- 7 *Mas são os filhos dessa dama*  
But it is the sons of this mistress
- 8 *Que você sabe como é que chama*  
That you know how to call

[Refrain]

9 *Filha da puta*

Son of a bitch

10 *É tudo filho da puta*

They are all sons of a bitch

11 *É uma coisa muito feia*

It's something very ugly

12 *E é o que mais tem por aqui*

And it's what is more available around here

13 *E sendo nós da Pátria filhos*

And being us sons of the homeland

14 *Não tem nem como fugir*

There isn't even how to escape

15 *E eu não vi nenhum tostão*

And I didn't see a penny

16 *Da grana toda que ela arrecadou*

Of all the money that it made

17 *Na certa foi parar na mão*

Surely it ended up in the hands

18 *De algum maldito gigolo*

Of some goddamn gigolo

19 *'Cês me desculpem o palavrão*

Forgive me the swear-word

20 *Eu bem que tentei evitar*

I've well tried to avoid

21 *Mas não achei outra definição*

But I didn't find another definition

22 *Que pudesse explicar*

Which could explain

23 *Com tanta clareza*

So clearly

24 *Aquilo tudo que a gente sente*

Everything we feel

25 *A terra é uma beleza*

The land is nice

26 *O que estraga é essa gente*

What spoils it is this people

Their song-texts praise and scold Brazil at the same time (lines 1 to 4), a common contradictory reaction to the transition to democracy seen repeatedly in Brazilian music, where the qualities and advantages of the land were celebrated, whilst its 'people' were generalised, mainly in the form of politicians, and regarded as the degradation of the country. Notice in Roger's song-texts how he uses the same word,

‘gente’ [people], to designate two opposite groups of ‘we’. The first is made up of people like Roger (us) (line 13 and 24) who share his frustration and disgust about this ‘other’ (their), who spoil the country and its potential (lines 24 to 26), through the corruption and exploitation they perpetuate as ‘gigolos’ of this ‘whore’ of a country (lines 15 to 18).

Following the movements of the 1960s and 1970s, songwriters, singers, and bands would be singing songs that I shall no longer argue as protest or political, but rather, in the light of Georges Zimmerman, ‘songs of complaint’, when referring to the informative, consciousness-raising nature of the songs and the performances in question.<sup>201</sup> These bands aimed at raising awareness on their public about political, social and economic issues that were happening in Brazil as things that one should not be avoiding to speak and know about. In this sense they wrote ‘oral reports’ in order to raise a consciousness about the radical social changes and legacies, as a way of emphasizing the cultural values of their own communities and environment. With more irony and boredom than anger or hatred, it was in this social and cultural context that many bands were formed in the 1980s, some of them having survived until nowadays.

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<sup>201</sup> According to Georges Zimmerman’s *Songs of Irish Rebellion* the Irish peasants of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, as much as the Brazilian generation of the 1980s and 1990s, succeeded more in complaining or lamenting “rather than attempt[ed] to change the established order.” (Zimmerman, 2002:17) Zimmerman also asserts that the ballad-singer period declined in the 1980s “because the period of political excitement [and turmoil] seemed over or because the people who had listened to them... were now more literate and read newspapers.” (ibid.) In Brazil something different happened in the sense that, although the 1980s and 1990s generations learned to worship everything American and care less about the national, they were still singing about the country, complaining about politics and society’s hardships, but not protesting per se, not taking the streets, as we will see in the next chapter.

Although some of the BRock ‘stars’ were writing and singing about their concerns and complaints regarding their lives and the problems of the country, Dapieve argues that this BRock ‘gang’ was, with rare exceptions, making music for “young white high middle-class males and their pairs... sons of entrepreneurs (such as Cazuza), politicians (Roberto Frejat), military (Lulu Santos, Herbert Vianna, Paulo Ricardo Medeiros), civil servants (Renato Russo), diplomats (Bi Ribeiro), university professors (Arnaldo Antunes, André Mueller)”. (Dapieve, 2005:195) This is to cite only a few names who were responsible for the success and the longevity of BRock. As well asserted by Dapieve, and in the case of BRock in this thesis,

the verbs are in the past, but not the subjects... all the bands of First Division [of BRock] are active... With time, even without stop being fundamentally rockers, all of them were assimilated by and as Brazilian music. And there is another achievement of BRock: to have taken the American little mulatto away from the ghetto, and obtained its nationalisation.” (Dapieve, 2005:196)

Hence, the weight and position of these artists’ discourse is loaded with an etic view point.<sup>202</sup> They are looking at this world from the spectators, the informants, and the anthropologists’ point of view. They are analysing the society they observe. Etic is used here in contrast to emic, according to Marvin Harris 1968’s theory, in which,

‘emic’ is the inside or native view; while ‘etic’ is the view of the anthropologist or social scientist. Derived from linguistics after ‘*phoneme*’ and ‘*phonetic*’, some cultural anthropologists have viewed this as an objective in contrast to subjective view. But, a closer examination of use of this concept reveals totally different thing. (Srivastava, 2005:55)

Therefore, they perform the role of the outsider, an *etic* task with the insider, *emic*, discourse as predicted by Harris, when he argues that:

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<sup>202</sup> Marvin Harris, *The Rise of Anthropological Theory: a history of theories of culture*.



from an etic point of view, the universe of meaning, purposes, goals, motivations, etc., is... unapproachable. But to insist upon the separateness of emic and etic phenomena and research strategies is not to affirm a greater or lesser “reality” or a higher or lower scientific status for either of them... [and] no advantage would accrue to a research strategy concerned exclusively with etic phenomena. (Harris, 2001:579-82)

In any case, it was these upper-class dwellers, portraying their *etic* role, who were at this point in Brazilian history giving voice to this more *emic* entity, who did not have the space in the real world to create, to build *audiotopias*, only to participate in it as listeners.

Amongst the few names that helped BRock finding its own space, two have to be taken into consideration, for different reasons yet similar achievements: one of them is Cazuza; and the other is Renato Russo, and his band, Legião Urbana, the main object of our case study in the next chapter.

Born Agenor de Miranda Araújo Neto (1958-1990), in Rio de Janeiro, and raised in Ipanema, the typical upper middle-class boy, Cazuza was the only son of João Araújo (b.1936),<sup>203</sup> public relations for the recording company Odeon at the time; and a seamstress, Maria Lúcia da Silva Araújo (b.1936), known as Lucinha Araújo. As such, Cazuza would find his ways into arts through the theatre, and from there through the BRock band which sheltered him at the beginning of his singing career: Barão Vermelho [Red Baron]. Initially formed by Roberto Frejat (electric guitar/vocals), Dé (bass), Maurício Barros (keyboards), and Guto Goffi (drums), all

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<sup>203</sup> João Araújo is a music producer, and the founder of Som Livre (1971). The company is part of the Organizações Globo (mentioned in Chapter 2), and responsible for the release of all TV Globo's soap opera soundtracks. It was also the company to launch Barão Vermelho and Cazuza, as we are going to see next. See: <[http://www.abpd.org.br/sobre\\_gravadora.asp?g=20](http://www.abpd.org.br/sobre_gravadora.asp?g=20)>

who in 1981 welcomed Cazuza, the band is still going strong with Frejat as their leader vocal, since Cazuza braved, with extreme success, a solo career from 1985. During his stay with the band, they had hits with songs such as *Todo Amor Que Houver Nessa Vida* from the album *Barão Vermelho* (1982), which was “later also recorded by Gal Costa, Caetano Veloso and other singers”;<sup>204</sup> in the album *Barão Vermelho 2* (1983) the song *Pro Dia Nascer Feliz*, also recorded by Ney Matogrosso; their 1984 album *Maior Abandonado* was a success with the homonymous song. After Barão Vermelho’s performance at *Rock In Rio*, in January 1985, the band would not resist to disagreements and would split in July that year.<sup>205</sup>

Cazuza released his first solo album, *Cazuza*, in November 1985, with hits such as *Exagerado*, “emblematic of his romantic-poetic persona”, *Codinome Beija-flor*, and the polemic *Só As Mães São Felizes*. In 1987, when he was diagnosed with HIV-AIDS, he toured with his newly found romantic side in the album *Só Se For A Dois*, although the song which “exploded was the pop-rock *O Nosso Amor A Gente Inventou (Estória Romântica)*”.<sup>206</sup>

After a period in Boston’s New England Hospital, where Cazuza “spent a critical two months [...] undergoing AZT treatment”, he recorded his third solo album *Ideologia* at the beginning of 1988, which became one of his best-known and renowned albums. The cover of the album alone is a provocation beyond words, where the word ‘ideologia’ is written in letters which bring symbols such as the swastika,

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<sup>204</sup> See the section: “From garage to stage” in Cazuza’s official website <<http://www.cazuza.com.br>>

<sup>205</sup> See the section: “The rise of Barão Vermelho” <<http://www.cazuza.com.br>>

<sup>206</sup> See the section: “Finally alone (and free)” <<http://www.cazuza.com.br>>

David's cross, communist party, anarchy, currency and other symbols afloat. As Ezequiel Neves (1935-2010), Cazuza's producer, asks: "Can you think of anything more provocative and syncretic?"<sup>207</sup> The title of the song itself is a pre-announcement of what the listener is to expect. In *Ideologia*, Cazuza and Roberto Frejat<sup>208</sup> talk, in Cazuza's own words, about the generation of the mid-1980s:

[a] generation without ideology, compacted between the 60s and today. I was raised during the dictatorship, when you couldn't say this or that, when everything was forbidden. A much disunited generation. In the 60s, people united through their ideology. "I'm from the Left, are you from the Left? So we are friends." My generation was united by drugs: he is clean, he is addicted. Drugs are not an ideology, they're a personal choice. (Araújo, 1997:373)

Cazuza exposes here the need of a generation for finding that missing connection, a way of reaffirming themselves, as he does in *Ideologia*:

- 1 *Meu partido*  
My party
- 2 *É um coração partido*  
Is a broken heart
- 3 *E as ilusões*  
And the illusions
- 4 *Estão todas perdidas*  
Have been all lost
- 5 *Os meus sonhos*  
My dreams
- 6 *Foram todos vendidos*  
Were all sold
- 7 *Tão barato*  
So cheap
- 8 *Que eu nem acredito*  
That I can't believe
- 9 *Ah! eu nem acredito...*  
Ah! I can't believe
- 10 *Que aquele garoto*  
That that boy

<sup>207</sup> See the section: "Long Art, Brief Life" <<http://www.cazuza.com.br>>

<sup>208</sup> Roberto Frejat (b.1962) was Cazuza's long-life friend and music partner. Together they've written most of the songs of Barão Vermelho, and some of Cazuza's solo albums.

11 *Que ia mudar o mundo*  
     Who wanted to change the world  
 12 *Mudar o mundo*  
     Change the world  
 13 *Frequenta agora*  
     Now goes to  
 14 *As festas do “Grand Monde”*  
     The parties of the Grand Monde

The generation they are talking about is (un)partisan, disillusioned with the way the country was being led to the end of the 1980s, with a “world-record inflation of 1.782% per annum. [The country was] also a strike champion... [with] four thousand lock outs, involving 18.4 million workers... [and other] seven-hundred thousand bank employees holding the first general strike in the history of the country.” (do Carmo, 2000:157) Hence the reason for Cazusa to be broken-hearted and expressing it in a way which was as if his dreams (line 1 to 5), whichever they were, would never became true considering they had been ‘sold’ (lines 5 to 9). As a consequence of that disappointment, this ‘boy who wanted to change the world’ changes direction and joins forces with the conformed bourgeoisie of the ‘Grand Monde’ (lines 9 to 14).<sup>209</sup>

(Refrain I)  
 15 *Meus heróis*  
     My heroes  
 16 *Morreram de overdose*  
     Died of overdose  
 17 *Meus inimigos*  
     My enemies  
 18 *Estão no poder*  
     Are in power

Cazuza’s circumvention assumes a more personal side from lines 15 and 16, when he acknowledges that the drugs which took the ideology from his idols, also killed them,

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<sup>209</sup> Cazusa also criticises the ‘bourgeoisie’ in his last album *Burguesia* (1989) in its title-song (Cazuza, George Israel, Ezequiel Neves) by stating: “A burguesia fede/A burguesia quer ficar rica/Enquanto houver burguesia/Não vai haver poesia” [The bourgeoisie stinks/The bourgeoisie wants to become rich/Whilst there is bourgeoisie/There will be no poetry].

and that if that was not enough, he has to bear witness to his enemies being empowered (lines 17 and 18).

(Refrain II)  
19 *Ideologia!*  
Ideology!  
20 *Eu quero uma pra viver*  
I want one to live  
21 *Ideologia!*  
Ideology!  
22 *Eu quero uma pra viver*  
I want one to live

He then cries for the lost ideology of this precious generation, as he put it before (lines 19 to 22).

23 *O meu prazer*  
My pleasure  
24 *Agora é risco de vida*  
Is now a life threat  
25 *Meu sex and drugs*  
My sex and drugs  
26 *Não tem nenhum rock'n'roll*  
Doesn't have any rock'n'roll  
27 *Eu vou pagar*  
I'm going to pay  
28 *A conta do analista*  
The shrink's bill  
29 *Pra nunca mais*  
So that I never again  
30 *Ter que saber*  
Have to know  
31 *Quem eu sou*  
Who I am  
32 *Ah! saber quem eu sou*  
Ah! To know who I am

He touches a very delicate issue in any society until nowadays, HIV-AIDS (lines 23 and 24). He acknowledges the woes of his (and many people of his generation) life-style of unsafe sex and drug (ab)use as being dangerous or even deadly (lines 25 and 26), to an extent that one should try and become someone else in order to survive life in society (lines 27 to 32).

(Refrain III)  
 33 *Pois aquele garoto*  
     For that boy  
 34 *Que ia mudar o mundo*  
     Who was going to change the world  
 35 *Mudar o mundo*  
     To change the world  
 36 *Agora assiste a tudo*  
     Now watches to everything  
 37 *Em cima do muro*  
     On top of the fence  
 38 *Em cima do muro*  
     On top of the fence

Cazuza then ‘decides’ that he is not looking for this ideology anymore, nor joining the club of the rich and famous. He is more introspective, sullen, without the strength to fight against the system, deciding to stay ‘on top of the fence’, not taking sides (lines 33 to 38), almost as if in a psychological reaction to his physical condition due to the progression of the disease, and the series of treatments. But Cazuza was not defeated. Besides *Ideologia* this album presented precious songs such as *Um Trem Pras Estrelas* (the only partnership between Cazuza and Gilberto Gil),<sup>210</sup> and *Brasil* (by Cazuza, Nilo Romero, and George Israel), a declaration of love and loyalty to his country, the country of ‘vale tudo’ [anything goes].<sup>211</sup> According to Dapieve (2005:76), if there was a song “which was destined to transcend the album, to transcend life itself, that was *Brasil*.”

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<sup>210</sup> *Um Trem Pras Estrelas* is an observation of Rio de Janeiro from his flat’s window, with the beginning of the song painting a colourful picture of it: “São 7 horas da manhã/Vejo Cristo da janela.”  
<sup>211</sup> *Vale Tudo* was also the title of a soap opera presented between 1988 and 1989, and according to *Memória Globo*, in it “the writer discusses questions such as dishonesty, corruption and ethics”, right on the nerve of Cazuza’s song.  
 See: <<http://memoriaglobo.globo.com/Memoriaglobo/0,27723,GYN0-5273-224151,00.html>>

- 1 *Não me convidaram*  
Nobody invited me  
2 *Pra esta festa pobre*  
For this lousy party  
3 *Que os homens armaram*  
That the men put on  
4 *Pra me convencer*  
To convince me  
5 *A pagar sem ver*  
To pay before seeing  
6 *Toda essa droga*  
For this entire *droga*<sup>212</sup>  
7 *Que já vem malhada*  
Which was already slammed  
8 *Antes de eu nascer*  
Before I was born

From the beginning to the end, the song is a clear lament, a moan, a complaint about the situation of the country. From lines 5 to 8, it is clear that Cazuza is talking about the economical chaos of that period (*droga*), and acknowledging that it was the people, and not the perpetrators, who would have to pay the bill left by the decision-makers, the politicians, ‘the men’. The same men who organise the *panis et circenses* of this ‘lousy party’ (lines 2 and 3) to which he was not invited (line 1), possibly for being from an upper-class, not sharing the same ‘bread’ with the poor. It is almost as if the “narrator of the song (the average Brazilian) has to stay outside the walls of the party (the good life from which he is excluded) – which he is taught to crave for, to support, but will never have.” (McGowan and Pessanha, 1998:195)

- 9 *Não me ofereceram*  
Nobody offered me  
10 *Nem um cigarro*  
Not even a cigarette  
11 *Fiquei na porta*  
I was at the door  
12 *Estacionando os carros*  
Parking the cars

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<sup>212</sup> In Brazilian Portuguese *droga* refers to something useless or bad, which in English can be translated by *chaf*, for instance. But this word also has a more obvious meaning, and it could be literally translated as *drug*.

Lines 9 to 12 show his condition of an outsider, almost as a subaltern who only gets to drive those rich people's cars to the car park.

13 *Não me elegeram*  
Nobody elected me  
14 *Chefe de nada*  
Chief of anything  
15 *O meu cartão de crédito*  
My credit card  
16 *É uma navalha*  
Is a razor

Not holding a position in this 'scheme', with a sharp criticism in the verb 'to elect' (as if this election was a sort of fraud to elect those 'chiefs') (lines 13 and 14), he then sees himself resorting to violence and crime, where his money will come on the tip of the knife he is pointing towards the others (lines 15 and 16).

(Refrain)  
17 *Brasil!*  
Brazil!  
18 *Mostra tua cara*  
Show your face  
19 *Quero ver quem paga*  
I want to see who pays  
20 *Pra gente ficar assim*  
For us to be like this  
21 *Brasil!*  
Brazil!  
22 *Qual é o teu negócio?*  
What is your business?  
23 *O nome do teu sócio?*  
The name of your partner?  
24 *Confia em mim*  
Trust me

The last assertion (line 24) could be either an irony, a deceiving offer, as to grant the trust of the country for later to betray it. But it could also be a reassurance of the promise he makes, at the end of the song, to this 'unimportant' country of not betraying it (lines 49 to 53), not selling it out, like other people would and have done before. However, there is a condition for his loyalty: this country must show its



‘face’ (line 17 to 20), its partners (line 22 and 23), so that we know whom are we dealing with.

33 *Não me sortearam*  
Nobody raffled me  
34 *A garota do Fantástico*  
*Fantástico’s girl*  
35 *Não me subornaram*  
Nobody bribed me  
36 *Será que é o meu fim?*  
Is it me done for it?  
37 *Ver TV a cores*  
Watch colour TV  
38 *Na taba de um índio*  
In an Indian longhouse  
39 *Programada*  
Programmed  
40 *Prá só dizer “sim, sim”*  
To just say “yes, yes”

In a critical point of view, he deals with the sexist way women are treated in the country (lines 33 and 34), when he insinuates that a girl who appears in this TV Globo’s weekly programme, *Fantástico*, could be raffled, as a way of bribing him (line 35 and 36) for something he does not need to mention. The power of TV is further questioned when he connects it to the natives of the country as if even they were now being ‘brain-washed’ by this powerful *medium* of mass manipulation (lines 37 to 40).

49 *Grande pátria*  
Great country  
50 *Desimportante*  
Unimportant  
51 *Em nenhum instante*  
At no time  
52 *Eu vou te trair*  
I will betray you  
53 *Não, não vou te trair*  
No, I won’t betray you

54 *Confia em mim*  
Trust me  
55 *Brasil!!*  
Brazil!!

If *Brasil* ends with a declaration of love for his country, it is still, throughout the song-texts, a song which clearly attacks “deception and hypocrisy... [where] Cazuza sums up the injustices of his country.” (McGowan and Pessanha, 1998:195)

Even though Cazuza was a true rocker, he had naturally “drunk at the source of the live tradition of MPB (Brazilian Popular Music) to recreate, in a present-day and spontaneous Portuguese, full of slang, and in a markedly personal style, the typical poetry of rock.”<sup>213</sup> With all his anger and passion he was still to record in 1989, with his health very weakened by the disease, his last album *Burguesia*. Cazuza’s title-song brought “long lyrics attacking middle-class values”, and although it was playing quite successfully in the radios, “the album wasn’t a commercial success and was discreetly received by the critics”.<sup>214</sup> With the deterioration of Cazuza’s health at the end of 1989, even receiving alternative treatments he did not resist, and died on the 7<sup>th</sup> July 1990. The relevance of this musician in Brazilian music is undisputable: his grave in São João Batista cemetery, in Rio de Janeiro, can be found “close to other stars of Brazilian music like Carmen Miranda, Ary Barroso, Francisco Alves and Clara Nunes” (ibid.), some of them Cazuza’s own idols.<sup>215</sup>

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<sup>213</sup> See the section: “Living life in art” in Cazuza’s website <<http://www.cazuza.com.br>>

<sup>214</sup> See the section: “Long Art, Brief Life” in Cazuza’s website <<http://www.cazuza.com.br>>

<sup>215</sup> Immediately after his death, Cazuza’s mother founded the NGO Sociedade Viva Cazuza with the mission of providing “assistance to needy children infected with the Aids virus, assist adult patients under Rio’s municipal care system, disseminate scientific information about HIV/Aids, as well as [clarifying doubts] to health professionals or layman.” See the section: “Our Mission” in Viva Cazuza’s website <<http://www.vivacazuza.org.br>>

Although not sharing the same idols and having quite dissimilar personalities, Cazuza would share some strong common elements with another artist of his time: Renato Russo. They were both homosexuals, they both died of HIV-AIDS (made public or not), and they were both considered 'poets of a generation', of the 1980s, with short-lived and prolific careers, singing about the issues which surrounded them, and which united the two artists into the same category of idols of a generation. But who was this man, Renato Manfredini Jr.?

## Renato Russo, A Man Ahead of His Time?

Renato Manfredini Jr, born on the 27<sup>th</sup> March 1960<sup>216</sup> in Rio de Janeiro, would become, in the very near future, an idol, and one of the most famous songwriters, poets, musicians, singers, and performers of his time, and for generations to come.

Renato Russo, as he was known as an artist, was raised as a middle-class child for whom the opportunity of living abroad – which widened his musical (product of his parents' eclectic taste) and personal horizons – was given since a very early age, as he had studied arts and learnt the English language.

Russo, who received the rudiments of piano when he was five, was an excellent student and had fond memories of his schooling in Rio de Janeiro, even paying tribute to some of his teachers in some songs: “A professora Adélia,/a tia Edilamar/E a tia Esperança” [And teacher Adélia,/ auntie Edilamar/and auntie Esperança], in the song *O Descobrimento do Brasil* [The Discovery of Brazil] (1994). Still at school, he never had a drive for sports.<sup>217</sup> His knowledge of piano even made him, for a while, wanting to become a pianist, influenced by the pop music of the pianist Billy Joel, and the keyboard player Keith Emerson, followed by progressive rock and classical music, in a blend of music styles and genres which would widely influence his future career. (Dapieve, 2006:20-26)

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<sup>216</sup> Russo was born less than a month before the capital of the country, Brasília, was inaugurated (21<sup>st</sup> April 1960). The 21<sup>st</sup> April is also a national public holiday which commemorates an early movement, in the 18<sup>th</sup> Century, for Brazilian independence, headed by Tiradentes, a national hero since the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

<sup>217</sup> As an adult Russo forewarned his friends, that The Smiths' Stephen Morrissey could not be a 'depressed' writer after finding that the singer played basketball. (Dapieve, 2006:20-26)

His passion for Rock'n'Roll would be nurtured through the music of The Beatles, the first band the young Manfredini had the chance to put his hands on, through LPs bought when the family was still living in Rio de Janeiro. Following the Rock'n'Roll saga of the 'boys from Liverpool', he got in contact with the work of Elvis Presley and then Bob Dylan. His early assimilation of his idols would become so evident during his career that the journalist José Emilio Rondeau would assert "that only someone blind or deaf would have not found at first sight that Renato was John Lennon, Bob Dylan, Elvis Presley, Paul McCartney... all of them together, in a country so needy of a national equivalent." (Dapieve, 2006:74)

His father, also Renato Manfredini, economist at Banco do Brasil, moved the family to Forest Hill, in the district of Queens in New York when he was taking a post-graduate course in 1967. The experience of living in the USA was very positive in the formation of both children, Russo and Carmen.<sup>218</sup> When the family returned to Rio de Janeiro in 1969, Russo was immediately enrolled as a student in the language school Cultura Inglesa,<sup>219</sup> where he further developed his excellent English. Russo followed his mother, Maria do Carmo, when he started his career as an English language teacher after his family moved to Brasília in 1973. It would be a young, on the verge of turning 18, Renato Manfredini Jr., the English teacher for the Brasília branch of the Cultura Inglesa, who would, in 1978, make the speech welcoming

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<sup>218</sup> Carmen Teresa, Russo's two years younger sister.

<sup>219</sup> Cultura Inglesa, or English Culture, was, and still is, one of the only chains of language schools in Brazil that teaches British English whilst the great majority of the other uncountable schools teach American English. This fact is to be taken into consideration as one of the connections Russo established with the United Kingdom, and which would influence him and his work.

Charles Prince of Wales during his official visit to the country's capital and to the school. (Dapieve, 2006:24)

His enthusiasm for English language would make it easier for another passion to develop, Rock'n'Roll, the one that would influence his personal and professional life. In many of his song-texts we find references to English language or its particular terminologies. In his diaries, which were kept as a regular routine in his life until very near his death, most of the entries were made in English, probably because he felt more comfortable writing about private matters in a foreign language. As a follow up solo career on the tail of the band's success, Russo would record songs, and even an entire album, *The Stonewall Celebration Concert* in 1994, in English.

In 1975, for a year and a half, when he was between the age of 15 and 17, Russo could not walk due to a disease on his left femur. During this period, he acquired an avid habit of reading, which became the reason he had the opportunity to make literature and poetry a strong part of his life. He started devouring the works of writers such as Shakespeare, Allen Ginsberg, Fernando Pessoa, Adélia Prado, Carlos Drummond de Andrade, and also thinkers and philosophers like Friedrich Nietzsche, Blaise Pascal and Bertrand Russell. These authors gave him great food for thought, and topics for further debate and discussion. Later, Russo would become an avid reader and fan of the biographies of "stars and rock groups and cinema artists" (Dapieve, 2006:27), and of everything related to cinema, mainly the great French film directors like François Truffaut and Jean-Luc Godard, and the Swedish Ingmar Bergman. Godard would later even appear as the artistic preference of one of

Russo's most famous characters in *Eduardo e Mônica*.<sup>220</sup> During this period Russo would not stop studying, and the school (Colégio Marista de Brasília)<sup>221</sup> where he was studying sent his exams to his house, so much did they trust his good conduct as a student. Also during this period of forced isolation, Russo created an imaginary band called *42<sup>nd</sup> Street Band*<sup>222</sup> led by Eric Russell, Russo himself.<sup>223</sup> He wrote Russell's biography, thought of the songs, and even drafted covers for his albums, which would pretty much become a rehearsal for what the future was about to bring into his own life. (Dapieve, 2006:29) In 1977, already cured and rejoining society, Russo entered the Centro Universitário de Brasília, where he found out about the Punk movement. (Dapieve, 2006:31) Although Russo's passion for Rock'n'Roll started with The Beatles, Joni Mitchell, The Beach Boys, Jefferson Airplane, and Bob Dylan albums – passing by an eventual Leonard Cohen – it ultimately progressed into heavier and noisier music such as Led Zeppelin, which would become an entry door for his love for the Sex Pistols. Because of his 'love affair'

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<sup>220</sup> *Eduardo e Mônica* is one of Russo's most well-known songs, and it tells us about these two completely different characters who meet up and end up happily ever after having kids and enjoying a family life together besides their differences; which holds strong resemblances to the Beatles's story-telling song *Ob-La-Di, Ob-La-Da*.

<sup>221</sup> The *Maristas* originated in France at the beginning of the nineteenth century and arrived in Brazil at the beginning of the twentieth century. The Brasília branch was opened in 1962, and still operates. Its philosophy is centred around the principles of Christianity, and its teaching is organised towards a citizenship that is expected to be ethical, conscious, and critical, according to the principals established by the institution directives. See: <<http://www.marista.org.br>>

<sup>222</sup> The name *42<sup>nd</sup> Street Band*, could be a homage to either/both *42<sup>nd</sup> Street* (dir. Lloyd Bacon, 1933), about a Broadway show; or to Billy Joel's 1978 album *52<sup>nd</sup> Street*. Interestingly they are also names of nightclubs, in Manchester (UK) and Manhattan (USA), respectively

<sup>223</sup> According to Russo (Assad, 2000:227-8), he created his famous pseudonym mirrored by the large amount of Fernando Pessoa's own "collection" of them. At first, his fictional *persona* Eric Russell was based on Bertrand Russell's surname (the English philosopher, who wrote *History of Western Philosophy* in 1946, one of Russo's favourite books). Then he was inspired by the French philosopher Jean-Jacques Rousseau, and then by Henri Rousseau (the French Post-Impressionist painter). Another reason was that during the first rehearsals of *Legião Urbana* they would go to the campus of the University of Brasília, and because people were always talking about how bad the Communist were they would use the expression 'tá russo' ("it's Russian", in English), meaning that a situation was difficult to bear..

with that band, he met in 1978 the guitar player André Pretorius (1961-1987) at the bar *Taverna*, in Brasília, “a meeting point for the few Punks” in the city. From that musical friendship, and the addition of Antônio Felipe Villar de Lemos, or Fê Lemos (b.1962) and his drums, Russo would form his first band, the BPunk Aborto Elétrico.<sup>224</sup>

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<sup>224</sup> BPunk here is my playing with Dapieve’s BRock.



## Aborto Elétrico, proving that there was Punk in Brazil

The beginning of the 1980s, with all its changes, would be a propitious time for the emergence of a seminal Punk project in Brazil. Although the main roots of it were in São Paulo, we are interested in the more specific case of Brasília with Aborto Elétrico, AE, and its British roots.<sup>225</sup>

The mid-1970s brought Punk Rock to the world. Better known or popularised by the abbreviated term Punk,<sup>226</sup> it followed earlier trends and themes which came from the United States with bands such as The Ramones,<sup>227</sup> and the protoPunk The Stooges (Michigan), with Iggy Pop (James Osterburg) as lead singer; MC5 (Detroit); Velvet

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<sup>225</sup> According to Russo, Aborto Elétrico “is a reference to the baton used by the police of the Federal District [Brasília], that, when used for dissolving a manifestation [at the university] in 1968, induced a young pregnant girl to miscarrying.” (Dapieve, 2006:45)

<sup>226</sup> Regarding this thesis, we want to use *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Music* definition of punk as in “an admirer or player of a loud, fast-moving, and aggressive form of rock music popular in the late 1970s, typically characterized by coloured spiked hair and clothing decorated with safety pins or zips; also, this form of music. The terms punkrock and punk rock are also used. The word is recorded from... the early 20th century in the sense ‘a worthless person’; it may also be related to archaic punk ‘prostitute’ and spunk, ‘courage’. See: <<http://www.oxfordreference.com/views/ENTRY.html?entry=t214.e5776&srn=2&ssid=625356317#FIRSTHIT>>

<sup>227</sup> The Ramones were an American band formed in New York in 1974, considered the first punk band ever, with their “sparse, intense, three-minute buzzsaw blast dominated by... strummed, distorted guitar, bass, and drums. This became the musical basis for the Sex Pistols.” (Friedlander, 2006:246) One of their most famous songs is Blitzkrieg Bop. Named after the German tactic blitzkrieg in WWII, it means ‘lightning war’, or quick war. There are different theories about the meaning of the ambiguous song-text, which is quite rare for the way the Ramones wrote, with very obvious and explicit criticism. The most common theory is that it does not mean much, and that it is only about cheering up their fans, and creating a similar chanting to that of The Bay City Rollers in *S-A-T-U-R-D-A-Y, Night*. This chanting became one of the most famous in the world, mostly at sports events, their “Hey, ho, let’s go”.

Underground (New York)<sup>228</sup> with lead singer Lou Reed (Louis Firbank); and David Bowie (David Robert Jones), amongst others.

In Great Britain, the genre was a direct reaction to the country's worst economic crisis since the Second World War, with extensive unemployment, strikes and violence sweeping the nation. The underprivileged British youth of the mid-1970s found themselves surrounded by an extensive lack of work and study opportunities, and became extremely rebellious and disillusioned towards a monarchical government which provided them with a fairly efficient welfare system (the dole), yet a "dead-end education system [with] no future, and so they struck back" (Friedlander, 2006:246), as a reflection of their surroundings. Its music, misconstrued, scandalous and almost abusive, comprised of heterogeneous components and tendencies, became a perfect genre for those nationals who were "trashing British sensibilities with gobs of musical distortion, shocking appearance, and spewed invective" (Friedlander, 2006:244); and also all those around the world who wanted to confront and challenge the system. Using strong sounds (or noises) and symbols, the Punk bands were transforming the rock scene with their rage and disregard for the 'industrial' rock of the 1960s and 1970s, rejecting iconic (and commercial) figures such as Elvis, the Beatles and the Rolling Stones, and their lucrative contracts and shows that would fill big stadiums, opting instead to go into a more intimate, alternative, performance model, dropping well-known record labels and founding new, smaller and unknown ones in an attempt to avoid "the big-

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<sup>228</sup> One of Velvet Underground's most famous songs is Heroin, which is, as in many other of their songs, a collection of "personal narratives of heroin addiction, ghetto drug connections, and sexual perversity". (Friedlander, 2006:245)

business sales and promotions”. (ibid.:253) One of the best known examples was the British band Sex Pistols.

The Sex Pistols was firstly formed in the summer of 1975 through the enterprise of the businessman Malcolm McLaren, and was formed by vocalist Johnny Rotten,<sup>229</sup> guitarist Steve Jones, drummer Paul Cook, and bassist Glen Matlock, who was substituted by Sid Vicious in early 1977.<sup>230</sup> According to Friedlander (2006:247), the first name of the band was The Strand or The Swankers (depending on where they performed before 1975), still without Lydon, who was invited in the summer 1975 to audition for lead vocal, after McLaren saw him in his co-owned shop, Sex, and got completely euphoric about Lydon’s style wearing a “sadistically mutilated Pink Floyd t-shirt with the word HATE scribbled in a biro trembling with furious loathing above the Dodo’s moniker”. (Friedlander, 2006:247)

For McLaren, Lydon’s clothes and attitude were the perfect impersonation of Punk, as described by a fan in Burchill and Parsons’s *The Boy Looked at Johnny*:

Their clothes were elaborately contrived to make the wearer appear as terrifyingly repugnant as possible, alluding to anything that would induce immediate outrage in the eye of the beholder... Hair shorn close to the skull and dyed any color so long it didn’t look natural, spiked up with Vaseline; noses, ears, cheeks, lips, and other extremities pierced with a plethora of safety pins, chains and dangling insignia; ripped and torn jumble sale shirts, strangled with a thin tie and mangled with predictable graffiti of songs titles, perversions or Social Observations; black leather wrist bands and dog collars studded with silver spikes sometimes with leashes attached. (Friedlander, 2006:244)

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<sup>229</sup> The name Johnny Rotten, adopted by John (Joseph) Lydon, was given by Sex Pistol’s guitarist Steve Jones, allegedly because of his bad (green) teeth. (Perry, 2007)

<sup>230</sup> Sid Vicious, or John Beverly, died, aged 21, of heroin overdose after celebrations of his release on bail for charges on the murder of his then girlfriend, Nancy Spungen in 1978. See: <<http://www.sexpistolsofficial.com/index.php?module=biography>>

This attitude of 'I-couldn't-care-less' thrown by Lydon was then perpetuated by the Sex Pistols, and other Punk bands that followed them, in order to demonstrate a disdain for the social and cultural standards of the time, and started making a garage DIY (do it yourself) Rock'n'Roll. When one listens to the early recordings of the Sex Pistols the first thought that comes to one's mind is that they proved that no one needed to know how to play an instrument in order to be in a band, as their music, as much as any Punk band's, was regarded as:

... a heterogeneous style, comprising of a complex mélange of ingredients and orientations, spread across a spectrum of artists. The music was generally driven by a frantic [...] pulse carried by the entire ensemble. Words were spewed forth by vocalists unconstrained by previous notions of pitch or melody. The majority of lyrics reflected feelings toward a disintegrated and corrupt society and the plight of subcultural compatriots. The music and lyrics were imbedded in a confrontational stance that reflected varying degrees of righteous anger, performance technique, avant-garde artistic exploration of shock value, and intent to bypass the usual music-production institutions. (Friedlander, 2006:245)

In the summer of 1976, other Punk bands were active and performing in England, and some of those were The Damned,<sup>231</sup> The Clash,<sup>232</sup> The Vibrators, The Buzzcocks, Joy Division, and The Stranglers. In their only studio album, *Never Mind the Bollocks, Here's the Sex Pistols* in 1977,<sup>233</sup> and its famous, and infamous, *God Save The Queen*, the Sex Pistols showed the world the Punk ideal of 'no future' in a

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<sup>231</sup> The Damned was the first British punk band to record an album, in 1976. (Friedlander, 2006:248)

<sup>232</sup> The Clash was an English punk band formed in 1976, also made famous for their song *Should I Stay or Should I Go* released in 1982. A more retro version of punk, it was written as response to the struggle of the relationship between Mick Jones (lead guitar) and Meat Loaf singer Ellen Foley. See:<[http://londonsburning.org/art\\_nme\\_03\\_16\\_91.html](http://londonsburning.org/art_nme_03_16_91.html)>

<sup>233</sup> A joking reference to the band with a 'similar' name, The Buzzcocks, the release of the album coincided with Queen Elizabeth's Silver Jubilee in February 1977, and became album number 2 in the British record charts in October of the same year.

very outspoken and clear way, with a song-text which plays with the title of the British official anthem, and mocks it with such irony and disdain (in loud music):

God save the queen  
Her fascist regime  
It made you a moron  
A potential H bomb

God save the queen  
She ain't no human being  
There is no future  
In England's dreaming

...  
God save the queen  
We mean it man  
There is no future  
In England's dreaming

No future for you  
No future for me  
No future no future for you

Released around the time of Queen Elizabeth's Jubilee in 1977, according to Paul Cook "it wasn't written specifically for the Queen's Jubilee. We weren't aware of it at the time. It wasn't a contrived effort to go out and shock everyone." (Julien Temple, 2000)<sup>234</sup> In Johnny Rotten's words, "You don't write a song like 'God Save The Queen' because you hate the English race. You write a song like that because you love them, and you're fed up of seeing them mistreated." (Julien Temple, 2000) Their sole intention was to draw attention to the situation of the English working class and their struggle, whilst showing a strong resentment towards the institution represented by the monarchy. As a succession of actions, on 7<sup>th</sup> June 1977, the day of the Jubilee celebrations, the band tried to play the song from a boat on the river Thames, just outside Westminster, and when they docked people (including

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<sup>234</sup> See also: <<http://www.johnnydon.com/press/pistols.html>>

members of the band) were arrested because of a row between one guest and a cameraman. (Julien Temple, 2000)

Controversy was always the word connected to Punk – and Punk was the perfect style to be adopted by a small group of young friends from Brasília who shared fanzines and albums, the same musical taste, feelings and ideas about the country. The *Turma da Colina*<sup>235</sup> (Gang from Brasília, or the Big Four)<sup>236</sup> as they became known, was a group of well-educated, travelled and wealthy adolescents who shared a strong, even urgent, interest in music, and who had an urge to write song-texts which carried unconformist thoughts of Punk, although having nothing in common with the working-class background of most Punk artists in the UK. As we can see from their background, amongst these musicians were the sons of military officers, Renato *Negrete* Rocha and Herbert Vianna; and the sons of professors, Carlos Augusto *Gutje* Woorthmann, Felipe *Fê* and Flávio Lemos, and André and Bernardo Mueller. The brothers Felipe *Bi* and Pedro Ribeiro, Afonso *Ico* Ouro Preto and Fernando *Dinho* Ouro Preto, and Eduardo *Dado* Villa-Lobos were “*itamaratecas*”.<sup>237</sup> André Pretorius and Philipe Seabra were sons of diplomats, and Renato Manfredini Jr. was the son of an economist at Banco do Brasil.

This exchange of material and ideas was made possible through the transatlantic ‘vai-e-vem’, or exchange of culture, arts, and political thoughts mostly promoted by

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<sup>235</sup> Colina is a neighbourhood of Brasília where all these teenage friends used to meet to play their instruments, and music; and share news and material from abroad.

<sup>236</sup> The four main bands to come from Brasília in the 1980s: Paralamas do Sucesso, Legião Urbana, Plebe Rude and Capital Inicial.

<sup>237</sup> Calling them *itamaratecas* was a way of referring to their parents’ diplomatic background, as *Itamaraty Palace* is where the Ministry for Foreign Relations is located, and where all foreign affairs are dealt with.

André Mueller, the group's guru, who lived in Sheffield (one of the hubs of Punk rock in the UK, along with Manchester and London) for two years at the end of the 1970s, and would send cassettes of Punk artists to his brother Bernardo in Brasília, who was studying at the Escola Americana [American School].

At the end of the 1970s, as much as nowadays, Brasília was thriving with these young sons and daughters of officers, professors and diplomats. Life as a rich 'kid' in Brasília could be extremely boring for those left behind when most politicians, and their families, fled the capital of the country to their estates of origin during weekends and extended holidays, and these 'kids' had to find an entertainment alternative, a way of releasing their tension and boredom: that was through Rock'n'Roll.

In November 1982, the Punk movement in São Paulo organised, at SESC-Pompéia,<sup>238</sup> the 1<sup>st</sup> Punk Festival entitled *O Começo do Fim do Mundo* [The Beginning of the End of the World], which agreed with the ideals of 'no future' inspired by British Punk. There people could see national bands playing, watch videos of their English predecessors, and appreciate the release of a book which tried to explain the movement, *O Que É Punk* [What Is Punk], by Antônio Bivar. This festival was so successful that, in March 1983, *Circo Voador* organised the 1<sup>st</sup> Punk Night in Rio de Janeiro, which had the participation of two sympathising bands: Kid

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<sup>238</sup> SESC, or Social Service of Commerce, had "innovated by introducing new models of cultural action and emphasized, in the 1980s, education as a pretext for social transformation. The substantiation of this purpose was done by an intense action in the cultural field and in its different manifestations, addressed to the whole public, to many age brackets and social layers." See: <[http://www.sescsp.org.br/sesc/quem\\_somos/index.cfm?lg=ing&forget=14](http://www.sescsp.org.br/sesc/quem_somos/index.cfm?lg=ing&forget=14)>

Abelha & Os Abóboras Selvagens, and Os Paralamas do Sucesso, who were following yet another vein of rock, ska.<sup>239</sup> (Dapieve, 2005:27-8)

The Punk anti-establishment's<sup>240</sup> questioning and argumentation was, according to Dapieve, still a 'subversive idea' even in the period of a weakening military dictatorship which was facing a slow process of political democratisation initiated by the military President Ernesto Geisel, at the end of the 1970s. If it was to survive and multiply, BRock urgently "needed the pure air of democracy, as rock cannot survive where there is censorship". (Dapieve, 2006:36) This much needed fresh air would blow its way from Brasília to the rest of the country, within a few years, through the re-democratisation of the country in 1985.

One of the reasons why the Punk movement attracted so many followers was its way of inciting their audiences to violence and rage against any idea of conformity to the system, through its song-texts and also their unique form of dance. As Friedlander acknowledges,

with working-class macho ethos, audience members launched themselves onto the dance floor, stopping every four to five minutes for a thirty-second punch-out with fellow punkers. Others practiced the pogo, a dance introduced by Rotten's mate John Beverly (soon to change his name to Sid Vicious) at a Manchester Free Trade Hall gig in July 1976. Dancers resembled a mass of sweaty pogo sticks, bouncing and bashing one another with sinister delight. In this turbulent world of epithet and physicality, band and audience cemented their relationship as members of the same community. (Friedlander, 2006:246)

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<sup>239</sup> Although ska is traditionally a Jamaican creation, we could relate the Brazilian version to the also called ska-punk, "a blending [of] ska with hardcore punk and hard rock for a concoction labelled ska-core." (Augustyn, 2010:192).

<sup>240</sup> Which fought for the power to be placed into people's hands, were the sons and daughters of UK's working-class, and also against the British establishment and the glamour surrounding the Queen and the rock stars.



Vicious's 'pogo' was taken to Brazil, and had a strong influence on Renato Russo's performance style once on stage. The frenetic and also unarticulated way of moving his body was always a trademark of Renato Russo. The pogo would not be the only association Russo had with Vicious; he also admired the bass player in him. When Vicious died in 1979 Russo wrote a letter to the *Melody Maker*<sup>241</sup> using "his pseudonym from 42<sup>nd</sup> Street Band, Eric Russell". (Dapieve, 2006:47) In the published letter Russo talked about the pain he felt by the gap left by Vicious's disappearance. Russo would later pay homage to Vicious in Aborto Elétrico's song *Anjos Mortos*. (ibid.)

In January 1980, in the best Punk way, with Pretorius bleeding from playing his guitar too hard, Aborto Elétrico performed for the first time in the bar Só Cana, in Brasília (Dapieve, 2006:46), and "although Aborto Elétrico never recorded, much of its repertoire was registered". (Dapieve, 2005:130) These songs are: *Geração Coca-Cola*, *Que País é Este*, *Conexão Amazônica*, *Fátima*, *Música Urbana*, *Veraneio Vascaína*, and *Tédio*. (ibid.) *Tédio* was a "criticism to intellectualised conversations, hence, to MPB, which distanced itself from the public due to its recurrent use of metaphors, practically imposed by the censorship of the military regime." (Dapieve, 2005:52) Throughout their short-lived career, they would count on the presence of Dado Villa-Lobos and Marcelo Bonfá in the audience, future partners of Russo in another (later) band. Because of disagreements between Russo and Lemos, Aborto

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<sup>241</sup> *Melody Maker* (MM) was a British music magazine, founded in the late-1920s, which in 1999 merged with *New Music Express* (NME). See: <<http://www.nme.com/magazine>>

Elétrico would be dismantled by Russo's withdrawal between 1981 and 1982. (Dapieve, 2005:45)

After the experience acquired from the failure of Aborto Elétrico, Russo dreamt of another band. Arriving in the music scene during Brazil's opening up towards democracy, *Legião Urbana* [Urban Legion] had plenty to sing about because of the crisis within the actual change in the regime and the legacy of corruption, debt, political and social challenges from the dictatorship: these were the problems the nation was facing and would have to face with its rebirth through democracy.

The Punk music of the Sex Pistols was made to shock, to provoke, to irritate, to break the social rules and to question the status quo surrounding the artists that followed the movement. In the same way, Legião Urbana's initial Punk-rock would contest and unmask that sort of royal power imposed by the dictatorship and perpetuated within the recently 'conquered' democracy. This urge for complaint, defending the indefensible, shouting to be heard, to 'give voice' to those who would not dare talk was not new. Of course, it was present in many movements prior to Punk, but in the 1980s this would be solidified by more tolerance in social discourse (the end of censorship) and certain freedoms brought by the initial stages of the democratisation period in Brazil.

## Chapter 7 - The Case of the Legion

Certainly Brazil's most known 'legion', one of the most successful BRock bands, with more releases in the 1990s, and more sales in the 1980s than any other bands, *Legião Urbana* [Urban Legion], was created from the ambitions of Renato Russo. Legião Urbana (LU) (Dapieve, 2005:199), considered by many as one of the best BRock bands ever, appears twice in the Rolling Stone Brazil Magazine Hit Parades list of best Brazilian records<sup>242</sup> – October 2007 –, with their albums *Dois* [Two] (1986) in the 21<sup>st</sup> position, and *Legião Urbana* (1985) in the 40<sup>th</sup>. The band had more than 12 million albums sold until 2000, which is a record for a country where, according to Dapieve, “only bad things – or at least easy – sell well” (Dapieve, 2006:164), a country which knows itself as by “not having space for elaborate lyrics and melodies, cultured references, political position, feelings, ethics”. (ibid.) However, Renato Russo's career, both solo and as leader of LU, proved the “idea that the Brazilian is pleased to be dumb or superficial” to be wrong. (ibid:170)

As a definite and unquestionable proof of LU's legacy, at the end of 2010, EMI Music in Brazil, which sees the band “as the Brazilian Beatles”, re-launched all eight studio albums of the band (from 1984 to 1996) in CD and vinyl, and LU still keep the best-selling position of all times in the company even since their dissolution with Renato Russo's death in 1996. (Lima, 2010) But what (and who) was (and is) this 'legion'?

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<sup>242</sup> For the whole list of albums, see: <<http://www.rollingstone.com.br/edicoes/13/textos/os-100-maiores-discos-da-musica-brasileira/>>

After the ‘termination’ of Aborto Elétrico, Russo would live a period of discontent and introspection. Playing solo, with his acoustic guitar in a Bob Dylan style, Russo gave himself the byname, *Trovador Solitário*, or Lonely Troubadour, a perfect label for his “self-imposed exile”. (Dapieve, 2006:60) During this period, he had more space out of a group in order to develop and write, taking “a qualitative leap” in his career as a songwriter. According to Arthur Dapieve, Russo was “respect[ed]... [for being] the head of the first Punk band of Brasília, direct or indirect matrix of the others.” (Dapieve, 2006:54) One of the successes of LU’s renowned album *Dois* (1986),<sup>243</sup> *Eduardo e Mônica*, is from this period, which was described as “pure Dylan... but also pure Russo, a little history with which many people could identify”. (ibid.:59)

At a certain point in that year of 1982, Russo decided to form another band and invited Marcelo Bonfá (b.1965)<sup>244</sup> to join him. In September 1982, LU presented for the first time with its original formation: Bonfá, Russo, Paraná, and Paulista.<sup>245</sup> And thus *Legião Urbana*, an urban legion from Brasília, was born. In the following year the electric guitar player Dado Villa-Lobos (b.1965) joined the band. Bass player Renato Rocha (b.1961) followed in 1984,<sup>246</sup> the same year the band recorded their first album, *Legião Urbana*, released in January 1985. (Dapieve, 2006:182-3)

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<sup>243</sup> The year of 1986 was marked by the release of Plano Cruzado, by President José Sarney. The plan was an attempt to fight an inflation of around 233% in Brazil. One of the advantages of the Plan for the music scene in the country was the possibility of lower layers of society (around 20 million people) to be in a more comfortable situation, and as such to have unprecedented economic power to invest more money in superfluous goods, such as records, for instance. (Dapieve, 2005:201)

<sup>244</sup> Marcelo Bonfá was, at the time, the drummer of a band called *Metralhaz*.

<sup>245</sup> Paulo Paulista played keyboards and Eduardo Paraná the electric guitar.

<sup>246</sup> Renato Rocha, bass, was invited to join LU after Russo attempted suicide, cutting his wrists.

Following the sense of ‘no future’ of Punk, Russo questions, in many songs from almost all of LU’s albums, the prospects of Brazil before and after the reestablishment of democracy. But in none of them this questioning is considered so Messianic as in their first album, *Legião Urbana*, which starts and finishes with songs exploring the uncertain future of the country and of its citizens, particularly of the new generation, whilst criticising its past and its ‘mistakes’.

Nevertheless, when *Legião Urbana* (the ‘Punkiest’ album of the band) was released, Punk music was already a faint memory in the minds of those who had got to know it. The album’s first song, *Será*,<sup>247</sup> at first sounds like a genuine Punk-rock tune, with its arrogant and authoritarian beat, although its song-texts are imbedded with such romanticism<sup>248</sup> that suggests a purposeful use of ambiguity, present in many other song-texts, in order to give these songs a double meaning and reach a wider audience.

Russo made of his career (and his life, for that matter) some sort of a crusade of giving voice to (and speaking for) his generation, but in the song *Baader-Meinhof Blues*,<sup>249</sup> “I’m fed up of feeling empty”, Russo writes, making a point about the collective emptiness and lack of perspective felt by those bored youngsters living in Brasília, and possibly other corners of the country, surrounded by corruption and the

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<sup>247</sup> *Será* can be considered a recurrent question, in contraposition to the statement “what will be will be”, in Brazilian music when taking into account that Chico Buarque de Hollanda asks it repeatedly in his 1976 song *O Que Será*.

<sup>248</sup> Making it possible for female singer Simone – who also recorded *O Que Será*, as the main song of the film *Dona Flor and Her Two Husbands*’s soundtrack, directed by Bruno Barreto – to record it with a melodramatic basis for a Rede Globo Christmas Special in 1991, amidst extremely soft arrangements.

<sup>249</sup> As a reference to the famous terrorist organisation promoting kidnappings and bombings against capitalist structures at the end of the 1960s and 1970s in Germany.

consequences of the economic crisis endured throughout the 1970s. In just a few words in the song *Química*, we are also taken by his non-conformism. Russo sounds like someone to whom the contesting spirit of Punk was extremely suitable, as he also saw the ‘next generation’, the ones that were listening to his music, as passive and accommodated. He sees those who were taking the exam as a tribe within “our tropical Belsen”,<sup>250</sup> where Capitalism rules and one has to hold some ‘qualities’ in order to conform to the bourgeois lifestyle. That person then becomes a dignified member of society, if he can afford

- 17 *Ter carro do ano, TV a cores, pagar imposto, ter pistolão*  
 To have the last model of cars, colour TV, pay taxes, to have a  
 mole
- 18 *Ter filho na escola, férias na Europa, conta bancária, compra feijão*  
 To have kids at school, vacations in Europe, bank account, to buy  
 beans
- 19 *Ser responsável, cristão convicto, cidadão modelo, burguês padrão*  
 To be responsible, staunch Christian, model citizen, standard  
 bourgeois
- 20 *Você tem que passar no vestibular*  
 You have to pass the *vestibular*<sup>251</sup>

He relates the pressure for attaining higher education not to a need for personal improvement, but, instead, to a passive role in order to fit in a desired model, to become just another Brazilian ‘brick in the wall’.

The criticism against the passiveness of society in general is stressed here<sup>252</sup> through Russo’s always dry and honest style. This is also made clear in *Baader-Meinhof Blues*, when he states that “Violence is so fascinating/And our lives are so ordinary”,

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<sup>250</sup> The expression ‘tropical Belsen’ can be considered an ironic allusion to the Nazi concentration camp, near Celle in Lower Saxony, Germany, through the word tropical annexed to it.

<sup>251</sup> Vestibular is the national exam for access to the University, but mostly related to public/federal institutions, similar to the A Levels in the United Kingdom.

<sup>252</sup> Russo includes himself in the song through the use of the third person plural at the beginning. The subject swaps back and forth to the first person observer and narrator throughout the song-text.

because for him most people had, and were still, turning a blind eye to the violence perpetrated by the army (and its “arm” in touch with the people, the police), as well as the increasing urban violence in most of the big cities in the country. This fact leads to his insight in 1995 that:

the new generation is less aggressive. It is a more passive generation. It is used to the violence... and it is not like my generation, which deals with the instinct of death, is crazier, exhibitionist, bursting with ups and downs. This new generation is more like ‘relax, let’s see what happens’. (Assad, 2000:111)

The theme of violence and disregard for the future would come back in LU’s second album *Dois*,<sup>253</sup> and its strong depiction of the police forces and society in the song *Música Urbana II* [Urban Music II]:

1 *Os PM’s armados e as tropas de choque vomitam música urbana*  
The military police and the shock police throw up urban music  
2 *E nas escolas as crianças aprendem a repetir a música urbana*  
And in the schools children learn to repeat the urban music  
  
3 *E a matilha de crianças sujas no meio da rua*  
And the pack of children in the middle of the road  
4 *Música urbana*  
Urban Music

Note here the contrasting ideas between two national portraits of children, the next generation, when in line 2 Russo refers to these children in the schools being brainwashed by the repetition of a militaristic message,<sup>254</sup> whilst another group of children, a gang of the streets, become, like urban music, part of our urban lives, not shocking or bothering us anymore.

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<sup>253</sup> Produced immediately after the release of their first album *Legião Urbana* in December 1985, and released in 1986.

<sup>254</sup> As if it echoes the nationalist teaching of OSPB and EMC seen in Chapter 5 in this thesis.

On a large scale, the extensive reading and later the disease, added to the fact that living in Brasília strongly influenced the political mind of Russo, which leads us to find Russo contradicting his own writings in relation to his taste for, or involvement with, politics:

No, I don't like politics. The most I can do is to get a song from the trunk, a song from ten years ago, and sing it and complain. What am I going to do? Become a politician; become a deputy, to be massacred by the roller of Centrão?<sup>255</sup> But I don't understand these things; I don't like to talk about these things. We talk about this because it directly affects our private lives. What I know is that, suddenly, Bonfá comes to me and says that his rent went from 8 thousand to 35 thousand.<sup>256</sup> What I know is what I see on TV, the guys wrestling in the National Congress, as if they were animals. (Assad, 2000:195-6)

It is clear, from his own words, that he is not only aware of the current political and economic situation in Brazil, but also extremely critical about the relationship between politics and society. Certainly, if he did not like to talk about it, he would successfully sing about it.

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<sup>255</sup> Centrão is the nickname for a group of parties from the centre-right that, at that time, had a majority in Congress.

<sup>256</sup> Amount in Cruzados (Cz\$), the Brazilian currency between 1986 and 1989.



## Some of Legião Urbana's More Political Songs

Regarding Russo's writing as a personal or a collective voice, we have decided to develop a more political reading of *Legião Urbana's* songs, taking into account the place (Brasília) and the period of time (1984-1996) in which he was writing and performing with the band.

According to Russo, the song "*Será* is unbeatable. I think that everything we're going to say in life is in that song". (Assad, 2000:235) To justify Russo's opinion it would be enough to say that *Será* was, by 2009, the most recorded song of the band, with versions from different genres, but still spreading the same message from its song-texts, which makes *Será* a wider-reaching piece of art.

From the title itself, *Será* can be understood as a telling reflection of the influence of Punk music on Russo's life and professional career. From Russo's *Aborto Elétrico's* times, a Punk song is the opening track of the album LU's first album.

- 1 *Tire suas mãos de mim*  
Take your hands off me
- 2 *Eu não pertença a você*  
I don't belong to you
- 3 *Não é me dominando assim*  
It's not by dominating me
- 4 *Que você vai me entender*  
That you're going to understand me
- 5 *Eu posso estar sozinho*  
I might be alone
- 6 *Mas eu sei muito bem aonde estou*  
But I do know very well where I am
- 7 *Você pode até duvidar*  
You may even doubt it
- 8 *Acho que isso não é amor*  
But I don't think that that's love

From lines 1 to 4, Russo states that he, or his generation, is not owned by any individual, institution or government, and that any of those in power would not get to know him by trying to control him, by forcing him into things he did not want to commit to. In these lines, there is a strong feeling of breaking away from the military dictatorship, which can be easily related to an expected and achieved re-democratisation of the country in 1985, the year the album was released. In that sense, this first album becomes almost a celebration of the BRock generation started by LU, amongst other bands in Brazil.

The song starts with an order and an assertion, “Take your hands off me/I don’t belong to you”, as if Russo’s generation could not be touched by those authoritarians who perpetrated the domination and censorship they had undergone through the previous decades (lines 3 and 4). However, it could have also been poetically addressed to a lover he is no longer with, and to whose possessiveness he was reacting to (lines 1 and 2). In any case, there was a reaction, a will to fight back in order to be respected and understood. Those were needs which Russo recognised when he suggests that his generation was viewed as empty, thus underlining the need for public figures like him to speak out and act with accuracy and intelligence, as he asserts it: “My generation was always seen as empty and idiotic. I could not do anything stupid.” (Assad, 2000:111)

In lines 5 to 8, Russo acknowledges the fact that this character is not within a group anymore, he is therefore alone, but not lost. He knows exactly where he is and what

he is doing, and that doubting it is to show a lack of trust or love, which is yet another form of self-affirmation very common in Punk and Rock'n'Roll culture.

[Refrain]

9 *Será só imaginação?*

Is it only my imagination?

10 *Será que nada vai acontecer?*

Is nothing going to happen?

11 *Será que é tudo isso em vão?*

Is it all for nothing?

12 *Será que vamos conseguir vencer?*

Will we ever win?

We can say that in *Será* the fight against established powers and the questioning of the future made by Punk is present throughout its song-texts. What follows these first eight lines is the Refrain, which in this case is made of four defeating questions which here function as a way of ‘waking up’ his generation – or Generation X.<sup>257</sup> He says that this generation is made of healthy, strong youngsters, with an entire life ahead of them, who do nothing more than watch TV and wonder what they can do, but who in practice do nothing. He guesses that only about 10% of this generation is trying to do or to change anything around them. (Assad, 2000:111-12) He challenges this Generation X not to live this possibility only in their heads (line 9), but to stand up and fight in order to keep what was achieved by the previous generation, so that what that generation has done is not in vain (line 11). Russo calls his generation into taking action so they can also be winners (line 12) when he questions whether this generation can win over these external forces.

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<sup>257</sup> Referring to the socio-political construct of Generation X as the one born between 1961 and 1981, “also known as ‘baby bust’ generation, following a decline in birthrates after the previous ‘baby boom’ group”, which argumentation traces “back to the United Kingdom and a study conducted in 1964.” (Jackson II, 2010:307)

- 13 *Nos perderemos entre monstros*  
We'll get lost amongst monsters  
14 *Da nossa própria criação*  
Of our own creation  
15 *Serão noites inteiras*  
There will be whole nights  
16 *Talvez por medo da escuridão*  
Maybe for fear of the darkness
- 17 *Ficaremos acordados*  
We are going to be awake  
18 *Imaginando alguma solução*  
Imagining a solution  
19 *Prá que esse nosso egoísmo*  
So that our selfishness  
20 *Não destrua nosso coração*  
Does not destroy our heart

According to lines 13 to 16, this fight is not going to be easy. Generation X is going to have to face its own 'demons' (the monsters) created by the decayed system freshly inherited from this dark hour of transition. There will be sleepless nights for those who choose to make a difference (lines 17 and 18), as they will have to think about a solution for the selfishness which dominates the capitalist world and leaves people with hardened hearts, who do not care about the destitute members of society or even the future of the country itself (lines 19 and 20).

- 21 *Brigar prá quê*  
Why bother fighting  
22 *Se é sem querer?*  
If it is unintentional?  
23 *Quem é que vai*  
Who is going to  
24 *Nos proteger?*  
Protect us?

The last two stanzas bring yet another series of questions, following the clamorous refrain, on whether it is worth fighting without a will or a reason one believes in – and in the case you fight, who are going to be the ones protecting the ones who face the fighting (lines 21 to 24)? It is interesting to notice that line 22 brings an

intriguing question, whether “sem querer” relates to be “unwitting” or “unintentional”. The two different readings of this expression can drastically change the meaning of the message of the question “why to fight”, as fighting without the will is one thing, but fighting when the cause of the fight is unintentional turns the fighting unworthy and even unfair. Russo finishes by exposing his doubt on whether the ones fighting will probably have to answer for the general mistake, still being made, still to be made, by the past generation and possibly by (the current) Generation X.

25 *Será que vamos ter*  
Will we have  
26 *Que responder?*  
To answer?  
27 *Pelos erros a mais*  
For farther mistakes  
28 *Eu e você?*  
Me and you?

Note that in the last line of the song Russo alludes to the lost sense of community and emotional connections between people, which is thus re-established in this metaphoric call for solutions, within a personal but also collective sphere, amidst a strong lack of faith, hope, and despair because of the vagueness of their future in the face of the responsibility for the ‘mistakes’ made in the past. Russo calls ‘everyone’ to answer for those mistakes (lines 25 and 28), to solve those problems, both on a private as well as on a collective level.

Russo’s disillusionment with society, the government and its systems (and above all the Generation X to which he also belongs) is made even clearer in the sixth track of LU’s first album: *Geração Coca-Cola* [Coca-Cola Generation]. This song deals with

the way Russo sees his country's ties with the USA and all-things American. This claim and complaint about the generation, in general not inclined to make a move towards necessary changes, is made over and over throughout Legião Urbana's work. *Geração Coca-Cola* is known as Russo's first ever written song, from the time of *Aborto Eléctrico*. The song was so well-received that "not even its rhymes in "ão" [superlative in Portuguese] would weaken its anarchist-rock purposes". (Dapieve, 2005:130) According to Dapieve, the song was Punk through and through, even using the USA abbreviation for United States of America, which was "also present in one of The Clash [songs], 'I'm So Bored With the USA'" (Dapieve, 2006:49), yet another proof that Russo was indeed following the roads opened for those bands at the beginning of the 1980s.

Since the 1980s, Russo's generation's surroundings were drastically changing, with the modernity promised by the government finally reaching at least the wealthiest layers of society. It can be said that the 80s' generation, or Generation X, enjoyed the freedom and economic wealth conquered by the ones before; and praised, more than ever, the material relief that capitalism had to offer. Russo could not have chosen a better symbol to name the 'degenerate' generation and its state of mind than by linking them to the giant mercantile brand Coca-Cola.<sup>258</sup> By then the American soft drink was already one of the most eminent icons of consumerist capitalism, and all-things related to the American commercial, industrial and cultural domination.<sup>259</sup>

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<sup>258</sup> Coca-Cola, an American 'institution', was intensively promoted in Brazil at the beginning of 1940s. This country is currently the 4<sup>th</sup> biggest operation centre for the company worldwide. For more information, see: <<http://www.cocacolabrazil.com.br>>

<sup>259</sup> In an earlier generation, Décio Pignatari, the Concretist poet, had lampooned the product in the playful shift from Coca-Cola to 'cloaca' (sewer) in his "beba coca cola" of 1957.

- 1 *Quando nascemos fomos programados*  
When we were programmed at birth  
2 *A receber o que vocês nos empurraram*  
To receive whatever you pushed into us  
3 *Com os enlatados dos USA, de 9 às 6*  
With everything tinned from the USA, from 9 to 5<sup>260</sup>

Russo's criticism is set in the first person plural with the verb 'to be' in the past, in line 1, "we were", confirming this close connection between writer and his public who received all-things "tinned" (line 3), ready-made from the USA, without any Brazilian feature.

- 4 *Desde pequenos nós comemos lixo*  
Since we are children we eat rubbish  
5 *Comercial, industrial*  
Commercial, industrial  
6 *Mas agora chegou nossa vez*  
But now it is our turn  
7 *Vamos cuspir de volta o lixo em cima de vocês*  
We are going to spit this rubbish back at you

Russo also acknowledges that this generation has been fed by industrialised rubbish from powerful countries (line 4), possibly not only the USA. It is to be noticed here that during the period the song was written (around 1978) and released (1985), an 'invasion' of American goods was taking place in Brazil, but also in many other countries around the world. That was more noticeable when TV arrived to the homes of those Brazilians who were chasing the capitalist dream of 'I cannot have enough of it', and raising their children (the next generation) with a new babysitter: 'tinned' American TV programmes. 'Tinned' here also refers to the consumables and fashions coming from the USA, and the business hours in Brazil, "from nine to six" as a reference for the trades between these two countries. This was a generation fed

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<sup>260</sup> From 9am to 5pm here represents the business or commercial hours in America, and the UK, and Russo contrasts it to the Brazilian 9am to 6pm.

with Coca-Cola (not milk) bottles. Another link can be made regarding the long hours parents have to work as a means to keep their families, in this way delegating their children's care to schools, grandparents, maids, or babysitters, who could physically feed them in a different way their parents would. This lack of parental presence therefore deprived these children of the family nuclear cell so necessary to give society a stable model of conviviality and social order.

However, the opening up of the country to democracy in the mid-1980s might have given Russo a certain sense of revenge, time to send all the 'rubbish' back (line 6) onto the nation and its rulers (line 7), time to give their own opinion and act their own way, it was his 'Punk spirit' punching back.

[Refrain]

8 *Somos os filhos da revolução*

We are the children of the revolution

9 *Somos burgueses sem religião*

We are bourgeois without a religion

10 *Somos o futuro da nação*

We are the future of the nation

11 *Geração Coca-Cola*

Coca-Cola Generation

In Russo's incisive words, from lines 8 to 10, we can note the acknowledgment that this shameful Coca-Cola generation was made of the sons and the daughters of the 'revolution', as if questioning this revolution, or the advantage of being its heirs – we can almost see a question mark at the end of line 8. The future of the nation lies in Brasília, the political capital of the country, but also in its youth, the bourgeois *Turma da Colina*, the wealthy teenage group to which Russo belonged.



Although *Geração Coca-Cola* was composed at the end of the 1970s (Dapieve, 2005:130), the time of its release was significant, being the year of the end of the dictatorship, 1985. As a bourgeois without a religion, Russo could be seen as being ironic towards ‘revolution’ and the role of the church during the dictatorship. In that case, this ‘loss of religion’ could symbolise a disbelief and lack of trust towards the Catholic Church and for that matter the loss of the social structures regarding the familial and social order supposed to be carried by it. This generation was, then, a wealthier one, without examples, ‘religions’, and/or ideologies to follow,<sup>261</sup> a generation ‘lost’ amidst the transition and transformations of the country.

12 *Depois de vinte anos na escola*  
After twenty years in school  
13 *Não é difícil aprender*  
It is not difficult to learn  
14 *Todas as manhas do seu jogo sujo*  
All the tricks of your [its] dirty game  
15 *Não é assim que tem que ser?*  
Isn’t that the way?

Russo makes it clear that this generation did not happen to become what it is without help. It took some good examples (political and social), and some twenty years of skilful teaching, so that “all the tricks of [the] dirty game” were learnt (lines 12 to 15). It is interesting to notice here that these ‘twenty years’ of schooling can be associated to both, or either, the formal schooling system, or the duration of the military rule (and since at the time of writing this song, the dictatorship wasn’t finished yet, it could be seen as a premonition from Russo’s part). Russo is playing with both “school” and “schooling”, which, as for the latter, is the imposition of the ideology of the dictatorship. Another equivalent, as has been hinted at earlier, in

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<sup>261</sup> As it is the case in Cazuza’s song *Ideologia*.

respect of international echoes and influences on Russo's thinking, would be the song *Another Brick in the Wall* (by Pink Floyd, in 1979), which in the case of Brazil is another wall around the nation's intellectual and political development, an 'isolation' wall.

16 *Vamos fazer nosso dever de casa*  
We are going to do our homework  
17 *E aí então, vocês vão ver*  
And then, you will see  
18 *Suas crianças derrubando reis*  
Your children defeating kings  
19 *Fazer comédia no cinema com as suas leis*  
Making comedy in the cinema with your rules

This reference to "school" could still be associated to the study of History, and possibly OSPB and EMC,<sup>262</sup> and how the new generation would learn from the examples of the Old Empire (Portugal) with its 'kings' (line 18) exploiting the country. The difference is that now, at the end of the 1970s, this 'empire' is the dictatorship, and its 'kings', the military. Those would soon fall, and these 'children' would defeat the 'old kings' (lines 18 and 19), thus being replaced by this generation which is learning from the masters of trickery, politicians and military (lines 16 and 17).

Russo creates a world in which his generation is living the opposite of an ideal life, as if his creative process was in a sense a distortion of Josh Kun's *audiotopia*.<sup>263</sup> Here Russo creates an *audiodystopia*. Contrary to the utopian imaginary of the *Tropicalia* movement, Russo pulls us into the violent and dystopian world of the 'here and now', the world as he sees it. Note here that Russo and most of the

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<sup>262</sup> As discussed on Chapter 5, it was made compulsory in 1971, and revoked in 1993, meaning that those subjects were taught for over 20 years at Brazilian schools.

<sup>263</sup> *Audiotopia* as discussed in the Introduction and Chapter 4 of this thesis.

musicians of his generation are mere observers of society, rather than, like the Tropicalistas before them, taking active part in it. Thus, this is the distortion of audiotopia, the space which leaves utopia behind to show the harsh reality of this Coca-cola generation. In this audiodystopia, one is not taken away from a known world one wants to avoid. On the contrary, one is taken deeper into the real world which most of the times is being avoided. We could argue that most of Punk songs were born out of this disquiet, from this urge to look into the ‘garbage’ of society, picking up the answers from it, but leaving its leftovers behind, avoiding dealing with them. It is a sort of in-your-face discourse which was meant to shock more than to escape. If in the audiotopian world one walks “into a building, [by] entering into an architecture of sound” (Kun, 2005:3), in our audiodystopias, on the contrary, these artists are leaving the building to try and reach out into the real world, leaving the dreamt utopian world behind.

Following the same line of ‘complaint’ or ‘discontent’, the other songs of the album are mostly social criticism to what Russo is witnessing. The song *A Dança* [The Dance], second track of the album *Legião Urbana*, for example, uses a well-known slang, ‘dançar’, in its title.<sup>264</sup> In this song, Russo explores issues such as prejudice, hatred, female exploitation, drugs, fashion, modernity, (lack of) future, as if many

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<sup>264</sup> In Brazil ‘dançar’ is a verb made into a slang used with negative connotations when a person “se deu mal” (did not succeed), and it can mean to lose ‘the plot’, the competition, or the game. It can also mean to be betrayed and/or be vulnerable. Some examples are: “dançar conforme a música (to ‘dance’ according to the music, as in to follow the rules); “ele dançou depois do roubo” (he ‘danced’ after the robbery, as in he was caught and sent to prison); “meu time dançou!” (my team ‘danced’, as in my team lost); “você nunca ‘dançou’ com ódio de verdade” (one has never been close enough to, or ‘flirted with’, real hatred).

aspects of these issues would make one ‘dançar’ (to lose) in Brazilian society as he viewed it.

As if following a path of making peace with oneself and the ‘others’ around, the album finishes with some sort of reconciliation when Russo invites:

- 13 *Mesmo com tantos motivos prá deixar tudo como está*  
Even with so many reasons to leave everything the way it is
- 14 *E nem desistir, nem tentar*  
Without trying or giving up
- 15 *Agora tanto faz*  
It doesn’t matter now
- 16 *Estamos indo de volta prá casa*  
We’re going back home

According to Renato Russo, still in 1985, and almost a year after the release of their first album, Legião Urbana did not want to perpetuate the dramatic and solemn tones carried by their first album, *Legião Urbana*. Their second album, *Dois* [Two], was released in the middle of 1986, and said to be less ‘corrosive’ – bringing even a *baião*-like song in *Daniel Na Cova Dos Leões* [Daniel at the Lions’ Den] (Assad, 2000:70) – but still trying to convey the same social and political discourse in songs such as *Tempo Perdido* [Wasted Time]<sup>265</sup> and *Metrópole* [Metropolis], although it generally has a suppler tone, when trying to spread the band’s message of “this is not the way” of doing things. (Vasco and Guima, 1996:26-7) The album *Dois* has indeed something holistic to it, when Russo decided to look into society through a more individualised perspective. In Russo’s own words they “preferred to talk about the universal, about the individual experience of each being [...the] common point which unites all people.” (Vasco and Guima, 1996:27-8) This “individual experience” takes

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<sup>265</sup> *Tempo Perdido* is originally part of AE’s repertoire, and was written in 1977.

an almost premonitory perspective again when Russo discusses the future in the form of becoming a family tree – such as *Acrylic On Canvas* and *Eduardo e Mônica* –as only a few years later Russo would become the father of Giuliano Manfredini, his only son, born in March 1989.

In the sense of the universal as being a common point between people, “*Índios*” [Indians], the last song of the album, would again summarise the whole. In “*Índios*” Russo tries to engage with the suffering of a reduced, almost extinct group of people, the native Brazilians, in order to reach out for the whole population. He also makes a statement from the beginning, within the inverted commas which conveys an irony surrounding the word, as “Renato talks about ‘índios’, not índios,<sup>266</sup> what makes a whole difference” (Dapieve, 2006:88), as it works as a derisible questioning of who are the real savages:

- 1 *Quem me dera, ao menos uma vez*  
I wish at least once
- 2 *Ter de volta todo o ouro que entreguei*  
Being given back all the gold I handed over
- 3 *A quem conseguiu me convencer*  
To those who managed to convince me
- 4 *Que era prova de amizade*  
That it was a proof of friendship
- 5 *Se alguém levasse embora até o que eu não tinha*  
If someone took away even what I didn't have

Russo uses the exploitation perpetrated against the first inhabitants of the country as an analogy for a country which is still giving its ‘gold’ away (lines 1 and 2) – i.e. its

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<sup>266</sup> The word *índio* in Brazilian Portuguese sometimes carries a derogatory meaning, when used to refer to the person as not being used to the ‘civilised’ world, as not knowing how to behave in ‘society’, as not having ‘formal’ education, in sum, as not belonging elsewhere than to his/her own tribe in the jungle, in the bushes, the countryside.

natural resources – which made, and still makes the habitat of those natives being exploited in the past.

- 41 *Quem me dera, ao menos uma vez*  
I wish at least once  
42 *Como a mais bela tribo, dos mais belos índios*  
As the most beautiful tribe, with the most beautiful native Indians  
43 *Não ser atacado por ser inocente*  
Not to be attacked for being innocent  
44 *Nos deram espelhos e vimos um mundo doente*  
They gave us mirrors and we saw a sickly world  
45 *Tentei chorar e não consegui*  
I tried to cry and I couldn't

In line 44, Russo makes a reference to the 'tales' of the first colonisers of the country, and their violence (lines 41 to 43), who would offer mirrors in exchange for local indigenous goods – such as gold. Although in a more formal note, Roberto Gambini argues that these mirrors had another connotation, and that:

what was expected from [those] Indians was that they behaved as soft clay, finally allowing their obscure and chaotic nature to be molded into something human. The Jesuit was the mirror in which the Indian should mirror himself, as if saying: "Teach me, let me be like you, turn me into a decent human being."  
(Gambini, 2000:91)

Through his 'civilised' mirror, Russo only saw 'a sickly world' which made him feel like crying, but he could not possibly do it because of his lack of tears, since he had already cried all of them before.

"*Índios*" was a perfect closing track to the album *Dois*, leading Russo into an old and burning question with the release of the band's next album *Que País é Este 1978/1987* (1987). The title-song *Que País é Este* [What country is this], belonged to AE's repertoire of the 1970s, but LU decided to record it only then (1987), because, according to Russo, before "there was always the hope that something was really

going to change in the country, turning the song obsolete then”. (Dapieve, 2006:52) Unfortunately, however, the issues raised in the song-texts were still prevailing in the country in December 1987. By March 1988 the album had reached the “top of the hit parades, with 240 thousand copies [sold]” (Dapieve, 2006:103), hence proving what Russo had in mind when writing the song, including it in the album, and even naming the album after it.

The album *Que País é Este 1978/1987* brings other hugely celebrated songs such as *Faroeste Caboclo*<sup>267</sup> [*Caboclo* Western] and *Química* [Chemistry]. According to Russo, the question in *Que País é Este* is not a question per se, hence the absence of a question mark, but an exclamation, a commentary on the social and political disparities he observes in Brazil. Some of the songs were written before the band blew the charts, critics and public were stunned. Even Russo was caught by surprise, as he confessed: “The success of this album is an honour! Who could have told? This explains, once and for all, that we don’t record old songs just to make money. We took care of the product, from the cover to the paper.” (Assad, 2000:210) One could be surprised by the fact that Russo, in this interview, succumbs to the consumerist ideals of the capitalist society and treat their own work as “product”.

The song *Faroeste Caboclo* [*Caboclo* Western], a thirteen-minute long song saga, was censored by the (the then still present) Federal Censorship. The radios would

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<sup>267</sup> *Caboclo*, as in the North of Brazil, meaning “any person suspected of be descendent from Indians or who looks like an Indian”: it means “a detribalized Indian who speaks Portuguese, but still participates in a subsistence economy with some ties to local markets and regions, and practices a syncretic religion largely based in popular Catholicism”, whilst it also holds a “derogatory connotation, not unlike the term ‘negro’ for black.” (French, 2009:191)

have to edit it at many points in order to broadcast it. The reason? Its content, “which talked about drugs, sex and violence”, with strong lines which state “I don’t plant bombs in newsstands nor at children’s schools, that I can’t do”, or “and I don’t protect a ten-star general, who hides behind his desk, with his hand on his ass”,<sup>268</sup> a direct allusion to the action of some factions of the dictatorship that bombed newsstands which sold publications which opposed the military regime, and the coward behind other military actions against society. (Dapieve, 2006:103)

Russo made use of some of his music heroes in the making of *Faroeste Caboclo*, in his own words in 1990:

I think that *Faroeste Caboclo* is a mix of *Domingo no Parque*, from Gilberto Gil, and Raul Seixas things with the oral tradition of the Brazilian people. Brazilians love to tell stories. And I also wanted to imitate Bob Dylan. I wanted to make my own *Hurricane*. (Assad, 2000:103)

At this point in their career, LU was already so famous and prestigious that “the messianism of [the] content [of their music] was getting out of Renato’s and the band’s control” (Dapieve, 2006:102), when the drummer Bonfá was hit in the arm by a beer bottle during some sort of demonstration in one of their performances in Brasília. At the time, this was said to be the repercussions LU had to endure, since “with such an explosive repertoire, then, it was a matter of time until the time-bomb detonated.” (ibid.) The reason for this uncontrollable reaction can be related to the instigating content of some of the band’s songs, notably *Que País é Este*.

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<sup>268</sup> The expression “with his hand on his ass” (from the Portuguese “com o cú na mão”), means ‘to be scared of something’; and has a sexualised connotation as the person in question would be protecting his/hers own anal orifice from outer intervention. The term is generally related to torture methods used during the dictatorship.



- 1 *Nas favelas, no senado*<sup>269</sup>  
     In the slums, in the Senate  
 2 *Sujeira prá todo lado*  
     Dirt is everywhere  
 3 *Ninguém respeita a constituição*  
     Nobody respects the constitution  
 4 *Mas todos acreditam no futuro da nação*  
     But everybody believes in the future of the nation

Even for such short song-texts, the power of the song is sensed by its music, but also by the use of national symbols which marked Brazilian society at the time such as the ones mentioned from line 1 to 10. Russo goes from one extreme of society to the next in order to set his argument about the conditions of the country (lines 1 and 2), as from the *favelas* (overlooked and neglected, without political power), to the Senate (the centre of decision-making in the country), the wide-spread lack of respect for the law through all layers of society. He also questions the possibility of a democratic future if the constitution of the country, made for ensuring equality and fairness, is worthless (lines 3 and 4).

- (Refrain)  
 5 *Que país é este*  
     What country is this

The refrain makes the question even stronger because *Que País é Este* is a criticism, a remark, not followed by any more comments nor even a question mark. It just leaves the open question ‘blowing in the wind’, echoing, as if the answer should be given by LU’s fans and listeners themselves, as a provocation.

- 6 *No Amazonas, no Araguaia, na Baixada Fluminense*  
     In the Amazon, in Araguaia, in the Baixada Fluminense  
 7 *No Mato Grosso, nas Gerais e no Nordeste tudo em paz*  
     In Mato Grosso, in the Gerais, and in the Northeast all is at peace

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<sup>269</sup> The word Senate is not capitalised in the original version of the song-text.

8 *Na morte eu descanso mas o sangue anda solto*  
     In dying I rest but the blood is everywhere  
 9 *Manchando os papéis, documentos fiéis*  
     Staining the papers, truthful documents  
 10 *Ao descanso do patrão*  
     For the boss's rest

Russo acknowledges that certain regions of the country are dirty with its people's blood (lines 6 to 9), a direct connection can be made here with the struggle for land in Brazil in his mention of Araguaia in the Amazon.<sup>270</sup> Also a criticism to the fact that even when there is proof of the participation of certain elements of the army and/or the government they can 'rest' assured that no penalties are going to incur, as all those 'papers' are stained with victims' blood and can no longer be used.

12 *Terceiro Mundo se for*  
     Third World only if it is  
 13 *Piada no exterior*  
     A joke told abroad  
 14 *Mas o Brasil vai ficar rico*  
     But Brazil is going to be rich  
 15 *Vamos faturar um milhão*  
     And we'll profit millions  
 16 *Quando vendermos todas as almas*  
     When we sell all the souls  
 17 *Dos nossos índios num leilão*  
     Of our Native Indians at the auction

Sarcasm is the right word when regarding this chaotic vision of Brazil, as Russo sees this 'rich third-world' country (lines 12 and 13) as a joke abroad for its 'misuses' of such wealthy resources; and the possibility of further enrichment, when the old-haunting notion that the Amazon, and everything in it including its peoples, is being sold off finally materialises (lines 14 to 17).

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<sup>270</sup> The issue of Araguaia here could be a reference to the *Araguaia Guerilla* between 1966 and 1975, led by members of the Communist Party of Brazil (PC do B), which ended with the death of around sixty militants. (Archdiocese of São Paulo, 1985:216)

The environmental preoccupation is extremely present in this album. Following the questions mentioned above, Russo makes a commentary about the nuclear power plant in Angra dos Reis,<sup>271</sup> recently inaugurated and extremely polemic at the time.

- 11 *Vamos brincar perto da usina*  
Let's play near the power station  
12 *Deixa prá lá a angra é dos reis*  
Leave it, the creek belongs to the kings  
13 *Por que se explicar se não existe perigo?*  
Why to explain yourself if there is no danger?

In the track *Angra dos Reis*, what seems to be a love-story, with a slow beat and prolonged tone in Russos's singing at the end of the lines, takes a completely new tone from lines 11 and 13, when Russo questions the safety of the nuclear power plant when inviting the second person to go with him to play (*brincar*) as allegedly there is no danger in doing so. That can be seen as a pertinent question then, after the Chernobyl accident in 1986, and especially today.<sup>272</sup> Another aspect of this stanza can be found when Russo says that "the creek belongs to the kings" (line 12), in a very intelligent play with words using the verb *to be* (*é*) in relation to Angra dos Reis, in the Portuguese: "a angra é dos reis". Which gives a notion that the nuclear power plant belongs to the politicians (the powerful, the 'kings') who decided to establish the power plant there even if under public fear and protests, to the extent that people had no say in the decisions made regarding their own country, and their community. Moreover, Angra dos Reis is (still today) one of the most beautiful and

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<sup>271</sup> Although Angra dos Reis power plant, located at the seaside town of Angra in Rio de Janeiro, has been operational since 1982 without any incidents or accidents, concerns raised could be considered directly related to the major nuclear accident which occurred in Chernobyl, Ukraine (then part of the USSR) in April 1986, becoming a catalyst of criticism towards nuclear power plants, and nuclear power in general, around the world.

<sup>272</sup> A growing international concern regarding nuclear power plants has been re-raised with the events surrounding Fukushima nuclear plant in Japan, after its crippling as a consequence of a tsunami which hit the country on the 11<sup>th</sup> March 2011.

paradisaic seaside resorts of Brazil, depending on tourism and, to some extent, its fishing communities to survive.

*Angra dos Reis* is slow and sometimes even out of tune, with the instruments playing in two parallel beats, which gives it an almost ghostly feel. The dark side of the issue about nuclear power, and also the doubts of Russo's generation, and others to come, are expressed from lines 20 to 23, in which he discusses his attempt to evaluate who he is, who he thinks he is, and who people would like him to be, setting the 'blame' on oneself although this self is not guilty.

20 *Vai ver que não é nada disso*  
Maybe it's not that at all  
21 *Vai ver que já não sei quem sou*  
Maybe I don't know who I am  
22 *Vai ver que nunca fui o mesmo*  
Maybe I was never the same  
23 *A culpa é toda sua e nunca foi*  
It's entirely your fault and it has never been

In the next passage there is this sense of things already being lost, without solution or future, and the expression from line 12, "leave it", returns on line 28, emphasising the disregard towards things which cannot be achieved and causes which are lost; the 'no future' of Punk always determining Russo's choices.

24 *Mesmo se as estrelas comessem a cair*  
Even if the stars started falling  
25 *E a luz queimasse tudo ao redor*  
And the light burnt everything around  
26 *E fosse o fim chegando cedo*  
And the end was coming soon  
27 *E você visse nosso corpo em chamas*  
And you saw our body in flames  
28 *Deixa prá lá*  
Leave it

29 *Quando as estrelas começarem a cair*  
When the stars start to fall  
30 *Me diz, me diz prá onde a gente vai fugir?*  
Tell me, tell me where we are going to run to?

The imagery of ‘our body in flames’ (line 27) reminds us of the possibility of a nuclear incident, where this singular “body” is either the community surrounding the power plant, the country, or ultimately the planet. In the case that this singular “body” (line 27) represents the two characters as a single individual, would make the relationship a very romantic, and also very dramatic way of having their ending, together as one. Although Russo sees these falling stars as a possibility (“even if” in line 24), he later sees them as an imminent event through the use of the adverb “when”; in line 29, he shows again the impossibility of escaping this tragedy (line 30) which would be a consequence of the interference of the State.

*Que País é Este 1978/1987* is an album filled with question marks. LU finalises it up ‘asking’ yet another question: ‘whether this situation would ever change’. In the song *Mais do Mesmo* [More of the Same], Russo said that,

the idea that we wanted to put, in this album, was “More of the Same”. Because, it is like, what is going on around here is more of the same. The situation hasn’t changed at all, nothing happens and, then, this song is a close to *Que País é Este*.” (Assad, 2000:163)

The somber tone of 1987 was to change in 1989, with the release of *As Quatro Estações* [The Four Seasons]. According to Dapieve, “leaving the dark ages... Renato made the release of *As Quatro Estações* a moment of self-revelation.” (Dapieve, 2005:138) Curiously, in the same year his son Giuliano was born, Russo’s homosexuality “couldn’t be more explicit”. (ibid.)

Punk, and its politics, was back and it would ‘walk’ a more religious side now found by Russo. In his own words, in 1989, “the new album is all political. In this album, we’re talking about the spiritual, and nowadays there is nothing more political, for me, than the spiritual”. (Assad, 2000:208) Russo still ascertains that he

wanted the album to be about cycles, the loss of innocence. It would be basically that: Spring, Summer, comes Autumn and all the leaves fall. And, in the Winter, the tree is left that way. It is as if we were reaching the Winter. But, then, Spring is coming again. It means, you can choose to have another Spring. Most people I know are stuck in Winter, and I think that this is their biggest problem. (Assad, 2000:209)

The album is, as such, a religious-political statement, going from a rampant rock, as in the track *1965 - Duas Tribos* [1965 - Two Tribes], to the slowest melody in *Pais e Filhos* [Parents and Children]; then to its liturgical ballad reciting of Saint Paul’s Epistle in *Monte Castelo* [Monte Castello].<sup>273</sup> For the scope of this thesis we are more interested in *1965 – Duas Tribos*, where Russo exhorts the country to make changes and face the ones already made (in lines 5 and 6), acknowledging that the country is free from dictatorship and that the ‘Geração Coca-Cola’ should take advantage of that fact and *do* something to make the country better (line 40 onwards), and thus expand its *audiotopian* possibilities.

5 *Temos paz, temos tempo*  
We’ve got peace, we’ve got time  
6 *Chegou a hora e agora é aqui*  
It’s now time and the now is here

From lines 17 to 24, Russo explores some of the maladies of this society when qualities can be treated as abomination.

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<sup>273</sup> The title of the song, Monte Castelo, is a reference to a WWII battle which happened in the North of Italy, where the Brazilian Expeditionary Force (FEB) acted with the Allied Troops against the German Army; yet another commentary about division, love for thy neighbour, and brotherhood.

- 17 *Quando querem transformar*  
When they want to make
- 18 *Dignidade em doença*  
Dignity into illness
- 19 *Quando querem transformar*  
When they want to make
- 20 *Inteligência em traição*  
Intelligence into treason
- 21 *Quando querem transformar*  
When they want to make
- 22 *Estupidez em recompensa*  
Stupidity into reward
- 23 *Quando querem transformar*  
When they want to make
- 24 *Esperança em maldição*  
Hope into damnation
- 40 *O Brasil é o país do futuro*<sup>274</sup>  
Brazil is the country of the future
- 41 *O Brasil é o país do futuro*  
Brazil is the country of the future
- 42 *O Brasil é o país do futuro*  
Brazil is the country of the future
- 43 *O Brasil é o país*  
Brazil is the country
- 44 *Em toda e qualquer situação*  
In all and any situation
- 45 *Eu quero tudo*  
I want everything
- 46 *P'rá cima*  
Up

According to Dapieve, when the album was released at the end of 1989, “450 thousand copies had already been sold in advance” (Dapieve, 2006:111), which would certainly put a great amount of pressure on their next work: *V*, which was

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<sup>274</sup> As a direct reference to the *Ufanista*'s discourse; and possibly as a reference to *Brasil, País do Futuro*, a book by Stefan Zweig (1941), an Austrian writer, who committed suicide in Petrópolis, Rio de Janeiro, in 1942 because of the depression caused by his exile in Brazil during WWII, even though he admired the country.

“meticulously conceived to cause strangeness... a very pretentious album.” (Dapieve, 2006:126)

Following a series of events in 1990, Plano Cruzado (March), a cocaine overdose (April), Cazuza’s death (July), Russo’s own diagnose for HIV-AIDS (end of the year), made the whole band go through one of the most stressful moments of their career. The result of those tensions is in *V*, Russo’s favourite album of LU, an album which is full of “timeless, perennial songs”. (Dapieve, 2006:122-27) The song we have chosen to represent this more insecure and intimate phase of Russo is *O Teatro dos Vampiros* [The Vampires’ Theatre], mostly because of its somber music and sharp song-texts, which show Russo’s weaknesses and doubts, yet his strengths and hopes.

- 1 *Sempre precisei de um pouco de atenção*  
I always needed a little attention
- 2 *Acho que não sei quem sou*  
I think I don’t even know who I am
- 3 *Só sei do que não gosto*  
I only know what I don’t like
- 4 *E desses dias tão estranhos*  
And of these very strange days
- 5 *Fica a poeira se escondendo pelos cantos*  
The dust keeps hiding in the corners

From lines 1 to 2, it is clear how lost and in need of a direction in life Russo was at that moment, even though he was opinionated enough to know what he did not like or want (line 3), even during these days of loneliness, symbolised by the dust he can notice in the corners of the room.

- 16 *Vamos lá tudo bem – eu só quero me divertir*  
Come on it’s alright – I just want to have fun
- 17 *Esquecer, dessa noite ter um lugar legal prá ir*  
To forget, and tonight to have a nice place to go to



His very personal call for attention, line 16, is also a call for forgetting all his problems, and also a way to escape himself and the world surrounding him (line 22 and 23).

22 *Quando me vi tendo de viver comigo apenas*  
When I found myself having to live on my own  
23 *E com o mundo*  
And with the world  
24 *Você me veio como um sonho bom*  
You came to me as if in a good dream  
25 *E me assustei*  
And I got scared

Yet, during this questioning and doubting, something good happened, as a surprise which scared him – his son Giuliano Manfredini was born. The responsibility of becoming a father would also be manifested in the album *As Quatro Estações*, mainly in the song *Pais e Filhos*, where he also reflects on those commitments.

It was literally a time of discoveries for the man and the artist, and in that process he wrote one of his mightiest songs, *Perfeição* [Perfection], the fourth track in the band's sixth album *O Descobrimento do Brasil* [The Discovery of Brazil] (1994). In *Perfeição*, line after line Russo would say what he or the band “wouldn't or couldn't say about Brazil”<sup>275</sup> (Dapieve, 2005:212), strong statements without any disguise or excuse, pure toxic poetry as we can see from beginning to end in the song-text:

1 *Vamos celebrar a estupidez humana*  
Let's celebrate human stupidity  
2 *A estupidez de todas as nações*  
The stupidity of all nations  
3 *O meu país e sua corja de assassinos*  
My country and its scum of assassins  
4 *Covardes, estupradores e ladrões*  
Cowards, rapists, and thieves

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<sup>275</sup> Notice that I use almost the whole song-text, even if it is long and self-explanatory through its stinging statements.

We have to consider the context of what was happening around Russo, and in Brazil, at the time this album was being produced and while he was writing these song-texts (1992), such as The Gulf War (1991-1992) (lines 1 and 2), the impeachment of the Brazilian President Fernando Collor de Mello (1992) for corruption (lines 7 and 8); the Carandiru Massacre<sup>276</sup> (1992) (lines 3 to 6), amongst others.

- 5 *Vamos celebrar a estupidez do povo*  
Let's celebrate the populace's stupidity
- 6 *Nossa polícia e televisão*  
Our police and television
- 7 *Vamos celebrar o nosso governo*  
Let's celebrate our government
- 8 *E nosso estado que não é nação*  
And our State which is not a Nation
- 9 *Celebrar a juventude sem escolas*  
Celebrate the youth without schools
- 10 *As crianças mortas*  
The dead children
- 11 *Celebrar nossa desunião*  
Celebrate our disunity
- 16 *Vamos comemorar como idiotas*  
Let's commemorate like idiots
- 17 *A cada fevereiro e feriado*  
Every February and holiday
- 18 *Todos os mortos nas estradas*  
All the ones killed on the motorways
- 19 *E os mortos por falta de hospitais*  
And those killed for lack of hospitals
- 20 *Vamos celebrar nossa justiça*  
Let's celebrate our justice
- 21 *A ganância e a difamação*  
Greed and defamation
- 22 *Vamos celebrar os preconceitos*  
Let's celebrate prejudice
- 23 *E o voto dos analfabetos*  
And the illiterates' voting

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<sup>276</sup> The massacre happened in the detention house, Carandiru, in São Paulo, following an inmates riot, after what the Military Police invaded the prison and killed 111 of those inmates.

In these lines, Russo is fiercely criticising several institutions in Brazilian society: Education (lines 9 to 11), Health (lines 18 and 19) and Justice (lines 20 to 23). In ‘celebratory’ mood, Russo is referring to the lack of conditions of most of Brazilian schools, roads and “minds”, how ten years after the end of the dictatorship things did not improve much, since the country still lives off of Carnival and so many other national holidays – which perpetuates the notion of *panis et circenses* – (lines 16 and 17), and the incapacity of a mass of poor illiterate populace (line 23) to choose their representatives.

41 *Vamos cantar juntos o hino nacional*  
Let’s sing the national anthem  
42 *(A lágrima é verdadeira)*  
(The tears are true)

Russo makes an irony to the nationalist routine, related to the military dictatorship times, of singing the national anthem at official ceremonies (line 41), whilst acknowledging that when he does it, his “tears are true” (line 42), because he is crying with sadness for all the things which come in the next stanza.

47 *Vamos festejar a violência*  
Let’s celebrate violence  
48 *E esquecer a nossa gente*  
And forget our people  
49 *Que trabalhou honestamente a vida inteira*  
Who worked honestly all their lives  
50 *E agora não tem mais direito a nada*  
And now haven’t got any right to anything

Another reason to ‘celebrate’ is the injustices of this violent country (line 47) which violates the rights of those ‘honest people’ who work so hard to build the country (lines 48 and 49), and have their share in society denied (line 50), which takes us back to the song *Cidadão* by Geraldo Vandré discussed in Chapter 3.

63 *Venha, o amor tem sempre a porta aberta*  
 Come, love has its door always open  
 64 *E vem chegando a primavera*  
 And Spring is almost here  
 65 *Nosso futuro recomeça*  
 Our future is restarting  
 66 *Venha, que o que vem é perfeição*  
 Come, for whatever comes will be perfection

Yet, Russo is willing to recuperate an *audiotopian* mood out of the audiodystopian world of his views, when considering love as the open door to reconciliation and salvation. He relates a restarting of a ‘long-lost’ future to the arrival of Spring – as in a return to the band’s fourth album, *The Four Seasons* –, the season of hope and rebirth (lines 64 and 65). Russo imagines that after all he had seen anything else his people could attempt to do right would be perfect, ‘perfection’. It is a shame that Renato Russo did not live enough to pursue this perfection.

The last album of the band released while Russo was still alive, *A Tempestade ou O Livro dos Dias* [The Tempest or The Book of Days] (1996) confirms the resilient, sombre, and stormy tone of this discourse since from its title. When referring to *A Tempestade*’s brochure, the band’s members call attention to the fact that “there are neither acknowledgements nor the traditional phrases *Urbana Legio Omnia Vincit* [Legião Urbana Wins All] and *Ouçá no volume máximo* [Listen at maximum volume]”.<sup>277</sup> Replacing them, a sentence from the Brazilian Modernist writer Oswald de Andrade: *O Brasil é uma república federativa cheia de árvores e gente dizendo adeus* [Brazil is a federal republic full of trees and people saying goodbye], as if that

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<sup>277</sup> See: <<http://www.renatorusso.com.br/site/discografia/a-tempestade>>

was Russo's own epitaph, when we take into account that he died a few months after the release of the album.

Legião Urbana could not have chosen a better ending for its official career than through its last album with Russo's posthumous participation, *Uma Outra Estação* [Another Season] (1997), as in this album through one of the songs, *La Maison de Dieu* [The House of God], Russo is, in death, saying his definite goodbye:

- 43 *Abra os olhos e o coração*  
Open your eyes and your heart
- 44 *Estejamos alertas*  
Let's be alert
- 45 *Porque o terror continua*  
Because the terror continues
- 46 *Só mudou de cheiro*  
Only its smell changed
- 47 *E de uniforme*  
And its uniform
- 48 *Eu sou a tua morte*  
I am your death
- 49 *E lhe quero bem*  
And I wish you well
- 50 *Esqueça o mundo, vim lhe explicar o que virá*  
Forget about the world, I come to explain what is coming

Although in 1996 Russo was writing about death in his latest songs, he would have always denied being HIV positive. In 1995 he dodged the subject by asking a question back to a reporter: "Do I behave as if I was HIV positive? It's my problem, I don't talk." (Assad, 2000:23) Russo's denial seems to follow the death, by HIV-AIDS, of people from the artistic surroundings such as: Henfil, journalist/writer (1988); Lauro Corona, Brazilian actor (1989); Freddie Mercury, British musician (1991); Conrado Segreto, an acclaimed Brazilian stylist (1992); Cláudia Magno, Brazilian actress (1994), preceded by her boyfriend, actor Marcelo Ibrahim (1984). But one of the most significant names of the list is, of course, Cazuza. Talking about

the relationship between his song *Feedback Song for a Dying Friend* (released in 1989 as the fourth track of *As Quatro Estações*) and Cazuza's public admission of being HIV positive (1989), Russo says that "it was important, as an artist, to position myself regarding AIDS. Let's be honest. There is a homosexual relationship in music. I'm in the risk group. I'm not haemophiliac though. I don't want to be the martyr for the gay cause. Prejudice comes from ignorance, from fear." (Assad, 2000:23) *Feedback Song for a Dying Friend* was then immediately related to Cazuza – as if a homage –, for its homosexual content:

1 Soothe the young man's sweating forehead  
 2 Touch the naked stem held hidden there  
 3 Safe in such dark hayseed wired nest  
 4 Then his light brown eyes are quick  
 5 Once touch is what he thought was grip...<sup>278</sup>

Renato Russo died on the 11<sup>th</sup> October 1996, alone in his flat in Ipanema, Rio de Janeiro, after a long battle against HIV/Aids (Dapieve, 2006:15); and just a few months after the release of LU's album *A Tempestade ou O Livro dos Dias*, in July. At that moment Marcelo Bonfá and Dado Villa-Lobos announced the dissolution referring to it as an epilogue:

The first one was also the last register of Legião Urbana's career *A Tempestade ou O Livro dos Dias*. The second epilogue, the album *Uma Outra Estação* was released in July 1997 containing tracks from the material that had not been used in *A Tempestade ou O Livro dos Dias*. In this album, Bonfá and Dado tried to close that cycle of their lives and make the best of it. There was no running away from Renato's final anxieties in the lyrics he left behind, but it was possible not to be morbid.<sup>279</sup>

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<sup>278</sup> The original song-text of the song are in English, as Russo justifies: "*Feedback song* I wrote in English, because it was a heavy thing, about AIDS." (Assad, 2000:106)

<sup>279</sup> For the whole interview, see: <<http://beta.legiaourbana.com.br/biografia?pagina=epilogo>>

Legião Urbana, the band, ceased to exist in 1997, but the spirit of the Urban Legion lives in the memories, hearts and guitars of their fans and admirers.

## **Conclusion - Fifteen years without Russo**

As to conclude our arguments, we certainly have to acknowledge the inheritance of space and freedom received by those bands initiating their career throughout the opening of the democratic process in Brazil, after 1984. As we also have to acknowledge the fact that those bands of the 1980s and 1990s inherited a country which was almost free from censorship and ready to experience freedom of speech and in the media, which had been blue-pencilled for more than two decades. This new generation of songwriters and performers had not much need to disguise their opinion through song-texts, through metaphors of realities or rhythms, to comply with a cultural trend in order to avoid censorship imposed by the state. In that sense, Rock'n'Roll, and Punk, and BRock were the perfect genres to express the voice of a generation who had been emancipated from the position of being the sons and daughters of the 'revolution' in order to become the next revolutionaries, as these genres are regularly associated to revolution.

We are talking about a generation who was facing a strong revolution in the way they could express themselves and be heard, but also receiving immediate feedback from their audience, due to the more widespread means of communications such a proliferation of TV and radio stations, the beginning of the virtual world through the Internet, the advent of the CD and the DVD. At the same time, this generation had, and still has, a strong responsibility as to bring consciousness to the younger ones who do not share the same memories and experiences. A generation which might



have other perspectives and ideas in regards to their country and society as the democratic ideal was fulfilled by their precursors, and otherwise does not have a strong enough reason to be paying attention to the politics surrounding them.

These circumstances draw us into imagining what Cazusa and Russo would have been writing about from the end of the 1990s, although we have to acknowledge that a continuation and development of the path they started can be established with the new artists of this Brazilian ‘protest’/lament song.

This generational relationship can be seen as a relay race, where, in a diachronic way, those different generations are going to engage in a communal effort in order to win a ‘race’, be it of social, historical or political context. The success of this ‘race’ is going to depend on the coordination of its actors. Drawing from the example of the 1970 World Cup, and its use of music and nationalism, sports, and mostly football, can be considered an important characteristic of Brazilian identity. As a sport category, relay race could be used as an analogy to how the generation which performed protest music in Brazil since the 1960s had taken over from one to another, as passing the baton in a synchronised way. If one ‘runner’ (i.e., a generation) misses the baton from the previous one, that other ‘runner’ will have to compensate to the other. The previous runner’s time is up: the follower will not be able to replace him, and he is thus obliged to grab the baton and run the next length until it reaches the next runner and passes the baton to that one again, and so forth. Although each runner runs alone, they have to do it as a team, nonetheless, giving continuity by passing the baton and reaching a harmonious speed at the end of

length, which, although it looks like in tandem, is an individual effort. And if this last runner does not achieve the same quality, the same speed, the same harmony with the previous one, there will be serious implications: the runner can fall; the baton can fall, thus ending the race for which they have trained so hard together.

In that sense, the various protest music movements, from the 1960s onwards, reflect how different generations of Brazilian artists have been taking from, and passing over to, one another, the energy to protest, the baton, thus adapting their discourse, topics and musical strategies and genres to the very particular social, historical, or political context they belonged to. Yet, in a distinctive way from the real relay race, which keeps the same baton, the protest ‘runners’ of this generational race, change the baton, adapt it and to it, reshape it, i.e., their music style. Also, contrary to the relay race, where each individual train as part of a team, in a homogenous and coordinated fashion, in the case of music each new generation will get a baton and use it their own way. When the baton is handed over it will create another movement.

In the case of Brazilian music, who were/are those ‘runners’ receiving the ‘baton’ from Cazuza and Russo? Are they singing about the same issues and with the same purposes? And to what effect?

## Legacy and the future of what is not past

Some of the bands formed since 1996 (when Legião Urbana was dissolved) owe, to a certain extent, to this band's legacy, as since then different forms of Rock'n'Roll, and other genres, developed following the paths opened by their predecessors. For these artists, the album *Que País é Este 1978/1987* is still a strong and recurrent reference and 'question'.

Social awareness more than social criticism were to follow the discursive, but not the financial, roots of the more well-off *Turma da Colina* members, from Brasília, as many of today's singers and songwriters have a closer-to-life background and point of view. These artists are moved by their own communities' need to survival, having a framework which is socially-generated, coming from a longing to improve the communities they are somehow involved with, and, as an ultimate goal, the country as a whole.

We can see that *emic*<sup>280</sup> standing point, as they speak from experience, from within, in many different artists and bands within Brazil since the 1980s. Two examples, amongst so many, can be said to be Seu Jorge<sup>281</sup> and Farofa Carioca, in their song *Moro no Brasil*;<sup>282</sup> or AfroReggae's *Nenhum Motivo Explica a Guerra*.<sup>283</sup> In both

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<sup>280</sup> *Emic* as in contrast to *etic*, as seen in Chapter 6.

<sup>281</sup> Seu Jorge (b.1970), born Jorge Mário da Silva, is an acclaimed Brazilian singer and actor in Brazilian blockbusters *City of God* (2002), and *Elite Troop 2* (2010). He was born and raised in Belford Roxo, a neighbourhood of Rio de Janeiro's periphery. Seu Jorge started his carrier in the band Farofa Carioca in 1997.

<sup>282</sup> *Moro no Brasil* also inspired the homonymous documentary by Finnish director Mika Kaurismäki in 2002, where he summarises the history of Brazilian music.

cases,<sup>284</sup> they talk about the life they witness, differently from Cazuza and Russo who, being middle-class boys, had an *etic* point of view on some of the issues they touched upon, such as poverty.

- 38 *Agora eu tenho aqui*  
Now I have here  
39 *A causa do nosso problema*  
The cause of our problem  
40 *Miséria e fome derrotam*  
Poverty and hunger defeat  
41 *Derrotam nossa nação*  
Defeat our nation  
42 *Prá completar*  
To complete  
43 *Tem, tem*  
There is, there is  
44 *Violência ao cidadão*  
Violence against the citizen  
45 *Precisamos sim*  
We must rather  
46 *Fazer por nossos irmãos*  
Do for our brothers  
47 *Com a ajuda de Deus*  
With God's help  
48 *Deus!*  
God!  
49 *E por que não?*  
And why not?  
50 *Então vai lá*  
So be it  
51 *Vai lá cidadão*  
Go on citizen  
52 *Faça por você*  
Do it for yourself  
53 *Não se sinta um derrotado*  
Don't feel defeated  
54 *E lute prá sobreviver*  
And fight for your survival  
55 *Uh! Hiê!...*

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<sup>283</sup> Grupo Cultural AfroReggae was founded in 1993, almost as a response to Vigário Geral massacre in 1992, where twenty-one *favela* dwellers were killed by the police. See: <<http://www.afroreggae.org>>

<sup>284</sup> Exclusively for lack of space, we have chosen to use only two bands, Farofa Carioca and AfroReggae, amongst other bands and singers, within impoverished communities in Brazil, as a way of exemplifying the discourse coming from those communities.

In the above passage of *Moro no Brasil*, we can see a realisation of the problems those communities and the country as a whole are facing (lines 38 to 44); and a call for solution which is not suggested to be asked from, nor given by, any governmental body. Instead, there is an acknowledgement that the citizen has to count once more with the almighty powers of God (lines 47 and 49), and at the same time take the power into their own hands in order to implement the needed actions within their communities and personal lives (lines 50 to 54).

(Refrain)  
 56 *Moro no Brasil*  
       I live in Brazil  
 57 *Não sei se moro*  
       I don't know if I live  
 58 *Muito bem ou muito mal*  
       Very well or very poorly  
 59 *Só sei que agora*  
       I only know that now  
 60 *Faço parte do País*  
       I am part of the country  
 61 *A inteligência*  
       Intelligence  
 62 *É fundamental...*  
       Is fundamental...

In this song, AfroReggae, although accusing the State of greed and corruption, avoids the victimization of the *favelados*, of the community, which had been the dominant opposing discourse in Brazil.

1 *Nenhum motivo explica a guerra*  
       No reason explains the war  
 2 *Nem a grana*  
       Neither money  
 3 *Nem a ganância*  
       Nor greed  
 4 *Nem a vingança, nem avanço industrial*  
       Neither revenge, nor industrial advancement  
 5 *Nem esperança, nem o ideal*  
       Neither hope, nor ideal  
 6 *Nem em nome do bem, contra o mal*  
       Neither in goodness sake, against evil

- 7 *Nenhum motivo explica a guerra*  
No reason explains the war
- 8 *Nem a sede de poder*  
Neither thirst for power
- 9 *Nem o medo de perder*  
Nor fear of losing it
- 10 *Nem a ira*  
Neither rage
- 11 *Nem a mentira*  
Nor lie
- 12 *Nem a conquista territorial*  
Nor territorial conquering
- 13 *Ninguém tem que fazer o que não quer*  
Nobody has to do one doesn't want to
- 14 *Nenhum motivo explica a guerra*  
No reason explains the war
- 15 *Ninguém precisa ser o que não é*  
Nobody needs to be what one isn't
- 16 *Nada justifica não*  
Nothing justifies it, no
- 17 *Nenhum motivo explica a guerra*  
No reason explains the war
- 18 *Nem cobiça, nem controle populacional*  
Neither avidity, nor populational control
- 19 *Nem vergonha, nem orgulho nacional*  
Neither shame, nor national pride
- 20 *Nem a crença, nem a defesa*  
Neither belief, nor defense
- 21 *Nem a raça, nem a fé*  
Neither race, nor faith
- 22 *Ninguém tem que seguir o que não crê*  
Nobody has to follow what one doesn't believe
- 23 *Nenhum motivo explica a guerra*  
No reason explains the war
- 24 *Ninguém tem que fazer o que não quer...*  
Nobody has to do what one doesn't want...

By stating that 'there is no reason for war', the band is basically suggesting different possibilities of dealing with the oppression society imposes on the *favelados*, because for them, "nobody has to do what one doesn't want" (line 24). There is a sense that people who live in the *favelas* are doomed to be riddled in violence, crime and drug trafficking, an open war with the Police and the State, a conundrum they cannot escape. AfroReggae, on the contrary, shows them ways out of this war: "nobody has

to follow what one doesn't believe" (line 22). The discourse of the group implies that they want to change the community from within, empowering the youth with the education, health care and culture – by resorting to the legacy of Afro-Brazilian roots – neglected by the State, in order for them to build their own way out.

AfroReggae is that way trying to create a different world, in the form of an improved community, a world within music which again is going to reshape the notion of Josh Kun's *audiotopia* into the renewed *audiotranstopia*. In this *audiotranstopia*, which goes beyond the utopia of a world of social change, the band inspire and lead people into transcending their own social and cultural barriers to achieve their upmost goals in life. They stopped looking from a top-down, voyeuristic position, and started to narrate what they experience, seeing from within and singing about what they know and 'emically' understand.

In the case of AfroReggae, almost as if taking the baton from the hands of Lucinha Araújo, Cazuza's mother, they are helping their communities in practical terms. AfroReggae's projects promote health care and education, trying to take the *favelas'* kids out of the streets, out of unemployment, drug dealing, and crime, as seen in the documentary *Favela Rising*. In this film, the actual results of AfroReggae's projects can be witnessed, showing how these actions are fulfilling the role of the absent State in regards to those impoverished communities. In other words, a pictorial representation of the power of the *audiodystopian* message created by the band and its projects.

AfroReggae are using their batons to beat their drums of war, but this war is against a collective legacy of poverty, social and racial neglect, a strife for, happiness, pride, and victory. They are not just moaning, complaining, or asking the state to provide; they are promoting awareness and change in the way society, as a whole, sees the ‘underprivileged’, the ones that were overlooked by the powerful, and who can finally be heard – and in that sense, AfroReggae gives them a voice by creating a community where they can express themselves.

AfroReggae received the baton from the previous generation of privileged and middle-class artists, used their know-how and experience in order to appropriate it to its local community and change it from within. Now it holds the baton and its running. As such, AfroReggae holds not only the baton of a Brazilian generation prior to them, but also of an older one from the 1960s. When Bob Dylan was singing that the answer was Blowin’ in the Wind, he certainly could not realise that the seeds of rebellion and change would reach the hillsides of deprived communities in Brazil. AfroReggae is definitely one of those many bands which are sowing the seeds carried by those winds of change.

...Mandei plantar  
Folhas de sonhos no jardim do solar  
As folhas sabem procurar pelo sol  
E as raízes procurar, procurar  
Mas as pessoas da sala de jantar  
Essas pessoas da sala de jantar  
São as pessoas da sala de jantar  
Essas pessoas da sala de jantar  
São ocupadas em nascer e morrer  
(*Panis et Circences* – Veloso and Gil, 1968)



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- O Cangaceiro*, dir. by Lima Barreto (Brazil, 1953)
- The Filth and The Fury*, dir. by Julien Temple (London, Film Four, 2000)
- Get Yourself a College Girl*, dir. by Sidney Miller (USA 1964)
- Guerra de Canudos*, dir. by Sérgio Rezende (Brazil, 1997)
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